

Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Community learning and skills

Inspection dates

30 January – 2 February 2018

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

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Learners' achievements on courses leading to qualifications are high. Most learners on non-accredited programmes achieve their personal development goals.
- A high proportion of learners progress to higher levels of study, work-related activities or employment on completion of their programme.
- Leaders and managers rigorously monitor the performance of staff; this has resulted in improved quality and outcomes for learners.
- Leaders have strengthened the management of subcontractors. As a result, a high proportion of learners on courses delivered by subcontractors make good progress.
- The quality of initial advice and careers guidance is good. Learners develop clear and realistic plans for their future.
- Staff provide strong pastoral and academic support so that learners who are often isolated and disadvantaged can engage in education. However, a small proportion of teachers do not deploy support staff well enough in lessons.
- Leaders and staff promote a culture of inclusivity and harmony for learners.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills and grow in confidence.
- Learners have a good understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices and to improve their well-being.
- Teachers are skilled in planning and delivering high-quality and interesting learning activities.
- A small proportion of teachers do not prepare learners sufficiently well for the demands of GCSE mathematics examinations.
- A small proportion of teachers do not set sufficiently clear or helpful long-term goals to enable learners to develop the work-related skills that they need to achieve their aspirations.
- Learners do not have a sufficient understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Elected members and leaders do not have a sufficiently clear strategy relating to purpose of the non-accredited programme and, in particular, how all non-accredited courses contribute to the priorities of the council.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council is located in West Yorkshire. Its adult learning provision is delivered through the adult and community learning service, Calderdale Adult Learning (CAL), which provides courses for around 3,800 adults per year. Courses include information and communication technology (ICT), leisure, arts, media and publishing, languages, preparation for life and work including literacy and numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and provision for a significant number of adults who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. CAL also offers family learning in partnership with a large number of schools in the borough.
- CAL delivers learning in some of the most deprived communities in the borough in partnership with six subcontractors. Programmes are provided at a dedicated centre in Halifax and in a wide range of community venues across the borough.
- Calderdale is ranked as the 141st most educationally deprived local authority district. The unemployment rate in Calderdale is 6.4% compared with 4.3% nationally.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that learners' long-term goals help them to develop the work-related skills that they need to achieve their aspirations.
- Improve the development of learners' mathematics skills so that a greater proportion of learners achieve their qualification.
- Deploy support staff more effectively in lessons to ensure that learners have sufficient time to practise their practical and communication skills.
- Take action to improve learners' understanding of the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Establish clear links between the purpose of non-accredited programmes and the council's key priorities, and ensure that all non-accredited programmes improve skills that learners need to enhance their personal, social and work-related skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, managers and staff have improved the quality of provision since the last inspection. They have tackled successfully most of the areas for improvement that were identified. They have raised expectations and aspirations for learners, particularly in the communities that they target in Halifax.
- Leaders and managers have strong links with subcontractors, local enterprise partners, agencies and voluntary organisations. These links enable CAL to provide a responsive curriculum that meets local and regional skills priorities and the needs of the most isolated and disadvantaged communities.
- Leaders have completed an effective review of the curriculum in order to ensure that they target their priority communities and groups. The range of programmes supports learners to overcome barriers to having successful adult lives. For example, learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who have been out of work for a long period of time, attend programmes that focus on developing their independence, social and employment skills. Learners develop greater independent living skills; they are more confident in engaging with staff from the local authority and Jobcentre Plus, and are better prepared to return to work.
- Leaders and managers plan and monitor improvement actions effectively. Self-assessment is largely accurate and highly self-critical. Leaders and managers analyse information from a wide range of sources and identify accurately the strengths of the provision and the aspects that require further improvement. Following self-assessment, they produce a helpful improvement plan that they use well to ensure continuing improvement and higher standards.
- Elected members and leaders have strengthened quality assurance arrangements, which are now good. Managers now collect and use accurate data on the performance of different aspects of the service, including the performance of subcontractors. They monitor performance against challenging targets closely and take swift action to address any areas of underperformance. This contributes to ensuring that the proportion of learners who remain on their programme and achieve their personal targets and qualifications is high. A high proportion of learners who are on programmes delivered by subcontractors make good progress in developing the skills that they need to meet their individual needs and aspirations.
- Leaders and managers make very good use of a rigorous performance management system that strengthens the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Observations place a strong emphasis on evaluating learning and learners' progress. Teachers receive helpful feedback and training and most improve their professional practice. Leaders take decisive action to terminate the contracts of teachers when professional performance does not meet the required standard.
- Non-accredited programmes engage learners in interesting and purposeful activities that make a positive difference to their health and adult lives. Programmes support the strengthening of communities through reducing social isolation. However, elected members and leaders do not have a sufficiently clear strategy relating to the purpose of the programmes and, in particular, how non-accredited 'leisure' courses contribute to the

priorities of the council, including those relating to improving work-related skills and developing the local economy.

The governance of the provider

- A committed strategic board provides good scrutiny and challenge to leaders to improve the quality of provision and learners' achievements. Since the last inspection, the appointment of newly elected members of the council and stakeholder representatives has strengthened the expertise and effectiveness of the strategic board. Board members support leaders well to address the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection and have a good understanding of the current challenges faced by the service.
- Elected members provide an effective degree of scrutiny and place a high strategic priority on supporting the communities that they represent on the council. They demonstrate a high level of support and investment in maintaining high-quality adult learning provision. Members provide robust challenge to leaders to ensure that subcontractors, which deliver programmes in some of the most deprived areas of the borough, meet the council's high aspirations and achieve their performance targets.
- Elected members and leaders regularly analyse management reports, including those on the achievements and progress of learners. They effectively hold leaders to account for improving performance. In a very few instances, the recording of improvement actions agreed by the strategic board is not clear enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Appropriate policies and guidance are in place in relation to safeguarding arrangements, including the 'Prevent' duty. Staff use them effectively to protect learners who are at risk from harm. Leaders, managers and staff follow safe recruitment procedures.
- Staff receive mandatory training and regular updates on safeguarding topics and the 'Prevent' duty. A continuing focus for leaders, managers and staff is the development of provision that protects learners and develops their understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Learners have a broad awareness of the risks of radicalisation and extremism. However, many learners do not have sufficient understanding of how to protect themselves from these risks in the context of their everyday lives.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers are skilled in planning and delivering high-quality and interesting learning activities. They set work that builds on previous learning and challenges learners to make greater efforts in developing their skills. As a result, learners are enthusiastic, enjoy their learning and make good progress.
- Teachers carefully assess learners' abilities at the beginning of their programme and gain a thorough understanding of their starting points. This ensures that learners benefit from challenging tasks and stimulating learning approaches that are appropriate to their individual needs. A high proportion of learners on vocational and non-accredited

programmes, particularly those furthest away from gaining employment, develop their skills to a good standard.

- Teachers set high expectations for learners. They ensure that learners participate fully during lessons and develop their communication skills and vocational knowledge. Most teachers review learners' work well and provide helpful feedback on what learners are good at and what they need to do to improve further. Learners appreciate this feedback and use it well to develop their skills and knowledge to a higher level.
- Teachers use their specialist skills well. This supports learners to develop their technical and practical skills at the level they need to achieve their qualification or personal goals. For example, in a cookery lesson, learners prepared vegetables and cooked a healthy stir-fry meal for lunch. In art lessons, learners improve their fine art skills by learning advanced acrylic painting techniques; they develop their initial research drawings and produce more difficult mosaic projects.
- In family learning lessons, teachers support learners to develop a good range of practical, creative and language skills. Learners increase their confidence and skills by participating fully in activities designed to enhance their child's learning and behaviour through play. For example, parents, carers and children pot indoor plants, discuss plant care requirements and produce garden-themed artwork for use in the school. Learners report that they are able to help their children to understand English and mathematics better as a result of their course, and that learning activities have a positive impact on behaviour in school and family life.
- Staff provide good pastoral and academic support for learners. They quickly provide additional learning support to help learners overcome personal barriers to progress. Teachers set work outside the classroom to extend and consolidate learning. They provide a range of activities for learners to complete that develop their independence and help them to succeed.
- A small proportion of teachers do not deploy support staff effectively in lessons in ways that meet learners' needs. In too many instances, support staff complete activities for learners. This limits learners' progress towards developing the skills that they need for a more independent adult life.
- Teachers do not use assessment information consistently well to set clear and helpful long-term goals for learners. They break down personal targets into smaller steps that help learners to achieve their qualification. However, long-term targets are too broad and, as a result, a small proportion of learners do not fully understand or develop the work-related skills that they need to achieve their full potential.
- A very small minority of teachers do not plan learning well enough to meet the range of ability in their classes or to encourage learners to identify how they could improve their work. On a few occasions, learners, particularly the most able, have to wait for less confident learners to catch up before moving on; consequently, a small proportion of learners do not achieve their potential.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- Learners receive good initial information and advice at the start of their programme and good careers guidance during their programme. This ensures that they enrol onto the

right course at the right level and quickly settle into their programme. Staff effectively use their links with external careers agencies to help learners to develop clear and realistic plans for their futures.

- Learners grow in confidence; they develop very good personal, social and, in many instances, work-related skills that prepare them well for the future. Learners develop practical skills and information and technology skills that are useful to them at home and at work. On craft programmes, learners demonstrate progress from non-accredited learning to achievement of qualifications; they develop their technical skills well and go on to design and produce items that they sell locally.
- The most disadvantaged and vulnerable learners receive very good support. Staff, including those at subcontractors, help learners to overcome personal barriers and develop their confidence and communication skills in a supportive environment. Learners feel safe; they develop their social skills and become more effective in managing their lives.
- Learners develop their skills in English and mathematics well. Where appropriate, teachers integrate English and mathematics activities in lessons to enable learners to practise the skills required in their everyday lives. For example, learners calculate quantities while reading instructions for prescriptions.
- Learners develop their independent learning skills well. Most learners use the opportunity to complete work outside of lessons in order to improve their skills or practise topics that they have found difficult. Consequently, learners' standards of work are high and they develop their personal skills well.
- Learners have a good understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices and to improve their well-being. Teachers promote healthy lifestyles through exploring topics such as the sugar content in food and alcohol unit consumption. They effectively support vulnerable learners to develop their mental health and emotional resilience. Learners develop strategies to help them to manage their lives more independently and make suitable life choices.
- Learners demonstrate respectful behaviour to visitors, staff and peers. Staff create a very harmonious and inclusive atmosphere for learning. In classes for learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, teachers and learners agree and adhere to 'ground rules' that set out high standards of behaviour. Teachers promote equality and celebrate diversity well. However, they do not consistently help learners to make effective links between British values and community life.
- Attendance in most subjects is high. However, in a small proportion of subjects, too many learners miss lessons, including on entry-level English and mathematics courses, Spanish language courses and some art courses. In a small minority of lessons, learners arrive late, which disrupts the learning of others or delays the start of the lesson.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- A high proportion of learners progress to higher levels of study, work-related activities or employment on completion of their course.
- Learners' achievements on programmes leading to qualifications are good. In 2016/17, achievement was high and above that for similar providers.

- The proportion of learners achieving GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics at legacy grades A* to C (reformed grades 4 to 9) improved and was above that of similar providers in 2016/17. However, learners who studied on GCSE mathematics courses did not achieve as well as learners on GCSE English courses.
- Most learners on non-accredited learning programmes achieve their personal goals and make good progress, often from very low starting points.
- For learners who have already completed their programme in the current year, achievement is good. The retention of current learners is high, and no noticeable gaps exist between learners' performance. Leaders and managers have successfully addressed performance gaps that existed in 2016/17.

Provider details

Unique reference number	50958
Type of provider	Community learning and skills
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	3,825
Head of service	Grant Soames
Telephone number	01422 392834
Website	www.calderdale.gov.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 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	-	533	-	35	-	12	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Calderdale Smart Move WomenCentre Ltd Halifax Opportunities Trust West Yorkshire Community Accounting Service Proper Job Theatre Company The Artworks							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the interim head of adult learning, 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, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; 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

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