

Wiltshire Council

Local authority

Inspection dates

5–7 December 2017

Overall effectiveness		Requires improvement	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement	Adult learning programmes	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good		
Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Inadequate	

Summary of key findings

This is a provider that requires improvement

- Not all learners receive accurate information and advice before starting their courses to enable them to consider and plan their longer term goals.
- When learners are assessed at the start of their courses, those who have been out of learning for a long time and others with low literacy skills find the amount of information they are presented with confusing.
- Managers do not routinely take sufficient account of the impact teaching has on the development of learners' skills and their next steps when evaluating the quality and effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Tutors do not consistently pay enough attention to learners' individual starting points when teaching, and assessing learners' progress.

The provider has the following strengths

- Managers have made good progress in carrying out the recommendations from the previous inspection; consequently, the service has the capacity to improve further.
- A well-designed curriculum engages well learners who are disadvantaged and those with low confidence and few qualifications. They improve their English and mathematical skills and gain functional skills qualifications in these subjects.
- Learners benefit from good resources for learning and are supported well by the team of committed and well-qualified tutors.
- Learners acquire confidence and the desire to learn quickly and gain qualifications. They improve their parenting and interpersonal skills and many embark on courses that benefit them and their families.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Wiltshire Council is a single unitary authority formed in 2009. The county is predominantly rural with a population of around 486,000. Educational provision consists of primary, comprehensive and grammar schools, some of which are academies. It has one large general further education college offering higher education courses, but there is no university. The proportion of pupils aged 16 achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C is above the national average.
- Where pockets of deprivation exist in rural areas, people are dispersed. Approximately 40% of the population live in communities of fewer than 5,000 people. Access to services is a major factor in the quality of life in rural communities where a lack of public transport is often a cause of social exclusion. All learning sessions therefore take place in the community and children's centres.
- Wiltshire Council's family learning team's vision is to support a targeted family learning programme. This aims to engage parents and carers of different ages and backgrounds to gain new skills and give them the opportunity to gain English and mathematics qualifications. The service aims to help people reconnect with learning, support their children better and prepare them for progression to further learning, employment or volunteering.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Tutors should ensure that the advice and guidance they give to learners before they start their courses take account of their circumstances and that learners fully understand the information given to them. The discussion should include longer term goals to raise learners' aspirations.
- Tutors should structure teaching and feedback carefully to take full account of learners' starting points, gaps in their knowledge and subsequent progress.
- Managers should assess what learners have learned, and how well, when reviewing the quality of lessons. They should analyse information more systematically on what learners do when they have completed their courses to evaluate how effective these courses are in helping learners to gain the skills they need to improve themselves.
- Managers and tutors should review how potential learners are assessed when they start their courses. They should ensure that the plans for their learning are clear to learners and take appropriate account of the English and mathematics skill needs of learners on courses not leading to nationally accredited qualifications.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The relatively new manager and team of tutors have made good progress in carrying out the recommendations made at the inspection in October 2016. They have put in place appropriate measures to remedy weaknesses but the impact of these is not yet fully evident. As a result, the service has improved and now requires further improvement to be good.
- Since the previous inspection, the family learning team has become part of the school effectiveness service. This arrangement has led to greater support for the service and recognition of its importance in helping the county council to achieve its priority of helping vulnerable and disadvantaged people into learning.
- The team has continued to develop productive partnerships with children's centres, schools and community groups that enable the family learning team to engage families in learning that will benefit them. Tutors work energetically with partners to help them play a fuller part in recruiting the right learners. However, they have not yet been able to increase the number of target groups of learners in line with the service's plans.
- Managers have developed a new curriculum that neatly complements the county council's strategy to engage families and disadvantaged people in education. The curriculum provides suitable opportunities and routes for learners to achieve qualifications and progress to the next stage of learning. Currently, however, not enough learners participate.
- Tutors take part in regular and effective professional development that arises from reviews of their performance. For example, tutors improve their expertise in teaching mathematics in line with the service's priority to enable parents to help their children improve their numeracy skills. The feedback that tutors receive when they are observed while teaching is constructive and helps them to improve their practice.
- Managers currently do not pay enough attention to how much progress learners make in their courses when evaluating teaching and learning. The programme with a partner provider to develop the skills of staff to assess accurately and to improve the quality of teaching and learning is yet to have impact.
- Managers now involve all members of the team well in assessing the effectiveness of the service. They have identified areas for improvement clearly and now monitor progress in making these improvements routinely through the quality improvement plan. They have not yet evaluated how effectively they have been in carrying out the plans.
- Actions to use learners' views to make improvements and ensure that partners are more positive and assertive in promoting the courses to parents are not yet fully effective.
- The quality of information and advice to learners before they start their courses is too variable. The guidance some learners receive does not take account of their individual circumstances and does not encourage them to think about longer term goals and raise their aspirations.
- Managers do not analyse information on learners' next steps when they complete their courses. Therefore, they are not able to evaluate how effective their courses are in

helping learners to gain the skills they need to improve themselves.

The governance of the provider

- A new and appropriate structure of governance is now in place. New governors with suitable skills and expertise have been appointed. They now regularly receive and scrutinise information on how the family learning team is performing. However, they are still developing their understanding of how to provide effective support and challenge to the managers of the team.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers carry out relevant checks on the suitability of staff to work with vulnerable adults when they are recruited. They make sure that staff receive appropriate updating on safeguarding priorities such as the 'Prevent' duty so that they understand how to deal with issues of extremist behaviour.
- Incidents of bullying and harassment are very rare and the designated manager for safeguarding investigates and records these appropriately.
- Staff pay close attention to following health and safety measures, including suitable risk assessment of the classrooms in community venues where they work.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Tutors are well qualified and pay careful attention to ensuring that they have good materials and resources for learners in the different venues. They carefully prepare appropriate activities that successfully engage learners, such as using lively story materials.
- Learners enjoy and learn from the insightful tips from tutors to help them improve their English, such as making up unusual and memorable sentences to improve their spelling of difficult words. Helpful coaching by tutors results in learners participating actively and productively in small classes. In this atmosphere, learners feel relaxed and comfortable to ask questions that improve their understanding and confidence.
- Since the last inspection, tutors have improved how they promote learners' understanding of life in modern Britain. They use current news items for discussion and as the basis for providing relevant reading and writing exercises. Learners learn about British values through induction; tutors reinforce this by explaining how expected classroom behaviours are aligned to respect, tolerance and the importance of regulations and the law.
- Learners receive clear and encouraging feedback from tutors which increases their motivation to learn. Tutors praise learners appropriately. They set appropriate homework tasks for learners that help them to consolidate what they learn in class.
- Tutors do not consistently give enough guidance on the specific next steps learners need to work on; they are often too hesitant in challenging learners to progress further in case they discourage them. Therefore, learners are often unable to fulfil the high expectations tutors have for them. Tutors do not provide sufficiently challenging activities for the most

able learners.

- Tutors carefully involve most learners in the process of assessing and recording their starting points when they begin their courses. However, the quality and volume of the assessments vary too greatly to be used effectively to plan and provide learning that closely matches learners' needs and ensures that they progress well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners quickly gain confidence and new skills as a result of the help they receive. Many learners enjoy the short courses that stimulate their desire to continue learning and to gain qualifications.
- Parents quickly acquire knowledge and understanding about how to help their children at school. They improve their English and mathematical skills through attending courses designed to help them keep up with the latest developments in schools.
- Learners gain practical skills in storytelling, spelling and working constructively with children. They practise and improve these skills working alongside others, and learn from tutors' sensitive corrections of their mistakes.
- Learners develop a good rapport with tutors and gain confidence in sharing ideas and problems with other learners. As a result, they improve their parenting and social skills, and their ability to support their children.
- Learners feel safe and are confident about tutors' attentiveness and awareness of their circumstances. Learners know how to report concerns and feel able to confide in their tutors if they have a problem. They are aware of online risks through tutors' reinforcement of these issues at induction and in lessons.
- Learners are highly respectful of each other and behave and participate well in classes; they support one another outside class and learn from each other through sharing their experiences.
- Learners adopt good behaviours and attitudes that prepare them well for employment. For example, if unable to attend, they make contact to ensure that they can catch up.
- The information and advice that learners receive before they start their courses are helpful to them. However, the guidance does not link to possible employment or career plans. This results in learners not being sufficiently aware of their potential longer term options. For example, a learner seeking a career change did not know how to go about finding this information.

Outcomes for learners

Requires improvement

- Most learners on mathematics and English functional skills courses gain their qualifications at the first attempt.
- The majority of learners on short courses not leading to nationally accredited qualifications complete these courses successfully. Many learners have no or few qualifications and achieving certificates is extremely motivating for them.
- Learners on personal development and introductory courses improve their numeracy and

literacy skills and knowledge. However, they are not always sufficiently aware of how much progress they make and this lack of awareness holds them back when they are considering their next steps.

- Learners attend regularly and are encouraged to be punctual by tutors' persistence in following up absences.
- Although the short courses in the new curriculum guide learners well onto the next level of learning, not enough learners currently progress to higher levels of learning.

Provider details

Unique reference number	50245
Type of provider	Local authority
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	450
Principal/CEO	David Clarke, head of school effectiveness
Telephone number	01225 713264
Website	www.wiltshire.gov.uk/family-learning

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	0	94	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	0		0		0			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	0							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	0							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors	None							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the family learning manager, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and telephone calls to gather the views of learners and partners; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Peter Green, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Margaret Garai	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Brownbill	Ofsted Inspector

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