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Mrs Katie Easey
Chief Executive Officer
Community Learning in Partnership (CLIP) CIC
8 Queen Street
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Dear Mrs Easey

Short inspection of Community Learning in Partnership (CLIP) CIC

Following the short inspection on 4 October 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 provider was judged to be good in February 2014.

This provider continues to be good.

You, senior leaders and teaching staff continue to make a significant contribution to good education and training within Lincolnshire. Noteworthy in this regard is the successful introduction of an employability programme for 18–24-year-olds not in education, employment, or training. This programme has addressed an identified need and further extended the geographical area and learner groups you are able to serve. Developments in the 'all age' programme offer clear progression opportunities for learners that encourage them to achieve further.

Partnership working is good. It has contributed well to the provision's success. Good development of external links, including with employers, has resulted in a high proportion of study programme learners participating in work-related activity.

Leaders and managers demonstrate a good capacity to improve the provision further. You and senior managers know the provision well and have an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The large majority of areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been effectively resolved.

Leaders and managers ensure that learners make good progress and attain an appropriately high standard. Teachers establish and maintain a learning environment that prioritises mutual respect and tolerance. Learners' behaviour is good. This contributes to the development of skills that improve their chances of gaining employment.

The supportive board of directors has effectively implemented performance management arrangements to improve the quality of learning. However, you acknowledge that the evaluation of standards in taught sessions needs reviewing, so that it more quickly identifies and addresses weaker practice. Target setting for learners has improved since the last inspection but teachers require more guidance to ensure that this is consistently effective.

Safeguarding is effective.

Senior leaders and managers continue to give learners' welfare a high priority. Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and support a caring culture that protects all learners and staff. Relevant and regularly reviewed policies are in place and safe recruitment practices are followed. Venues used for learning sessions are appropriately risk assessed and health and safety control measures implemented where required.

The designated safeguarding officer takes appropriate action where staff or learners raise concerns. Managers use their good external links to refer learners for specialist support. Learners know how to raise any concerns they have about their safety; they are confident teachers and managers will deal with these quickly and effectively.

All staff receive suitable safeguarding and 'Prevent' update training. Managers appropriately reinforce staff's understanding of these and related topics at regular meetings. Teachers effectively improve learners' appreciation of how fundamental British values apply to their lives. Consequently, learners become well aware of the dangers posed by radicalisation and extremism. Learners gain a good understanding of safe working when using internet-based media. Relevant monitoring and controls against inappropriate computer use are in place.

Inspection findings

- The board of directors provide a good standard of governance to monitor, challenge and improve managers' and teachers' performance. Consequently, the quality of the learners' experience continues to improve. Directors work well together to identify and evaluate how they can improve learners' development. For example, they recently investigated and reviewed how effectively teachers promote British values on study programmes. This has allowed directors to identify good practice that they can extend to other programmes.
- Directors recognise the need to strengthen succession planning. They have successfully introduced a new chief executive role to help deliver the organisation's mission and raise standards. Currently, directors are carrying out work to develop middle managers' roles and strengthen the provision's capacity to meet changes. The identified short-, medium- and long-term management development objectives align well to wider strategic goal achievement.
- Directors actively improve the effectiveness of governance arrangements. For example, they are piloting the use of data sets to give the board more pertinent

and relevant information to inform incisive scrutiny. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this improvement initiative.

- The board's membership provides for independent scrutiny. However, directors have identified that the appointment of additional external specialists would further strengthen impartial governance.
- Through effective performance management, you have successfully addressed the low overall achievement rates noted in 2015/16. In the most recent complete year, learners' achievement of the main qualification for the study programme is high. Learners now achieve their English and mathematics at an appropriately high rate and at the first examination sitting. A good proportion of learners move to employment, training or further study on completing their programme.
- Learners on study programmes attending the Mablethorpe centre are not achieving or progressing to their next career option as well as at other centres. You have introduced an improvement strategy to address this performance shortfall. However, it is too early to make a judgement on its success in raising standards.
- Adult learners participating in access to higher education programmes are achieving well. Progression to higher education is high. A minority of learners in the most recent cohort did not complete the programme or failed to move to their planned outcome due to reasons beyond your control.
- Recruitment and current achievement for adults attending the Career Net programme reflects the contract requirements. This programme is relatively new. As a result, during our visit, a full appraisal of how well it is delivering learner's outcomes was limited.
- Attendance on access to higher education programmes courses is good. Overall attendance for study programmes has improved significantly since the previous inspection. However, the rate requires further improvement. Managers recognise that not all learners recognise the importance of attending regularly to enhance their employability. The monitoring of attendance in subcontracted provision requires improvement so managers have accurate data to assess current session usage.
- Different groups of learners achieve at a similar rate. Managers monitor the success of different groups of learners effectively. For example, they are able to provide accurate evidence of how effectively learners in care, eligible for free school meals or learning English as an additional language are succeeding.
- The self-assessment process is well established. It provides a good overview of how the provision has developed over time. A minority of the associated report's text is overly descriptive and is not sufficiently critically evaluative. For example, the commentary on the Career Net programme does not give adequate weight to all areas for improvement. As you have identified, the self-assessment process does not fully use learners and employers' views to inform judgements. You are about to introduce a learner engagement strategy that is planned to provide learner feedback for evaluative purposes.
- The improvement action plan includes a wide range of pertinent and challenging objectives to raise standards across the provision. Seniors managers review the

plan very effectively to ensure that programme quality improves for all learners. However, managers rely too much on assessing learners' progress at the end, rather than during their programme. This delays managers' implementation of intermediary actions that could quicken completion of the primary objectives.

- Teachers have maintained the good teaching identified at the last inspection. They use their experience and professional expertise to develop learners' English and mathematics skills well. They successfully plan relevant activities that break down barriers to learning and re-engage learners. For example, on study programmes, learners enthusiastically participate in class activities that effectively develop their mathematics skills in dealing with money and percentages.
- Teachers successfully reinforce learners' use of correct spelling and grammar. Learners on adult programmes value the opportunity to enhance the skills essential to effective higher education course application and participation. Teachers develop learners' independent study skills well.
- Teachers plan activities that motivate learners to explore topics and deepen their understanding. They encourage learners to take risks, build confidence and ask questions to improve their knowledge and understanding. Learners enjoy learning and are inspired to learn further.
- Teachers use effective and probing questioning that encourages learners to reflect and extend their understanding. This ensures that they increase their knowledge further and swiftly build their skills. Teachers positively reinforce learners' achievements in class sessions. They give comprehensive verbal feedback to help learners improve. Learners can clearly identify the progress they are making.
- Teachers embed the promotion of British values effectively into taught sessions. For example, teachers supported adult learners to achieve a good understanding of the topic by participating in a discussion of different job roles. By debating the work of teachers and healthcare professionals, learners very effectively extended their skills in dealing with individuals without prejudice.
- Teachers set adult learners good, long-term targets related to their academic goals. These targets include milestone objectives that build learners' confidence as they make swift progress in manageable steps. However, across the provision, teachers do not consistently provide learners with challenging, skills-based targets in order to extend their individual learning fully. Too often, teachers set targets that lack detail, or only address assessment requirements. In a minority of lessons, all learners do the same activity regardless of their starting point. As a result, they do not always make the progress they are capable of, particularly if they are more able.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- managers rigorously implement the Mablethorpe centre improvement strategy so that qualification achievement rates rapidly improve to a high level

- arrangements are introduced to improve session attendance so managers can be assured that a consistently high proportion of learners on subcontracted provision participate in their scheduled lessons
- taught sessions are rigorously assessed and evaluated so that weaknesses are identified and standards swiftly improve
- the self-assessment process makes full use of feedback from learners and employers to formulate critically evaluative judgements. The improvement action plan should include clear milestone targets to aid monitoring so that primary objectives are quickly achieved
- all teachers set and monitor challenging and detailed targets to promote all aspects of learners' development, so they attain to their full potential.

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

Yours sincerely

Nigel Bragg
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, you assisted us as nominee. We met with managers and teachers, and used individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners. These views are reflected within this letter. We reviewed learners' assessed work. We evaluated the effectiveness of key documents, including those relating to risk assessment, lesson planning, quality assurance, performance monitoring and safeguarding. Inspectors took account of your organisation's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report.