

# Nottingham City Council

## Local authority

<b>Inspection dates</b>		<b>4 – 6 February 2015</b>
<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:

- a high proportion of learners who complete non-accredited family learning courses achieve their learning aims; they develop good skills, which they use well in their home life and in helping their children with schoolwork
- tutors motivate learners well to progress within family learning to take accredited English and mathematics qualifications; a high proportion of learners are successful in achieving qualifications in these subjects
- good teaching, learning and assessment help learners to develop good personal, social and work-related skills that prepare them well for progression to further study, voluntary work and jobs; the focus on improving learners' English and mathematics skills is particularly effective
- tutors provide good support to enable learners, many of whom have complex needs and face significant barriers to learning, to engage in family learning; they have high expectations for what learners can achieve and raise their aspirations well
- good governance and management of the service have established a clear priority for the provision to enable residents to support their children's learning better and to increase their own chances of improved employment.

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

- tutors make insufficient use of digital, and information and communication technologies in their teaching to enable learners who are not confident in using these technologies to gain the skills to do so
- a minority of tutors do not provide learners with a record of the full range of their learning achievements while on the family learning courses
- managers do not sufficiently analyse available data when making judgements about the quality of provision or the progress they are making towards achieving their plans to improve the provision further.

## Full report

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

- Improve the access that tutors and learners have to digital, and information and communication technology (ICT) within family learning lessons. Provide training and support so that all tutors have the confidence to use these technologies well in their teaching to enable learners to improve their own confidence and ability.
- Use established quality improvement and lesson observation procedures to identify tutors who do not sufficiently summarise learners' outcomes on records of assessment. Provide training and support to improve the practice of these tutors, making use of the examples of good practice that exist. Continue to monitor all tutors' practice in this area, implementing continued support through performance management where necessary to ensure that procedures for recognising and recording progress and achievement are consistently good or outstanding for all learners.
- Ensure managers use available data about the quality of the provision and progress of learners more effectively to set clear targets for improvement plans for the provision. Consider how data currently held in different formats and locations can be brought together to enable more holistic and efficient evaluation of the provision's strengths and areas for improvement.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- Nottingham City Council (NCC) provides a range of family learning programmes, currently catering for around 160 learners. The majority of courses are delivered in primary schools and nurseries in the city, mainly engaging the mothers of children in these settings. The service has recently started to increase the range of delivery locations and courses on offer, which is beginning to increase the number of men taking courses. Although the majority of courses are non-accredited, an increasing number of learners, around a fifth in 2013/14, take accredited qualifications in English and mathematics from entry level to level 2.
- Achievement rates for learners following non-accredited family learning programmes are good. A high proportion of learners who complete their courses achieve their learning aims. The procedures for recognising and recording progress and achievement are good on the large majority of courses. Records of assessment recognise and celebrate the progress that learners make well and enable the service to accurately judge levels of achievement across the provision.
- The number of learners taking accredited courses in mathematics and English has increased significantly, doubling from 2012/13 to 2013/14. An improving and high proportion of learners achieve functional English qualifications at level 1 and 2. A high proportion of learners taking functional mathematics at level 1 achieve the qualification. At level 2, the proportion achieving mathematics qualifications declined slightly in 2013/14 but remained above the national average.
- The vast majority of learners develop good skills, which they use well in their home life and in helping their children with schoolwork. Many learners start courses lacking in confidence having not experienced any formal training or education for a considerable time. They enjoy increased interaction with fellow members of their community. School head teachers welcome the increased support that parents who have taken courses provide for their children, recognising the improved attendance and progress that children make in their schoolwork as a result.
- End of course feedback and records of assessment confirm that learners increase significantly their confidence to look for work or to progress to further education and training. However, the service recognises that it needs to maintain contact with a higher number of learners after they

complete family learning courses to evaluate accurately the proportion of learners who gain employment, progress to further learning or volunteering opportunities when they complete their course.

- Although differences in the performance of different groups of learners are closing, a few remain. Learners from a Caribbean background achieve better than those from other backgrounds. Learners from Indian, Pakistani, other Asian and Arab backgrounds achieve less well than other learners, including the majority of learners who are from white British backgrounds. Males achieve better than females. Managers correctly identify that this is because a higher proportion of females follow longer and more challenging accredited English and mathematics courses, whereas almost all males take short non-accredited courses.

## The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, leading to learners achieving well and making good progress in gaining skills that prepare them well for progression to further study, voluntary work and jobs. The service's family learning programmes help adults and children develop very good social skills and promotes good support networks within the school community. Adults gain good insights into how their children learn and progress and by an improved understanding of the link between emotion and learning, can give them good support at home. They are able to identify and implement new strategies to help them manage their children's behaviour.
- Tutors have high expectations of learners. They provide particularly good personal and academic support. They quickly get to know their learners and are sensitive to the needs of those who lack confidence in their abilities or who have significant barriers to learning. Tutors build productive relationships with learners and as a result, learners feel confident enough to ask for help or clarification with any problems they have. They provide good additional support to ensure that less confident learners remain on their courses.
- Tutors use their good subject knowledge and expertise well to motivate learners. As a result, adults learn how to use play and praise as a technique to help their children to learn. In one class, adults made good progress in recognising how to use a reward system to promote their children's independent eating. Through well-planned activities, tutors promote good teamwork and collaboration that encourages learners to support each other.
- Tutors plan sessions thoroughly so that learners with different levels of ability and experiences learn well together. They prepare high quality learning resources that sustain learners' interest and concentration. One tutor used a game of snakes and ladders very effectively to improve learners' understanding of adjectives. Through a well-managed role-play, learners with English as an additional language learned how to describe health conditions accurately and to ask for suitable treatments in a chemist's shop.
- Tutors carry out good initial assessments of learners' needs and abilities and use this to set them appropriately challenging targets. They use this information well when planning learning activities and amend and develop targets with learners to help them progress.
- Tutors' assessment of learners is good. They provide prompt and detailed verbal feedback to learners about their completed work and performance. As a result, learners know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Tutors guide learners well to use learning diaries to reflect on their progress. The majority of tutors combine this with good written feedback and records of progress against learning objectives. However, a minority of tutors do not summarise the full range of outcomes that learners achieve through their family learning courses on their records of assessment.
- Tutors respond well to the service's priority to improve learners' English and mathematics functional skills. They plan activities carefully to help learners acquire and practise new skills,

appropriate to their prior attainment. Tutors routinely correct spelling and grammatical errors and help learners widen their vocabulary. They use assessment and target setting processes well to identify and encourage learners who are able to take accredited English and mathematics qualifications.

- The extent to which tutors prepare learners to use digital, and information and communication technology requires improvement. Although a minority of tutors use it well in mathematics lessons, the majority of tutors make insufficient use of digital technologies in their teaching to enable learners who are not confident in using these technologies to gain skills to do so.
- The quality of information, advice and guidance the service provides to learners is good. NCC promotes family learning well in schools and nurseries. It is beginning to promote it more widely in other community venues with the aim of engaging more males in family learning. Once on courses, learners receive good information and encouragement to progress to other courses, for example, qualifications in English and mathematics. Tutors and staff from external organisations within the community learning trust provide good careers advice and work well with learners to increase their knowledge of possible progression routes at the end of their courses.
- Tutors are highly sensitive to learners' individual needs and create an environment of equality, trust and harmony, which supports good learning. Learners feel very safe in the centres and feel at ease to discuss sensitive issues. A few good examples exist of tutors encouraging learners to consider cultural differences to approaches to learning, for example discussing how children learn mathematics in Indian schools compared to English schools. However, tutors do not always plan sufficiently to enable learners to consider more broadly how living in a diverse society could affect their lives and the lives of their children.

## The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Council members, senior leaders and managers articulate a clear ambition for the service and what it should provide for residents of Nottingham. Clearly defined strategies and objectives set out the priorities for the service's family learning provision. These clarify its contribution to the authority's overall strategic objectives of improving the employability, health and well-being of Nottingham residents and building sustainable communities. Managers plan the provision particularly well to enable parents to better support their children's education and to encourage and support residents to improve their English and mathematics skills.
- Governance of the service is good. Elected members and senior executives contribute to developing the strategic direction and key operational targets for the provision. They receive detailed reports about the performance of the service enabling them to have a good understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement. Senior leaders provide good levels of challenge and support for managers of the service through robust performance management arrangements.
- The performance management of subcontractors is good. NCC uses subcontractors to deliver all of the family learning provision. A good, two-stage contract procurement process ensures that subcontractors' provision meets the priorities of the service well. Managers hold regular contract review meetings with subcontractors, holding them to account well. They have recently begun to consider a wider range of operational, financial and quality performance data in these meetings. However, managers are not yet routinely analysing different data reports holistically to identify areas of concern early enough.
- Subcontract management arrangements include robust procedures to monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Direct observations by NCC managers are supplemented well by subcontractor managers' own observation outcomes. Observation reports are evaluative and focus well on learning, attainment and progress. Clear action plans ensure teachers know

how to improve their practice and provide them with opportunities to share good practice with tutors from other providers through the community learning partnership.

- The self-assessment process is thorough, involves fully all subcontractors, and considers and responds to feedback from learners and school head teachers. Judgments made about the quality of the provision are accurate and inform improvement priorities well. However, managers set insufficiently detailed, measurable targets against actions on the resulting improvement plans to enable close monitoring of progress by elected members, leaders and managers.
- Leaders and managers have established good partnerships with neighbouring authorities and other local learning providers. They use these well to design a curriculum of community learning provision across the 'Notts loves learning' community learning partnership that enables individual providers to meet local residents' needs well without duplicating provision. Managers work well with schools and other local service providers to use, at minimal or no cost, resources such as rooms, parent support officers and crèche facilities to enable available funding to be used to extend provision further.
- Managers prioritise family learning provision to help learners to improve their English and mathematics skills, and their confidence to use these to help their children learn at school particularly well. Using the 'keeping up with the children' course to engage parents in family learning focusing on English and mathematics, parents are better able to help their children in these subjects. Good advice and guidance through this stage of family learning has resulted in increasing proportions of learners progressing to and achieving accredited qualifications in these subjects.
- Managers promote equality well and act effectively to widen participation. Managers have used the recent round of procurement to engage with new subcontractors and to ensure an existing subcontractor deliver courses aimed at engaging more males in family learning. Provision is targeted well using demographic data to support areas of the city with greatest need. However, managers are less successful in using available data to analyse reasons why a few differences in the achievement of different groups of learners remain.
- NCC's safeguarding of learners is good. Through its subcontractor performance management procedures, managers ensure that all teaching and support staff have appropriate clearances to work with children and vulnerable adults. Mandatory safeguarding training requirements and deadlines for updating feature prominently in contract performance targets and review procedures. Learners know how to keep themselves safe and how to raise concerns. On the rare occasions this has happened, staff deal with issues quickly, sensitively and appropriately.

## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

### Nottingham City Council

<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								2
Outcomes for learners	2								2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2								2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2								2

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

## 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>	1,124							
<b>Employment and skills manager</b>	Mr Nigel Jackson							
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	November 2008							
<b>Website address</b>	www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/Learn							
<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+
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	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+		
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		
<b>Number of traineeships</b>	16-19		19+		Total			
	N/A		N/A		N/A			
<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>	161							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	N/A							
<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>▪ Central College Nottingham</li> <li>▪ Life Education Centre</li> <li>▪ New College Nottingham.</li> </ul>							

## Contextual information

Nottingham City Council receives funding from the Skills Funding Agency to deliver family learning across the city. It does this through subcontractors. Nottingham is a diverse city. Around a quarter of residents are from minority ethnic backgrounds, considerably higher than the national average. A higher proportion of adults have no formal qualifications compared to the rates nationally and for the East Midlands region. The proportion of pupils achieving five GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4, declined in 2014 and is below both the national and East Midlands region averages.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Malcolm Fraser HMI

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by the Family Learning 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; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions and assessments. 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 area 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:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012)

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