

# Short inspection of Norfolk County Council Adult Learning

Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

## **Outcome**

Norfolk County Council Adult Learning continues to be a good provider.

## **Information about this provider**

Norfolk County Council Adult Learning (NCCAL) provides adult learning and apprenticeship programmes. NCCAL provides training in a region that has a high proportion of residents with a low level of numeracy, literacy and vocational qualifications.

At the time of the inspection, there were 3,354 learners. Most learners study level 1 and level 2 courses. These include functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics. Most learners are adults. 143 learners are on apprenticeship programmes, most at level 3. Programmes include business administration, operational firefighter and teaching assistant standards.

The provider's largest teaching centre, Wensum Lodge, is in the early stages of a major development project. The council has provided significant investment which is currently being used to provide new learning resources to meet the needs of the community.

## **What is it like to be a learner with this provider?**

Learners enjoy the comfortable, inclusive learning environment. They feel welcomed and supported by staff and tutors. Tutors provide them with good-quality learning resources to use at home. This helps learners to improve and consolidate their skills and knowledge more rapidly.

Tutors support learners effectively, helping them to develop their confidence. Many courses help learners overcome their loneliness and isolation from society. For example, lipreading classes enable hearing-impaired learners to lead an active life. Learners develop the confidence to meet new people and interact with their neighbours.

Many learners enjoy developing their hobbies to a high standard. Courses such as silversmithing teach techniques essential for producing delicate high-quality jewellery. Learners often develop their hobbies into self-employment.

Most learners gain basic skills in English and mathematics.

Learners feel safe studying at NCCAL.

## **What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders have designed an effective curriculum that meets the needs of the local community and employers well. They understand the needs of learners living in rural, often economically deprived, areas of Norfolk. Good provision is available for learners with complex learning and social needs. For example, they teach adults with learning disabilities how to live independent lives. Leaders ensure that programmes offered provide many opportunities for learners to continue studying. Good provision exists for the ageing population.

Tutors are skilful in helping learners become more resilient. For example, apprentices are able to discuss concepts such as unconscious bias and the impact it has on their behaviour and corporate culture. This enables them to have difficult conversations with their team members.

Tutors enable apprentices to understand the impact that national issues may have on their businesses. Apprentices relate these well to their own learning. For example, they engage in lively and informed discussions about Brexit. They are able to relate the implications that this may have on future trading in the European market.

Staff embrace the diverse backgrounds of their learners. They use their different interests and cultural traditions to develop effective resources and learning activities. For example, Chinese learners develop their writing using information about the Chinese New Year calendar. Tutors use sports articles from newspapers to help adult learners read using their interest in football.

Tutors ensure that most learners and apprentices access good-quality learning resources. Learners benefit from a flexible learning approach using new technology. This helps them to make good progress on their courses. For example, adult learners receive effective support from their tutors to enable them to link the online learning resources to classroom activities. This supports them to continue their learning in their own time. However, learners in a few community learning venues do not benefit from these good resources and facilities.

Tutors do not ensure that adult learners receive appropriate developmental feedback to enable them to improve the standard of their written work. For example, learners do not develop skills in self-correction when reviewing their own work because

tutors do not routinely correct or explain basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Assessors do not identify apprentices' starting points effectively. As a result, they do not have a good understanding of the skills, knowledge and behaviours that apprentices need to develop. Leaders are taking steps to rectify this, but it is too early to demonstrate its impact.

Tutors and assessors carry out effective careers advice and guidance. Leaders have a rich source of information about their communities and learners. Experienced staff work closely with the local job centres and libraries to ensure that learners benefit from detailed information on their next steps.

Leaders recently strengthened the senior leadership team. Management training has ensured that they have the skills and expertise they need. Governance arrangements are strong. They have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Governors set robust targets to ensure that senior leaders improve the provision. They monitor the completion of the targets effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding team is well trained. The team provides good support to teachers and learners. Staff deal with safeguarding concerns promptly. All staff complete appropriate training. They have a good understanding of the local issues that may affect their learners' safety.

## **What does the provider need to do to improve?**

- Leaders should ensure that the feedback given by tutors enables learners to develop their knowledge and skills rapidly.
- Leaders should rapidly improve the learning resources and facilities at the few insufficiently resourced adult community learning venues.
- Managers must ensure that assessors use the starting points of apprentices to plan learning effectively.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	53545
<b>Address</b>	County Hall Martineau Lane Norwich NR1 2DH
<b>Contact number</b>	01603 306605
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/adult-learning">www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/adult-learning</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Denise Saadvandi
<b>Provider type</b>	Local authority
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18–21 April 2016
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	Norfolk County Football Association

## Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since Norfolk County Council Adult Learning was judged to be good in April 2016.

The inspection team was assisted by the Head of Service, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the further education and skills inspection handbook and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

## Inspection team

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