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Ms Rebecca Jones
East Sussex County Council Adult Education and Family Learning
Hailsham East Children's Centre
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Dear Ms Jones

Short inspection of East Sussex County Council Adult Education and Family Learning

Following the short inspection on 17 May 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the provision was judged to be good in June 2010.

This provider continues to be good.

Since the previous inspection, you have continued to focus on high-quality community and family learning to meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in the community. You continue to provide a good range of activities and training that purposefully supports individuals and young families and raises the expectations and aspirations of the people in the communities you serve.

You have focused on the critical areas for development identified in the previous inspection report, taking effective action to bring about improvement. You have maintained suitable awareness of the national priorities for safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty to ensure that your learners and staff are informed and aware of these developments.

You and your team continue to provide your partner organisations with training for their tutors which is highly valued by them. You have made good progress in maintaining the high standards of the provision found at the previous inspection. Appropriate, robust performance management, together with frequent meetings with tutors, have ensured that you have maintained the quality of teaching and learning to help your learners to progress and manage their lives more effectively.

Managers and tutors know the learners well and provide purposeful individual pastoral support. Your tutors clearly understand their learners' needs and are able to inspire them to learn and better support their families, raising their life chances and their career expectations.

Safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding arrangements introduced by the county council and further refined by children's services ensure that your safeguarding activities continue to be effective. Appropriate actions are taken to safeguard learners during training, providing them with the security to relax and confidently enjoy their learning.

You, your designated safeguarding officers, centre managers and tutors have received appropriate training in safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. Tutors are aware of the potential dangers and influences that affect learners' communities, including from those with radical or extremist views. Learners trust their tutors and are confident to share their concerns. They understand that bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour are not tolerated or acceptable in the training or work environment.

Managers and staff promote the importance of personal safety, safe working practices, family well-being and personal health well, enabling learners to understand and better manage the problems they encounter in their everyday lives. During our visit, learners spoke in detail about the support and helpful interventions provided to them.

You have implemented your obligations under the 'Prevent' duty well through the policies and procedures of the county council. Tutors and other staff in contact with learners have all received appropriate training. Tutors are able to support learners who have concerns and know how to report these concerns. Learners understand the risks of radicalisation and how to keep themselves and others safe from the dangers of extremism.

Inspection findings

- You and the county council's senior leaders have high expectations of the subcontractor partners who deliver training to your learners, many of whom are very vulnerable. Actions to promote improvement are swiftly identified and acted upon.
- Your subcontractor providers produce timely attendance and achievement reports for the programmes they run; these enable you to monitor their performance and that of the learners on programme. The vast majority of learners successfully complete their learning programmes, and you understand the reasons why some do not. Learners are very positive about the training they receive. They identify how their initial courses and the support you provide have helped them to become more confident individuals, complete further training and, in a significant number of cases, progress into employment. However, you do not collate information about learners' destinations into work or further training to inform the development of new programmes.
- The small proportion of learners who participate in functional skills English and mathematics courses do very well, with all successfully achieving their qualifications.

- East Sussex County Council provides the strategic direction for the provision that is directed towards vulnerable families in the most deprived areas of the county to help them lead more manageable lives and to gain sustainable employment. Close working with subcontractors and health and family support agencies has enabled you to establish training programmes that meet the needs of individuals in their communities well. Parents and carers are supported with courses in first aid, parental behaviour, and child well-being. Specialist courses in subjects such as living with a child with autism enable parents and carers to improve their understanding of the condition. Many learners improve their economic well-being, progressing from courses to help them support their child at school onto employability courses, volunteering and into employment.
- Tutors work hard to encourage learners to effectively identify and record their starting points at the beginning of a course and then to further identify the skills and attributes they have acquired as they progress through training. A simple but effective individual learning plan provides a good record for learners to agree their personal learning targets alongside the more generalised group targets. However, a minority of tutors do not help learners make these targets sufficiently specific or measurable.
- Tutors benefit from detailed reports, produced by you and their providers, on the quality of their training. The reports record a multitude of information about the venue and the course itself and identify effective teaching, providing some useful actions for improvement. However, reports do not contain sufficient information about the learning taking place and what learners are able to do.
- Your quality improvement processes are effective and take appropriate account of the views of learners and subcontractor providers. Your self-assessment report lacks sufficient focus on, and evaluation of, the strengths and areas for improvement of your provision.
- Tutors and staff in the training centres have received appropriate training on the 'Prevent' duty. Most tutors positively manage concerns and problems identified by learners, but are not all sufficiently confident to discuss incidents that appear in the media with learners to stimulate and interest them.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- managers improve data collation about learners' destinations to provide accurate information about the impact of the learning programmes to drive further improvement
- continue to support all tutors to give them the confidence to:
 - provide detailed discussions and challenge to learners on the wider aspects of the 'Prevent' duty
 - further support learners to set their own meaningful and measurable learning targets

- work to refine the self-assessment process to ensure that the self-assessment report provides a concise analysis of strengths and areas for improvement across the provision.

I am copying this letter to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Martin Hughes
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

One of Her Majesty's Inspectors, plus one Ofsted inspector, visited East Sussex County Council Adult Education and Family Learning for one day. The family learning manager, as nominee, assisted inspectors. We met with the manager and line managers, tutors, a range of current and previous learners and a manager of your subcontracted provision. We also spoke on the telephone to tutors, the head of service, subcontractors and learners. Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment, and reviewed learners' work. We reviewed key policies and documentation, including those relating to self-assessment, safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, performance, learner achievement and progression.