Isle of Wight Adult Community Learning

Local authority

Inspection dates		3–6 June 2014
Overall effectiveness	**This inspection:**	**Good–2**
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement–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:

- Tutors are supportive, and have high expectations of their learners.

- Learners gain useful skills, improve their self-confidence and gain their qualifications.

- Learning sessions for parents are consistently good and enable them to have confidence in their English and mathematics skills.

- The service has developed a highly effective programme of community learning projects that are purposeful and productive for older learners, learners with learning difficulties and those recovering from drug misuse.

- The service has developed good collaborative partnerships especially with schools.

- Very effective, well planned and implemented strategies are in place to improve adults' historically low English and mathematics achievement on the island.

- The efforts to improve the quality of learning sessions have been successful.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Not all tutors set effective learning goals and targets.

- There is currently insufficient management capacity to sustain further improvements.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of learning sessions further by:
  - improving the quality of planning for learning, in particular in setting learners better goals and small steps to motivate them and to enable the service to measure accurately learners' achievement of non-accredited outcomes.
- Improve further the management of provision by:
  - increasing the quality of accurately-graded observations that show how much and what learners learn, to provide a robust profile of teaching, learning and assessment
  - ensuring attendance and punctuality are good in all subject areas
  - filling the current management vacancies in data management and in one subject area.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good

- Learners who are taking information and communication technology (ICT) courses, the majority of which lead to qualifications, achieve particularly well and better than at other similar providers. They develop good skills using industry-standard software.

- Functional skills learners, representing a small minority of the total, achieved poorly in 2012/13, with success rates well below those of other providers. However, this provision has improved significantly in the current year; progress is now rapid and the majority of learners have already achieved.

- Learners on family learning courses achieve particularly well. A high proportion of these learners who are taking a qualification are successful. Those who are taking courses that are not externally accredited achieve challenging individual learning goals that are skilfully written to help and encourage them. All family learning learners develop useful skills and resources to help them to work with their children in a positive and productive way.

- Learners who are following courses that do not lead to qualifications develop good, useful skills that they are able to use outside the classroom. For example, learners on an enamelled jewellery course completed professional-looking bracelets and necklaces. However, not all tutors record progress towards these non-accredited achievements effectively and the data held by the service on success rates for non-accredited provision are not reliable.

- Attendance and punctuality require improvement in many sessions. The service is aware of this, although appropriate actions have not yet been implemented.

- The service routinely and effectively monitors the levels of achievement of different groups of learners. Since the previous inspection, the service has successfully worked to close any achievement gaps.

- Learners improve their confidence and self-esteem through the courses that they take, raising their aspirations. For example, in family learning a high proportion of learners progress to higher-level qualifications or to employment , for example as teaching assistants.

- Learners on the small number of commissioned courses that are aimed at specific groups achieve particularly well and develop good skills. For example, a course for older learners on working with horses has been very effective in developing these skills, but has also provided a number of other personal benefits for learners through their interaction with the horses and with other learners. Learners involved in a project to write a book about the local area have learnt a range of new skills about writing, but they have also enjoyed the programme and have benefited from the social interaction.

| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good on community learning programmes, as reflected in the good success rates for learners. Achievements in non-accredited family and community learning are good and learners develop useful skills. A high proportion of learners in accredited courses gain their qualification.

- Tutors have high expectations of learners. The well-qualified and experienced tutors understand the barriers to learning that learners face and give good care and support to help overcome these. In one functional skills class, for example, the tutor encouraged a learner who had just passed an external examination to describe how much progress she had made since joining the class, which acted as a powerful motivation for recent, less confident learners.

- In the vast majority of lessons, tutors plan well to meet the needs of individual learners. In family learning, for example, learners engage in many practical and interesting activities which give parents and carers good insights into how children learn. The many functional skills learners preparing to take external assessments in the near future benefit from helpful examination tips and final revision. In the less successful lessons, theory is not well linked to real life applications. For example, in a mathematics class about area and perimeter, learners did not have the opportunity to use their learning in practical activities.

- The service uses community-based projects very well to capture interest and promote learning. In one project, learners, supported by a tutor with authorship experience, have drawn on their experiences to produce published work on the pleasure and hazards of drug taking. In an animal-based project for older learners, learning objectives are set for each learner which are carefully monitored using written and photographic evidence to support achievement. These projects also have wider benefits, such as improving self-confidence and reducing social isolation.

- Learning resources in family learning are good and are used very effectively to capture the interest of learners. However, in functional skills, although resources for learning are satisfactory overall, tutors make insufficient use of information technology resources to support existing e-learning initiatives for independent learning. Where information and learning technology resources are available, they are used very effectively to assess and track progress, promote discussion and support individual learning.

- Tutors on family learning courses skilfully assess the starting points of learners and identify clear individualised learning objectives. Progress towards these is monitored and recorded accurately, motivating learners. However, on the very small number of functional skills courses, tutors do not assess learners' starting points clearly enough and their learning objectives are not clear. A small minority of learners in English and mathematics have no written learning objectives, limiting their aspirations. Learners who have access to the online resources in English and mathematics benefit from the online assessment and tracking facilities that lead to more accurate measurement of their progress.

- In family learning classes, tutors embed English and mathematics very effectively into their lessons. In one session, which focused on how children learn through play, parents, carers and their children developed skills of counting, measurement and estimation while learning to make playdough, before practising writing skills as they recorded the activity in personal notebooks.

- Tutors use questioning well during lessons to check learning and help learners improve. Written feedback in the less successful functional skills classes is too general and does not clearly identify areas for improvement.

- Information, advice and guidance are good. All new learners receive clear information about courses and possible progression routes. Guidance on the next steps which learners can take is built successfully into programmes. Tutors have good links with the National Careers Service and refer learners for more specific advice when required.

- Students benefit from an approach to learning which welcomes and responds to all learners' needs. An atmosphere of mutual respect encourages all students to participate well and tutors plan lessons to meet the needs of different groups of students. However, the promotion of diversity through classroom activities is underdeveloped, although in one English lesson diversity was celebrated when the development of speaking and listening skills focused on the experience of a learner's visit to relatives in India.

The effectiveness of leadership and management	Good

- Leaders and managers, supported by the council, share a strong commitment to providing a service that contributes to tackling a history and legacy of low aspiration on the island as well as supporting older learners who have few alternative learning opportunities. They are implementing a targeted and sensible learning strategy, using resources well, to improve the English and mathematics skills of adults. They link very well with schools and have reduced the number of providers they commission to those that can best deliver the courses planned by the service.

- The service plans carefully to ensure that provision is located in a variety of settings in the community, offering a good mix of courses that lead to a qualification or courses for learners who prefer not to take a qualification. The courses provide a generally good learning experience for those wanting to improve their knowledge and skills, those who maybe at risk of isolation, or who have barriers to furthering their employment. However, although leaders and managers have made improvements in teaching, learning and assessment, no outstanding teaching was seen and too many current gaps in management and management practice are evident to ensure that the improvement is sustainable over time.

- The courses that leaders have established are highly responsive and link well with other educational services provided on the island, in particular the family learning courses run in schools. Most learners who successfully complete these courses progress onto functional skills courses and most attain English and mathematics qualifications. This makes a positive difference to the learners, who in turn engender an idea of the importance of English and mathematics in their children. Evaluations of the impact of these courses indicate improved behaviour of children whose parents increase their skills as a result of attending these classes.

- Strategies to improve digital awareness and provide courses leading to qualifications in information technology are very effective. Former learners become digital champions and provide voluntary services on behalf of the council. They successfully play an active role in generating people's interest in learning about technology. Leaders target community learning courses astutely, for example at older learners at risk of becoming isolated, learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and those recovering from drugs misuse. Some valuable and purposeful learning projects result in strong products such as books that provide useful insights into the community.

- Leaders and managers at all levels are resolving the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. For example, they have established improved measures to monitor and improve the commissioned subcontracted provision. Teaching, learning and assessment are improving, as is the achievement of learners following courses that lead to a qualification in English and mathematics. The recent improvements to the quality of teaching observations enables managers to identify pertinent areas for improvement more clearly, leading to a good programme of professional development for tutors. However, a greater number of observations is needed to reliably assure quality overall. Target setting for learners and monitoring of progress, although improved, are variable in quality, which makes achievement data on a number of non-accredited courses unreliable.

- Leaders and managers have been suitably self-critical and evaluative in the most recent self-assessment report. They have improved the ways they assess the service, underlining their desire to focus on quality improvement and sustainable improvement. Quality improvement planning now provides far clearer, measurable, targets. Managers use data well to evaluate the

impact of provision and include a range of useful key performance indicators. Further progress on data management is, however, required, as managers do not have a clear picture at their fingertips on headline data such as progression, attendance and punctuality. Leaders recognise this and a lead officer for data management is soon to be appointed.

- The service is highly responsive to all parts of the community. Classes are friendly and welcoming and conducted in an atmosphere of respect. Tutors in a few sessions employ a variety of strategies so that topical issues or cultural understanding for learners is developed and integrated seamlessly in the learning. However, too few examples of this good practice are evident.

- The organisation has all the necessary statutory safeguarding arrangements that would apply to protecting young people and ensures a duty of care for their adult learners. This includes, for example, referral procedures and links to a range of specialist agencies.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Isle of Wight Adult Community Learning

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	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	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Outcomes for learners	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
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
Community learning	**2**

Provider details

Type of provider	Local authority
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	Full time: Nil Part-time: 1653
Principal/CEO	Mr D Burbage
Date of previous inspection	December 2012
Website address	www.iwcommunitylearning.ac.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+
	-	78	-	41	-	-	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	**Intermediate**		**Advanced**		**Higher**	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total	
	-		-		-	

Number of learners aged 14-16	
Full-time	N/A
Part-time	N/A
Number of community learners	200
Number of employability learners	N/A
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)
At the time of the inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	▪ Bodster Equine Assisted Learning Centre ▪ InspirED ▪ Spectrum Housing Association ▪ Beachy Books ▪ The New Carnival Company

Contextual information

The Isle of Wight has a population of around 140,000 people, 83,000 of whom are of working age. Just over 60% of the working age population holds an intermediate level qualification or above, compared with around 73% for the South of England. The island has a significantly smaller proportion of young people aged 20 to 29 than Hampshire and England as a whole, and a higher proportion of residents of pensionable age. There are some areas of affluence, but also areas of urban deprivation alongside communities showing rural isolation and low aspiration levels. The service draws a significant number of learners from areas of high deprivation. Around 9% of the learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds, compared with 5% in the local population. Attainments in local secondary schools rose by 5% in 2013 when 50% of 16-year-olds achieved five or more A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Ian Handscombe

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the Commissioning Manager for ACL 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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