

Sheffield Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities

Local authority

Inspection dates		3–7 February 2014
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
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 on the 16 to 19 study programme and on the apprenticeship programme are making good progress in developing the skills that they need for work.
- On non-accredited courses, learners successfully improve their personal and social skills, and achieve their learning goals.
- Learners successfully develop their functional skills and gain qualifications in English and mathematics.
- Tutors challenge and inspire learners, and provide good support to ensure that their individual needs are met.
- Learners benefit from a wide range of high quality resources at the provider's main centres.
- Tutors and assessors successfully promote equality and diversity, and provide an inclusive learning environment.
- Partnership working is very good, and enables the service to respond successfully to learners' needs within the local community.
- Self-assessment is very thorough, and accurately identifies key areas for improvement.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Success rates are not consistently high across the provision.
- In 2012/13, the success rate among 16 to 18-year-old female learners on accredited courses was significantly lower than among male learners.
- Not enough teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding.
- Initial assessment is not always used effectively to set targets for learners.
- The process for observing teaching, learning and assessment does not always enable tutors to improve their practice further.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve success rates across the provision by:
 - monitoring closely the attendance and retention of current learners
 - acting swiftly to support learners at risk of leaving their course early
 - ensuring that all learners receive appropriate support to achieve their learning goals.
- Increase the number of 16 to 18-year-old learners that successfully complete the intermediate apprenticeship programme by identifying the reasons for the low success rate and taking actions to reduce the achievement gap between 16 to 18-year-old learners and those aged 19 and over.
- Improve the success of 16 to 18-year-old female learners on accredited courses by identifying the reasons for the lower success rates for this group, and by providing appropriate support to enable female learners to succeed as well as their male peers.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by providing professional development for teaching staff that enables the best practice in the service to be shared.
- Ensure that initial assessment is used effectively to identify precise individual targets for all learners, and that these are used as a basis for planning their learning.
- Further improve the process for observing teaching, learning and assessment by placing more emphasis on:
 - the specific targets that learners are aiming to achieve
 - learners' progress within lessons
 - what tutors and trainers need to do to improve their practice.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
------------------------------	----------------------

- Outcomes for learners require improvement. Although the success rate on courses that lead to a qualification improved in 2012/13, too many learners did not complete their courses successfully. The service has taken effective action in the current year to improve retention and this has led to a significant reduction in the number of learners who leave their course early. Attendance in lessons is very high. A high proportion of learners on functional English and mathematics courses successfully gain qualifications.
- The proportion of learners that successfully complete their apprenticeship programme within the planned timescale is slightly above the national average. However, too many 16 to 18-year-old apprentices on the intermediate programme, the largest cohort, did not complete their apprenticeship programme successfully in 2012/13.
- Retention and achievement on courses that do not lead to qualifications are good. Learners make good progress on a wide range of community courses, including family learning and information and communication technology, and successfully achieve their learning goals.
- In 2012/13, a significantly lower proportion of 16 to 18-year-old female learners completed accredited courses successfully compared with their male peers, and this gap increased significantly from 2011/12. Managers recognised this achievement gap in the self-assessment report, and they have begun to take action to reduce it.
- Learners on the current study programme and on the apprenticeship programme are making good progress in developing the skills that they need for employment. For example, on the pre-apprenticeship course, young learners who were previously not engaged in any kind of

education or training successfully gain skills that enable them to secure a job or progress on to apprenticeship programmes.

- The majority of learners successfully improve their English and mathematics skills. For example, learners on the catering and hospitality study programme make very good progress in improving their communication and numeracy skills while enhancing their skills and confidence to work in the catering industry.
- On non-accredited courses, learners make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. On family learning courses, learners improve their confidence and self-esteem, which enhances their ability to support their children's education.
- Managers do not collect comprehensive data on learners' destinations once they have completed their course. Where data are available, they indicate that among 16 to 18-year-old learners, progression is good, with a high proportion of learners progressing on to an apprenticeship programme or into further training and education. A high proportion of learners progress successfully to other courses offered by the service. For example, almost half of the learners on family learning courses progressed to another course in 2012/13. The majority of learners on courses in English, mathematics and English for speakers of other languages progress successfully to the next level.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good as reflected in the improving outcomes for learners, in particular the significantly improved retention rate in the current year and the good progress made by the great majority of learners. Tutors challenge and inspire learners well and, as a result, learners are highly motivated, enjoy their learning, and work hard. Tutors provide good support to meet learners' needs and successfully encourage independent learning through setting homework regularly and by the creative use of learning technology. Support assistants provide good support to learners who need additional help in their lessons.
- The great majority of tutors are highly skilled in using a wide range of stimulating and innovative activities and resources in their teaching. They teach sessions at a good pace that stretches learners and enables them to make rapid progress. They use questioning well to check learners' understanding and to extend their thinking and problem-solving skills. However, in a minority of sessions, tutors do not use appropriate or sufficiently interesting activities, and, as a result, learners do not always achieve their full potential.
- Learners on the study programme benefit from a very good range of enrichment activities. These include sport activities, photography, engineering opportunities, music classes, and art and design workshops. Learners on the music study programme record and play their music with great pride on a virtual community network that has a global audience.
- Learners benefit from very high quality resources. Excellent facilities and resources for health and social care courses enable learners to practise and develop their skills in a real work setting. The music studios have a wide range of outstanding resources of the standard used by professional musicians. High quality learning technology is available in the service's main centres, and tutors use interactive whiteboards successfully to support and enhance their teaching. A group of tutors has successfully developed online interactive learning resources on employability skills that they use to extend learning through the service's virtual classroom.
- Initial assessment is used appropriately to find the right level of course for learners and to identify whether they need additional support. Tutors assess learners' progress towards achieving their qualification thoroughly and accurately. However, tutors do not always make good use of the assessment of learners' starting points when setting individual targets. As a result targets are not always sufficiently specific or measurable, and this makes it difficult for learners to know what progress they are making.
- Tutors provide constructive and supportive verbal feedback to learners in their lessons, and this helps learners to understand how to improve. When tutors give written feedback, it is clear and

detailed, and enables learners to understand what they need to do to develop their skills and understanding further. However, not all written work is routinely marked and corrected.

- Tutors teach functional English and mathematics well, and ensure that learners are able to apply their skills at work and in their personal lives. Learners make good use of self-study sessions to improve their English and mathematics skills. Vocational tutors and functional skills tutors work well together to plan sessions so that learners have the opportunity to practise functional skills in a work context. Learners have the opportunity to improve their functional skills to a level higher than that required for their career aim, and many take up this opportunity.
- Learners receive good information and advice before and at the start of their programme so that they are clear about options available to them. They receive clear information from tutors about progression routes within the service and into further training and employment. However, learners do not make sufficient use of the resources in the service's central information, advice and guidance centre.
- Tutors and assessors promote equality and diversity well. High-quality materials that are easily accessible and carefully designed extend learners' understanding of diversity successfully. Learners from a wide range of backgrounds enjoy working together, treat each other with respect and support each other well. An equality and diversity calendar is part of the learners' electronic portfolio to promote and celebrate important events. Tutors and assessors use these as a basis for discussion, helping to raise learners' awareness of equality and diversity events throughout the year.

Health and social care
Early years and playwork

16-19 study programmes
19+ Learning programmes
Apprenticeships

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, and supports the improving outcomes for learners. Attendance is good and retention has improved significantly in the current year.
- Enthusiastic, well-qualified and experienced staff provide good support for learners. They encourage learners to have high expectations of what they can achieve. Learners are encouraged successfully to work independently and collaboratively. Tutors teach sessions at a good pace and all learners participate fully in a wide range of vocationally relevant activities. As a result learners are highly motivated and make rapid progress.
- The learning environment and resources are very good. A fully equipped mock hospital ward and domiciliary care unit are used well to promote independent living skills and introduce learners to simulated working environments. They provide learners with very good opportunities to develop and improve their practical skills.
- Tutors skilfully plan and manage study programmes for 16 to 19-year-old learners. Many learners on the current programmes have begun their work placements. Learners make good use of well-designed work placement booklets to record and reflect on their learning whilst in the workplace. However, a few learners have not yet had placements allocated.
- Initial assessment is thorough and identifies learners' starting points clearly. Target setting is effective and good use is made of the results of initial assessment when identifying targets for learners. Learners enjoy and benefit from using electronic portfolios that clearly monitor their progress against targets. Tutors successfully adapt their courses to meet the individual needs of learners, based on the outcomes of initial assessment.
- Assessment is thorough. Tutors check learners' progress regularly through effective questioning during sessions. When questioning indicates that learners need to extend their understanding, tutors use this information well as a basis for homework activities. Professional discussions and assessments with learners in the workplace focus well on the development of skills that learners

need when employed in care environments. Feedback from tutors on learners' written work is detailed and evaluative, and is used well by learners to help them to improve their vocational skills and understanding.

- Tutors provide good support for learners to enable them to develop their English and mathematical skills in vocational training sessions. Learners make good progress in developing functional skills that they then apply in the workplace. Managers encourage teaching and support staff to develop their own English and mathematical skills in order to improve the support that they give to learners. However, tutors do not always correct learners' work for spelling and grammatical errors.
- Staff provide useful information, advice and guidance for learners about employment routes and further study options. Learners also benefit from listening to external speakers who attend sessions to share information about relevant career opportunities. Learners understand the progression routes available for further study and many progress well from one level to the next.
- The promotion of equality, diversity and safeguarding is good in teaching sessions and in reviews. Tutors design activities and use resources that reflect the diverse settings that learners will experience when employed. As a result learners have a good understanding of equality and diversity issues in the context of working in the health, social care and early years sectors.

English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

19+ Learning programmes Community learning

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. This is reflected in the success rate for learners on accredited provision, which is below the national average. Learners on courses that do not lead to qualifications make good progress and achieve their learning goals.
- Most tutors have high expectations of their learners and provide good individual support. They are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subject and respond well to the diverse needs of learners from a wide range of backgrounds.
- In the better lessons, tutors use a good range of stimulating activities that interest and motivate learners. They carefully plan lessons that draw successfully on topical issues. For example, in one lesson the tutor provided stimulating materials to provoke discussion on the current flood crisis in England. Personal and additional language support for learners is good, and this enables learners to overcome barriers to learning, including low self-confidence. Learners in the better lessons make good progress in improving their English language skills and their confidence.
- In too many of the weaker lessons, activities do not build on previous learning or extend learners' knowledge and skills sufficiently. Tutors use activities that learners find uninteresting and, as a result, learners' levels of motivation are low. Learners' progress in these lessons is too slow because they do not see the relevance to their everyday lives of the language they are acquiring. Tutors in weaker lessons do not encourage learners to develop independent learning skills to enable them to extend their learning outside the classroom.
- Tutors do not use initial assessment consistently to set targets for learners to achieve within defined timescales. As a result a significant minority of learners are not sufficiently challenged, and make insufficient progress. Recording of achievement lacks rigour and too often consists of a list of activities that does not identify in sufficient detail the progress that learners make.
- Assessment requires improvement. In the better lessons, tutors use assessment effectively to encourage learners, through directed and extended questioning, to reflect on their learning and to consider how they can improve further. In these lessons, learners make good progress. However, assessment methods in too many other lessons are not rigorous enough and feedback

following assessment is insufficiently specific to enable learners to improve their language skills quickly.

- Learners benefit from good advice and guidance from a team of dedicated learning champions. They are made fully aware of progression opportunities following completion of their course and many progress on to higher-level language courses and other provision.
- Tutors promote equality and diversity effectively in the classroom and the resources that they use reflect the diverse local communities. Learners value working alongside others from different cultures and with a wide range of opinions. They are encouraged to work collaboratively and to welcome different ideas and customs.

Family learning

Community learning

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. This is reflected in outcomes for learners, which are also good.
- Tutors plan sessions well to meet learners' needs. They draw on their good understanding of learners' strengths and interests and ensure that their teaching motivates and challenges all learners. Tutors successfully encourage learners to participate fully in sessions through a wide range of discussion topics and practical activities and, as a result, learners improve their confidence and communication skills.
- Family learning sessions successfully enhance the ability of parents and carers to improve their children's personal and social skills. Families, schools and children's centres identify significant improvements in children's work at school as a result of their parents' learning and of the learning that parents and children do together.
- Tutors support learners well to help them to achieve their goals. Additional support tutors and bilingual volunteer workers provide good support for individual learners, many of whom have limited English language skills. Childcare facilities are provided at all the centres. However, in a few centres, childcare is not available for the full length of sessions, which means that some parents have to leave sessions early.
- Learners benefit from high quality resources. They use attractive and informative resource packs to support their learning and are able to borrow a wide range of other resources that they can use at home to support their children's education. Tutors adopt a range of innovative and flexible approaches to learning, using resources such as tablets and smartphones, which learners and children enjoy using and find helpful.
- Initial assessment is thorough. Tutors set accurate and challenging targets for learners. They use individual learning plans well to record learners' progress towards their targets and, on accredited courses, towards achieving their qualification.
- Learners receive good verbal and written feedback about their work and their progress, which includes supportive and encouraging comments on assessed work. However, in a minority of sessions, feedback is insufficiently detailed and tutors miss opportunities to encourage learners to use their new skills and knowledge with their children.
- In the majority of sessions, tutors successfully develop learners' English and mathematics skills and their ability to support the development of their children's skills. For example, they explain to learners the mathematical terms that their children will learn at school.
- Information, advice and guidance are good. Tutors take time towards the end of courses to help learners to explore opportunities for further study and employment. In one course for example, inspirational presentations about possible careers working with children provided learners with very useful advice and guidance.
- Tutors promote equality and diversity very successfully and create an ethos of mutual respect. The service actively recruits learners from black and minority ethnic communities and over half

of the learners are from these groups. The service provides specifically designed courses for some of the most disadvantaged groups of parents, such as members of Slovakian Roma families. These courses improve the readiness of children to attend school and successfully increase the resilience of families that have arrived recently in the country.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The service has a clear strategic direction that is closely aligned with the city council's priorities to build a strong local economy, tackle poverty and increase social justice. The elected cabinet member within the council with responsibility for education is very committed to providing appropriate education and training opportunities for all learners, in particular those who have previously underachieved.
- Leaders and managers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and they are highly committed to improving the quality of the provision. They have focused unremittingly on addressing the weaknesses identified when the service was inspected in 2012 and on improving the quality of learners' experiences. To support them in doing so, they have recently strengthened the management team with the appointment of a senior manager with specific responsibility for further improving teaching, learning and assessment.
- Managers successfully develop programmes to meet identified needs. The 16 to 19 study programme has been carefully designed to motivate learners and to help them to develop their English, mathematics and vocational skills. An intensive pre-apprenticeship programme enables vulnerable young learners to gain employment-related skills and provides a route into a job or apprenticeship. However, a significant minority of learners have to wait too long before they are allocated to a work placement.
- Partnership working is very good. The service works closely with local community organisations from across the city and, as a result, courses are very responsive to learners' identified needs. For example, the service provides a wide range of courses that successfully re-engage learners who are not in education, employment or training. Good working relationships with schools enable the service to design its family learning courses to meet the specific needs of families and their children.
- The commissioning process for appointing subcontractors to provide community learning is rigorous. Before awarding a contract, the service uses demanding criteria to assess whether the potential subcontractor can meet the quality standards of the service and the needs of its learners. Managers carefully and systematically review the quality of provision delivered by subcontractors. The service provides a good range of relevant training opportunities for subcontractors including workshops on health and safety, self-assessment and observing teaching and learning.
- Managers have successfully introduced a revised process for observing teaching and learning. Observers are selected and trained carefully, paired observations take place, and bi-monthly moderation meetings are held. Observations accurately identify most strengths and areas for improvement. However, in a few instances, observers do not record in sufficient detail the progress that learners make in lessons. In a minority of cases, actions identified by observers to improve tutors' practice are insufficiently detailed.
- Performance management has improved since the last inspection and is now good. All staff have an annual appraisal at which their performance over the previous year is evaluated and targets are set for the following year. Managers now place a strong focus on the use of data when managing performance. For example, they rigorously monitor the performance of tutors through monthly one-to-one meetings and make very good use of the service's system for reviewing learners' attendance, retention and achievement. Since the introduction of the improved arrangements for performance management, learner retention has improved significantly. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced and improve their skills through a good range of professional development seminars and training events.

- Self-assessment is very thorough and enables the service to identify accurately weaknesses and quickly take actions to improve performance and quality. Staff fully understand and are actively involved in the self-assessment process. Subcontractors' self-assessment reports are critically scrutinised and, when necessary, good support is provided to enable them to self-assess more accurately. Learners have good opportunities to provide feedback about their learning experiences through termly focus group meetings on each site. Managers are exploring alternative ways of obtaining feedback from employers as they recognise that they need to get a clearer picture of employers' views.
- Equality and diversity are fundamental to the service's work. Managers and staff promote equality and diversity well to ensure that there is a strong ethos of inclusion and mutual respect across the service. Learners from a wide range of backgrounds work well together. There is zero tolerance of bullying, harassment, discrimination and unfair treatment.
- The provider meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding learners. All staff who manage learners have been checked through the Criminal Records Bureau or the Disclosure and Barring Service. They have a very strong awareness of the importance of safeguarding. On each site there is a named safeguarding officer and managers follow specific procedures if safeguarding issues arise. Managers provide good advice and support to subcontractors about safeguarding.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)


Sheffield Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities

<p>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</p> <p>1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate</p>	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	2	2	N/A	2
Outcomes for learners	3	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	3	3	N/A	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	2	2	N/A	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	N/A	N/A	2	N/A	2	2	N/A	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Health and social care	2
Early years and playwork	2
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	3
Family learning	2

Provider details

Type of provider	Local authority								
Age range of learners	16+								
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full-time: 417								
	Part-time: 7,075								
Principal/CEO	Dee Desgranges								
Date of previous inspection	November 2012								
Website address	www.sheffield.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		
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	
Full-time	N/A	N/A	27	11	24	7	N/A	N/A	
Part-time	53	114	22	264	80	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total				
	N/A		N/A		N/A				
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher				
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+			
	89	58	29	64	N/A	N/A			
Number of learners aged 14-16									
Full-time	N/A								
Part-time	N/A								
Number of community learners	1,512								
Number of employability learners	N/A								
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency								
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Birley Community College ▪ Darnall Forum ▪ Gleadless Valley Community Forum ▪ Heeley Development Trust ▪ Learn for Life Enterprise ▪ Manor Training and Resource Centre ▪ Sheffield Association for the Voluntary Teaching of English ▪ Sheffield Out of School Network ▪ SOAR 								

- 
- Tinsley Green Training and Development
 - Woodhouse and District Community Forum
 - Yemeni Community Association
 - Youth Association South Yorkshire
 - ZEST

Contextual information

Sheffield Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities is part of the Children, Young People and Families service of Sheffield City Council. It provides courses for learners aged 14 to 19, adult and community education, and apprenticeship programmes across the city. The population of Sheffield was 557,400 in 2012. The main employment in the region is in service industries while the proportion of people employed in manufacturing is below the regional average. The unemployment rate is slightly higher than the overall rate for the Yorkshire and Humber region. The proportion of people with a qualification higher than a National Vocational Qualification at level 2 is slightly above the national average. The proportion of pupils attaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C in the city is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Steve Hailstone HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by the Assistant Director, Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities 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>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



Learner View is a new website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too.

To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

