

Skills and Learning: Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole

Local authority

Inspection dates		15–19 June 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
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:

- it successfully recruits unemployed learners or those who have multiple barriers to learning on to courses which enhance their opportunities to gain employment
- learners develop very good social and personal skills, and develop their confidence and self-esteem
- all the staff provide a high level of care and support to learners to enable them to reach their full potential
- leaders and managers plan the curriculum very well to meet local employment needs and to suit the specific needs of learners
- a large majority of learners progress on to further courses, employment or voluntary work
- leaders and managers ensure the quality of teaching and learning is highly effective and improving.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- not enough learners are successful in achieving qualifications on courses that are nationally recognised, and the recording of learners' progress on other courses is not sufficiently rigorous
- not all tutors routinely ensure that learners develop English and mathematical skills in lessons
- tutors in different subject areas do not always share good practice, for example in using information and learning technology to best effect in their lessons.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Raise pass rates on courses leading to national qualifications by making sure that learners are on the most appropriate courses and that they receive excellent feedback to help them progress.
- Provide additional information and training to staff on how to include more opportunities for learners to develop their skills in English and mathematics.
- Identify the resources in information and learning technology best suited to the learners and train staff to use the resources effectively and to share good practice.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Skills and Learning: Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole (SLBDP) provides courses that lead to nationally recognised qualifications which account for just under half of its provision. The majority of its programmes are community learning courses for which learners receive certificates and accreditation. These courses are designed to enable learners to enter formal education or learning again after long periods away from formal learning. The service also provides a small number of apprenticeships in three subject areas.
- The proportion of learners who achieve their qualifications on nationally recognised programmes is around the national rates; nearly all learners on community learning programmes successfully complete their courses or are successful in achieving the aims of the courses and gaining an appropriate certificate. The majority of apprentices gain their qualifications within planned timescales.
- Learners who have experienced difficulties in their lives, for example through health problems or being out of education or training for long periods, make good progress; they achieve well on courses that successfully reintroduce them into education.
- Learners acquire greater awareness of how to manage their health and well-being and cope with the difficulties they face. This is a result of taking part in courses designed around their specific situations to help them overcome barriers to learning and training.
- The majority of learners on these courses develop their readiness for paid employment or voluntary work by improving their communication skills and other social skills such as networking; they enjoy and benefit from the thoughtful planning of the courses and sympathetic teaching and support of tutors.
- Learners improve their English skills by communicating their thoughts well when speaking and writing. This enables them, for example, to help their own children with homework or supporting partners in business.
- The proportion of learners achieving high grades A* to C in mathematics GCSE is higher than the national rates. However, not enough learners routinely improve their mathematics skills during their everyday sessions.
- Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities develop their understanding of numbers and calculating to help them in their day-to-day situations through sensitive guidance of tutors. For example, they work out calculating journey times, changes to schedules and bus and train timetables.
- Apprentices learn good customer service skills and how to handle sensitive information within data protection regulations. They understand the guidelines for respecting confidentiality and this helps them in their job role.

- The small numbers of learners on traineeship programmes have appropriate work placements and nearly all gain further training, education or employment.
- Managers and tutors are successful in helping learners on community learning programmes to progress on to appropriate next steps. These include learners taking higher level courses, moving into further or higher education or volunteering. Through their voluntary work and through taking part in projects to raise funds for worthy local causes, learners make a good contribution to the community.
- Learners from different groups, those with mental health or from Black and minority ethnic groups make good progress in line with their potential.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and lead to good outcomes for learners. The service engages well with people with multiple barriers to learning and complex lives which include mental health problems, learning difficulties, substance abuse, domestic violence and parents with children in care.
- Tutors are strongly motivated and ambitious for learners, focusing on their next steps and creating good employment opportunities. Tutors successfully promote volunteering as an effective way of developing confidence and a route into employment.
- Support for learners is good. Learning support assistants provide very effective continuity of support by working with the same groups throughout the year. A successful volunteer programme ensures that learners receive the support they may need for dyslexia, for physical difficulties or for extra support with information technology in job clubs. Learners appreciate the support they receive very much.
- Tutors have highly developed skills in judging the degree of challenge or support needed by each learner; tutors' good understanding and management of challenging behaviour caused by anxiety, and comprehensive planning for all learners with complex lives allow learners to overcome their difficulties and become able to learn.
- Tutors treat learners with respect, consult them frequently about how much support they need and design teaching activities and materials that meet individual interests; they use a good variety of activities to reassure new and anxious learners.
- Learners take part enthusiastically in classes and actively enjoy their learning, including in English and mathematics when they work on real life problems and calculations that affect their daily lives. Staff inspire many highly motivated learners to move on to higher level programmes and to start applying for jobs as a result of developing skills in English and mathematics.
- Tutors use sympathetic and effective ways of establishing learners' starting points, often using learners' own views of how confident they feel. Tutors use these to set clear learning targets in well-designed individual learning plans or personal development plans.
- Tutors provide regular and frequent monitoring of progress that helps learners understand their improvement step by step. Tutors make a variety of thorough checks of learning in lessons and give positive encouraging verbal feedback. Staff draw learners' attention to errors of spelling and grammar in their written work where learners are able to respond without becoming discouraged.
- Initial advice and guidance are very effective. The appointment of outreach guidance staff has radically improved the take up of course places, particularly by learners joining job clubs.
- Tutors of courses leading to qualifications are good at ensuring learners know about their next steps. However, learners on non-certificated programmes do not get enough on-going guidance in class and at the end of their courses to decide about other courses or activities on to which they could progress.

- Not all tutors routinely teach learners how to improve their English and mathematics or introduce them to enough information technology.
- The recording of learners' achievements on programmes that do not lead to national qualifications requires improvement. Recording does not adequately show progress learners make in confidence, communication, volunteering or community activity, or the steps they make towards better attendance, time keeping and organisation.
- Not enough tutors have sufficient confidence or expertise in integrating topics relating to equality and an understanding of the effects of discrimination into their teaching.

Health and social care

Good

19+ learning programmes

Teaching, learning and assessment in health and social care are good because:

- the majority of learners gain their qualifications
- learners develop their confidence and self-esteem and acquire good skills in counselling, health and social care; this helps them in their support work in schools
- tutors and support workers are skilled in supporting a wide range of the needs of learners so they make good progress according to their starting points; for example, a significant number of learners progress from foundation to advanced level courses and into employment
- tutors develop learners' knowledge and skills using a range of activities such as group and paired work, handouts and word games that maintain their interest and motivation, resulting in learners making good progress towards their learning goals
- tutors use technology well to improve learning inside and outside the classroom; apprentices use electronic portfolios effectively and on-line learning programmes enable learners to study for qualifications at times that are convenient to them
- tutors track and monitor learners' progress well using a range of tools to suit different courses; as a result, learners know how well they are doing and their good progress
- learners have a good knowledge of safeguarding in relation to themselves and children and vulnerable adults in their care, including how to stay safe on the internet
- tutors give good feedback to learners which helps them develop their subject expertise and skills required to function effectively in employment, including their confidence and self-esteem; tutors thoroughly check learning in the majority of lessons so learners make good progress
- tutors have integrated English and mathematics well into their lessons; they assess work carefully and check accuracy, spelling and grammar so that learners improve their skills and apply work to their work
- information, advice and guidance are good, which helps learners make realistic career choices; progression to higher levels, including access to higher education and voluntary and paid employment, is high
- the promotion of equality and diversity is good; teaching materials reflect diversity and learners apply their knowledge to their work with children and vulnerable adults.

Teaching, learning and assessment in health and social care are not yet outstanding because:

- tutors do not record learners' additional studies when learners are unable to attend their lessons
- tutors do not provide extra activities or exercises that enable learners to develop their knowledge more deeply and increase their learning.

Hairdressing and beauty therapy

19+ learning programmes

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in hairdressing and beauty therapy are good because:

- the majority of learners successfully achieve their qualifications; they develop good practical skills, such as blow drying, make up and waxing, that meet industry standards
- during the current year, more learners have completed their course than in previous years because they have received good additional learning support
- learners benefit from high levels of support and care from tutors who understand their diverse and sometimes complex individual circumstances that act as barriers to learning
- learners' motivation is underpinned by tutors' high expectations of them achieving good practical skills; tutors enable learners to extend their knowledge within both hairdressing and beauty therapy
- tutors' planning for learning is good and, as a result, the large majority of lessons they teach are effective; therefore, learners develop good practical skills in both hairdressing and beauty therapy, such as colour and customer service
- tutors assess learners well and provide good support using detailed oral feedback on the use of industry related practice; for example, students on level 2 hairdressing confidently undertake colour correction that enables them to undertake more advanced skills
- tutors prepare learners well for work experience and provide effective advice and guidance; learners understand the importance of finding the correct salons and gaining high quality work experience to increase assessment opportunities that enable them to progress to employment.

Teaching, learning and assessment hairdressing and beauty therapy are not yet outstanding because:

- tutors do not always adequately use assessment of learners' starting points effectively to ensure that each learner is able to make the full progress of which they are capable; this results in a lack of pace for high achieving students and less capable students receiving insufficient support
- written assessment feedback for learners' practical skills is predominantly a description of activities; feedback does not always provide clear guidance on ways to improve and progress to higher thinking skills
- tutors do not yet adequately teach mathematics and English in lessons to develop students' technical vocabulary or functional numeracy.

Foundation English and mathematics

19+ learning programmes 16-19 study programmes

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in foundation English and mathematics are good because:

- success rates are improving for functional skills and GCSE English and mathematics, and learners develop high levels of confidence and self-esteem that enable good progression rates to higher levels of courses or to employment
- learners receive good care and support from tutors who have detailed knowledge of their learners, including potential barriers and difficulties to overcome

- tutors monitor learners' progress effectively as a result of regular tutorials, progress reviews, good target setting and individual support; tutors are very helpful and tackle the individual needs of learners well
- learners develop good English skills in lessons, such as spelling, punctuation, reading and writing; in addition, they acquire good speaking and listening skills that develop their self-confidence
- in mathematics lessons, learners readily perform a range of challenging tasks that includes estimating and calculating measurements, calculating fractions, percentages, proportions and discounts
- tutors have high expectations of learners and, as a result, learners produce high standards of work and they make good progress in lessons and in relation to their starting points
- learners improve further through helpful feedback from tutors on marked work and encouraging, positive feedback in lessons; tutors routinely correct spellings and learners use personal spelling tools to learn new words
- in the majority of lessons, learners use relevant materials that engage them in productive activities to develop their English and mathematical skills; for example, learners calculate proportions for recipes, whilst others calculate sales discounts for a department store
- careful planning to meet the individual needs of learners ensures high levels of learners' motivation and achievement in lessons; learners without previous qualifications are motivated to succeed and make good progress.

Teaching, learning and assessment in foundation English and mathematics are not yet outstanding because:

- independent learning and learners' progress are sometimes limited by over reliance on learning support assistants; in some cases, learning support assistants give learners the answers to exercises before they have finished working on them
- learning materials are not always set in real life experiences and this limits connections learners could make to their daily lives and current or future employment.

Community learning

19+ learning programmes

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in community learning are good because:

- outcomes for learners are good; learners make good progress in the essential skills for work and social engagement, including confidence, social skills, self-organisation, time management and communication skills
- links with Jobcentre Plus are very good and Jobcentre Plus managers are confident that learners make good progress on SLBDP programmes; in one extremely successful, well-attended job club in an area of very high deprivation, learners achieve good outcomes in terms of jobs, volunteering and community involvement
- tutors are strongly motivated and ambitious for learners, focusing on their next steps and creating good employment opportunities; tutors successfully promote volunteering as an effective way of developing confidence and a route into employment; on one project for young parents, most participants gained exciting work in performing arts
- tutors have highly developed skills in judging the degree of challenge or support needed by each learner; tutors' good understanding and management of mental health conditions allow learners to overcome their anxiety and become able to learn
- learners take part enthusiastically in classes; they do this on parenting courses by sharing strategies for the management of children's behaviour and their own stress; in art by their

willingness to experiment with new techniques and exhibit their work; in writing classes by asking questions and talking about their own experiences of writing

- learners receive frequent positive and constructive verbal feedback on their work and how to improve, although staff are not as confident in providing written feedback.

Teaching, learning and assessment in community learning are not yet outstanding because:

- tutors do not all ensure that learners know about other courses or voluntary work that they could do next to continue their learning and development
- the recording of learners' achievements is too variable; records do not always show adequately learners' progress in confidence, communication, volunteering or community activity
- staffing levels in job clubs are too low for the level of need following a recent take-up of these courses.

The effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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- Leadership and management are good. The board of governors includes representatives from each authority, has very clear terms of reference and members have explicit responsibilities to widen participation in learning. The business plan outlines a clear vision which the board and senior managers promote well to staff.
- The board has an excellent oversight of the service and insight into the provision; it is fully informed about decisions relating to the operational management. The senior managers present the board with extensive performance data at the quarterly meeting and these enable the board to decide effective strategies to develop the provision. The merger with the Dorset authority was very effective and well managed.
- Quality improvement activities are very effective. Managers have improved the quality of teaching and learning as a result of effective observations. Mentors provide good support for all tutors to improve their teaching, learning and assessment. Tutors take advantage of an extensive range of opportunities for continuing professional development internally and tutors improve their practice and achieve teaching qualifications externally.
- The self-assessment process and quality improvement plan are very thorough and lead to improvements; managers use the views of all staff, learners, employers, partners and subcontractors well to inform their evaluations. The self-assessment report is clear, concise and accurately reflects the service. Staff use data well to monitor progress made against the quality improvement plan.
- Senior staff manage the subcontracted provision very effectively. At their regular meetings they focus on performance and progress of learners and overall quality of the provision. They check the quality of all the documentation to make sure that appropriate targets are set, monitored and that feedback to learners is adequate. They observe teaching and learning in the subcontracted provision. Subcontractors' staff participate fully in the continuing professional development programmes offered by SLBDP.
- Partnership working is excellent. Three authorities work harmoniously together to provide what is seen to be a seamless skills and learning service. SLBDP has very close and effective working links with Jobcentre Plus and many other local organisations, for example the Equilibrium project which provides vocational training for learners who cannot access colleges because they live in very remote parts of Dorset.
- Managers have researched the community effectively and know the area well. They have designed the curriculum to provide learners with suitable vocational skills and the personal, social and employability skills to enable them to progress into employment, particularly meeting

local business needs. The design of courses is flexible to enable tutors to research and cater for the individual needs of learners.

- Managers do not monitor sufficiently how well tutors improve learners' English, mathematics and functional skills across the curriculum.
- Leaders and managers promote understanding of equality and diversity effectively. As a result, they widen participation and engage hard-to-reach learners. For example, the proportion of learners who are unemployed, of Black and minority ethnic heritage, or with multiple barriers to learning far exceeds the proportion in the community. All tutors receive excellent and regular training on how to incorporate equality and diversity topics into their teaching.
- Safeguarding is good. A senior member of staff manages the four designated safeguarding officers well and all have received appropriate training. All staff have received training which is refreshed every two years. All staff have received training in how to deal with possible cases of extremism and radicalisation.
- The safeguarding officers investigate each potential safeguarding issue thoroughly and deal with actual safeguarding incidents appropriately which they record in detail. All learners have a good understanding of safeguarding and staff provide them with extensive information about the various support agencies which can help them.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Skills and Learning: Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole

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	-	-	-
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
Health and social care	2
Hairdressing and beauty therapy	2
Foundation English and mathematics	2
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	8,600							
Principal/CEO	Ms Lesley Spain							
Date of previous inspection	March 2012							
Website address	www.skillsandlearningbdp.co.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+
	9	764	1	602	-	48	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	6	6	2	10	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	9		2		-			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	-							
Part-time	-							
Number of community learners	542							
Number of employability learners	223							
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"> ■ Abilities Limited ■ Bournemouth Churches Housing Association ■ The Magdalen Environmental Trust ■ Equilibrium CIC ■ Bridport Enterprise Supporting Training ■ The Training and Learning Company ■ Aster Group limited ■ Essential Drug and Alcohol Services ■ Leaf Academy ■ South West Regional Assessment Centre 							

Contextual information

Skills and Learning, Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole delivers its adult and community learning provision through seven centres across Dorset and also through a variety of subcontractors. The three authorities have been inspected previously, but this is the first time that they have been inspected all together. The county of Dorset, which includes the unitary authorities of Bournemouth and Poole, is a relatively prosperous county with nearly twice the national average of residents with significantly above average incomes. It has a number of areas of deprivation. Unemployment varies across the county, but is broadly the same as for the South West as a whole at around 5%. Around 8% of the population in the area are of Black and other minority ethnic heritage. The proportion of residents above statutory retirement age is significantly above the national average.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Charles Clark HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the Curriculum Quality and Business Development 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. 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:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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