

The Wiltshire Council

Re-inspection monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector:	Jon Bowman, Her Majesty's Inspector
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Address:	County Hall Bythesea Road Trowbridge Wiltshire BA14 8JN

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This is the first re-inspection monitoring visit to Wiltshire Council following publication of the inspection report on 20 February 2020 which found the provider to require improvement overall.

In March 2020, following the outbreak of the pandemic, the family and community learning team were redeployed elsewhere in the council. Following this redeployment, the delivery model underwent a full review. As a result, all course delivery moved to online from September 2020. The large majority of courses are now delivered online by a team of five tutors. At the time of the visit there were 96 learners on 21 courses.

The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has been taken into account in the findings and progress judgements below.

Themes

The progress leaders and managers have made in their work with partners to develop an appropriate curriculum that meets local needs **Reasonable progress**

Since the previous inspection senior leaders have positioned the community and adult learning service well within the council. This ensures that managers develop partnerships with other services and external agencies. As a result, leaders and managers have developed a wider range of partnerships with key stakeholders. However, leaders and managers do not ensure that the provision is based on clearly defined priority groups, based on an analysis of need. Recruitment strategies do not ensure that enough learners benefit from the courses available. Learner numbers are too low, and some courses are run with very low numbers.

Leaders, managers and tutors work well with partners to design and implement a range of courses. These courses meet the needs of some groups in the community, such as adult learners with disabilities and those who are unemployed. For example, managers work with Jobcentre Plus and the council's early years team to design and deliver a sector-based work academy. The training includes work experience and a guaranteed interview for learners for childcare assistant jobs in local nurseries. This training helps meet the needs of employers in a sector where there are staff shortages. Managers and tutors have developed a suite of courses aimed at developing the skills of adults with learning disabilities so they can live more independently.

The progress leaders and managers have made in ensuring that courses meet the individual goals and aspirations of learners **Significant progress**

The courses provided meet the individual goals and aspirations of learners very well. Managers and tutors carefully design courses with partners who have a good understanding of learners and the outcomes they need to achieve.

Tutors assess and know well learners' individual goals and aspirations. They work closely with learners at the start of the courses to understand their specific learning needs and personal goals. They review the progress made by learners towards these frequently during their course. Tutors use this information on learners to inform the content of learning and identify the individual support that learners need. For example, learners struggling with literacy are given weekly individualised spelling activities to help them develop their skills. Consequently, learners make good progress towards their individual goals.

Learners achieve a range of positive outcomes from attending courses. For example, through attending family well-being courses, learners maintain good mental health as they meet new people and feel less isolated at home. They develop routines at home that benefit the family group. For example, they eat with their family more regularly and take exercise together. Those with learning disabilities gain confidence that they take into their daily lives. They can better have conversations with new people and learn how to make a complaint respectfully. As a result, they are becoming more independent and take greater responsibility for themselves.

Many learners move onto positive next steps as a result of the courses they take. Around half move into further learning within the service.

What progress have leaders and managers made in developing governance arrangements that support the development of a good-quality curriculum? **Reasonable progress**

Since the previous inspection, membership of the governing body and its terms of reference have been revised. There is a good range of expertise on the board. Board members are independently minded and are committed to helping managers make the improvements needed. They understand the strengths and areas for improvement of the provision well. This provides a good foundation for the future.

The board and senior managers provide frequent scrutiny of the performance of the service and receive a suite of useful information to enable them to provide challenge to the services leadership team. They hold managers to account well for the performance of the service.

Governors are proactive in supporting service development. Governors, managers and staff share common goals and are working positively together to make improvements. They have introduced a governance monitoring programme where board members take responsibility with service managers to review aspects of the service. This work is in the early stages of implementation and any significant impact is yet to be seen.

The progress leaders and managers have made in equipping tutors to teach courses online **Reasonable progress**

Staff benefit from frequent and varied training and development to improve their teaching. They attend training to improve their skills in teaching online, meet weekly to share good practice and shadow each other to experience different approaches to teaching. They benefit from helpful training in teaching online, such as the use of visualiser technology and the use of the virtual learning environment. They use their experience and knowledge of online learning well to support learners. Staff are more confident to teach online as a result of their training.

Tutors manage online lessons well. They ensure that lessons engage learners and help them develop their digital skills. For example, they provide clear instructions to learners on each activity, which learners follow easily. They make good use of resources to engage learners. However, tutors are not able to utilise fully the online platform because of the current guidance that the local authority has issued. This inhibits the effectiveness of tutors in using the full range of tools at their disposal.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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