

# Short inspection of Warwickshire County Council

Inspection date:

5 October 2022

## Outcome

Warwickshire County Council continues to be a good provider.

## Information about this provider

Warwickshire Adult and Community Learning Service (WACL, the service) is part of Warwickshire County Council. WACL, the service provides adult learning courses across Warwickshire. Adults study at one or more community-based centres. At the time of the inspection, 973 adults were in learning. Many adults study courses that lead to accredited qualifications, including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), English, mathematics and digital skills. In addition, the service provides skills provision for adults who have additional learning needs. WACL, the service also offers a range of non-accredited community learning courses. Popular subjects include family learning, digital skills, arts and crafts, languages and music. The provider does not work with any subcontractors.

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

Learners, who come from a variety of social and ethnically diverse backgrounds, learn in a respectful and supportive environment. They are challenged to do their best by tutors who are sensitive to their needs. As a result, many learners develop their confidence and resilience.

Learners feel safe and well cared for. They know where to go to report any concerns. Learners develop their understanding of life in modern Britain and feel more integrated into their local communities as a result of attending courses.

Learners benefit from a range of flexible programmes that help to build their knowledge in English, mathematics and digital skills. Learners are better able to communicate effectively at work and when going about their daily lives, including when communicating through digital devices.

Learners benefit from well-developed links with local community organisations. Staff have nurtured effective links with the local resettlement team. They support learners to get quick access to the critical services they need to support their wider lives.

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

Leaders and managers have put in place a responsive curriculum to meet the needs of local residents. Leaders make effective use of information that they receive from Warwickshire County Council to implement initiatives quickly to support local communities. For example, they have recently acted swiftly to put in place 'fast-track' language provision to support Ukrainian refugees arriving in the local area.

Leaders use funding to target those learners who most benefit from accessing learning. They offer a wide range of family learning courses to encourage learners to access learning and develop their confidence. Learners develop their confidence, and many move into further learning, where they gain accredited qualifications. This helps learners to improve their lives and move into work.

Leaders and tutors plan the curriculum carefully. Tutors develop learners' knowledge, skills and behaviours gradually over time. ESOL tutors develop learners' understanding of the use of past and present tenses in simple sentences and texts, before applying this knowledge to more complex ones.

Tutors quickly identify what learners already know and can do when they start their course. They use this information to place learners in a class that is appropriate to their needs. Tutors plan learning carefully that focuses on the knowledge and skills that learners most need to learn. Learners make more rapid progress as a result.

Tutors provide frequent opportunities for learners to recap and recall their learning. Learners regularly practise their spoken English through talking to their peers about different topics about life in modern Britain. Learners improve the fluency of their spoken English and improve their understanding of their wider communities.

Tutors routinely and quickly correct any misunderstandings that learners exhibit throughout their learning. They provide learners with regular developmental feedback on their work. Tutors' feedback helps learners know what they need to do to improve the quality of their work, which improves over time.

Leaders and tutors ensure that most learners benefit from impartial careers advice and guidance. Leaders have in place a highly effective relationship with the National Careers Service to help provide impartial careers guidance to learners. Learners benefit from listening to guest speakers, who help them to improve job applications. Leaders recognise the need to ensure that all learners get access to high-quality careers advice and guidance. Leaders are ambitious for each course to have 'a line of sight to work' but recognise that careers advice and guidance require further development.

Learners develop significant new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Many learners either move into further learning or into work. However, senior leaders do not have routine access to sufficient progression and destination data for all areas of the

service. As a result, leaders do not use this information to inform improvements that they need to make to the curriculum.

Leaders use suitable quality assurance procedures to reassure themselves of the quality of education. They undertake observations of lessons, review learners' work and regularly gain feedback from learners. Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the provider.

Leaders have recently taken steps to strengthen the arrangements for governance. A refreshed advisory board is now in place. The board has a wide range of expertise in education and in helping leaders to understand the local community that they serve. Advisory board members provide effective challenge and scrutiny to senior leaders. Advisory board members were clear on the benefits of returning to face-to-face teaching for ESOL learners following the move to online teaching in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders respond quickly to the challenge from the advisory board to help improve the quality of education that learners receive further.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff promote a positive culture of safeguarding. All staff receive regular and useful safeguarding training. Clear policies and procedures are in place for the reporting of any safeguarding concerns. Where concerns are raised, designated safeguarding leads respond quickly and appropriately. Leaders work closely with organisations to help inform their understanding of the 'Prevent' duty. Staff have a sound understanding of the local risks. They help learners to improve their understanding of risks. Learners have 'be safe cards' which contain contact numbers to report any concerns that they may have.

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

- Ensure that all learners benefit from high-quality impartial careers advice and guidance in order that learners understand the full range of next steps available to them.
- Leaders should improve the timeliness of the information that they receive on the progression and destinations of learners to help support their understanding of the effectiveness of the curriculum.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	55276
<b>Address</b>	Pound Lane Learning Centre Pound Lane Lillington Leamington Spa Warwickshire CV32 7RT
<b>Contact number</b>	0845 090 7000
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/acl">www.warwickshire.gov.uk/acl</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Judy Hallam
<b>Provider type</b>	Community learning and skills- Local authority
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 and 10 March 2016
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since Warwickshire County Council was judged to be good in March 2016.

The inspection team was assisted by the delivery lead, 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 visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

## Inspection team

Ian Higgins, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Bev Ramsell

His Majesty's Inspector

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