

Derby City Council

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Information and communications technology (ICT)
- Arts, media and publishing
- Languages, literature and culture
- Preparation for life and work
- Family learning

Description of the provider

1. Derby City Council (DCC) provides government-funded provision for around 3,000 learners. Of these, most are enrolled by the Derby Adult Learning Service (DALs), with eight learners currently on provision for Entry to Employment (E2E). Around 30 learners are on Sure Start programmes, which are outside the scope of this inspection. Since the recent reorganisation all these areas are part of the children and young people's service department. DALs has four senior managers, seven curriculum and quality managers, three skills for life co-ordinators, four programme co-ordinators, four curriculum organisers, six programme organisers and two organisers for learning support and for mentoring. All tutors are part time.
2. DALs has two funding streams. In 2005-06, 7,853 enrolments were further education funded and 3,273 were funded through adult and community learning. DALs provides learning opportunities across the city of Derby but focuses its activity on the wards in the city that have been classified as areas of high socio-economic deprivation. In the current year DALs has enrolled some 1,751 new learners. Staff are located at eight main centres in the city. The self-assessment report, updated in April 2007, states that courses are delivered in around 57 centres.
3. DALs has a contract with nextstep to provide information, advice and guidance and with Central Training for the provision of accredited childcare courses.
4. At 31.4% the proportion of adults in Derby who have no qualifications is higher than the national average of 28.9%. The proportion of adults in Derby with level 2 qualifications is lower than the national average, at 17.3% compared with 19.4% for England as a whole. The unemployment rate in Derby in September 2006 was 3.4% compared with the national rate of 2.6% and the Derbyshire rate of 2.1%. Derby has a higher rate of deaf residents per thousand people than the national average.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject area

Information and communications technology	Good: Grade 2
Arts, media and publishing	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Languages, literature and culture	Good: Grade 2
Preparation for life and work	Good: Grade 2
Family learning	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Success rates are satisfactory overall, although they vary in both accredited and non-accredited courses. Standards of work are mostly good in all areas.
6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Where it is used, Derby's learning website is effective in promoting learning. Learners' needs are satisfactorily identified, but planning for individual learning and progress is not consistently thorough.
7. DCC meets the needs of learners, the community and employers well. It targets provision at those areas in most need, and maintains productive partnerships throughout the city which benefit learners.
8. Support for learners is good. Tutors offer helpful advice in lessons, and nextstep advisers offer both pre-entry and progression guidance. Learners on the E2E programme receive regular individual plans to support their development.
9. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Careful planning for new local and national priorities is in place, but actions, including those to recognise and record non-accredited achievement, have not yet been fully implemented. Sufficient accurate data is collected and used, although currently the different systems for collecting data make it overcomplicated. The self-assessment process is satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

10. DCC's capacity to improve is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection it has made considerable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. The process for observing teaching and learning is effective, and managers moderate the findings. The provider continues to maintain very effective partnerships both between council departments and with a range of organisations in the city. It is making good progress in developing workforce and workplace learning. It now has sufficient management information to monitor performance, including good and accurate information at centre level. However, the system for measuring success rates in non-accredited learning is not sufficiently effective for a meaningful evaluation of trends to be carried out. Data is not yet easy to use to give an overview of provision.
11. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. Curriculum and programme managers draft the self-assessment report and then tutors and managers meet to discuss the findings. All reports are then moderated in a meeting with curriculum managers and senior managers. A good range of evidence is used to support judgements. Grades given in the self-assessment report largely match those given

by inspectors, although in several cases the report identifies as strengths areas that are no more than normal practice.

Key strengths

- Significant improvements in teaching and learning
- Responsiveness to local needs
- Developing learners' confidence
- Development of good parenting skills
- Effective use of e-learning
- Successful strategies to re-engage people with learning

Key areas for improvement

- Better individual planning and recording of learners' progress
- Development of the quality improvement process
- The complexity of management information systems
- The focus on equality and diversity at service level
- Monitoring and communication of action plans to stakeholders
- The focus of staff training

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

12. Success rates are satisfactory, both on accredited and non-accredited courses. On non-accredited programmes, retention, which equates to the achievement and success rates, is not effectively measured but is based on the proportion of learners on programme two weeks before the end of the course. Owing to differences in the way data has been collected over the past few years it is not possible to make judgements on success rate trends, although retention appears to be increasing in all areas except creative arts.
13. Standards of work are mostly good in all areas. Many learners make good progress and enjoy their learning.
14. Learners gain confidence and enjoy learning in many classes. E2E provision effectively promotes safety and healthy lifestyles to young people. Currently DALs has limited information on progression of learners to further courses.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

15. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Recent measures to improve teaching and learning are effective. The quality of provision has improved significantly since the previous inspection with a higher proportion of good and better teaching and less inadequate teaching and learning. However, too few action plans are monitored and completed. Some learners effectively use Derby's learning website which provides very good opportunities to access teaching materials, discuss progress with tutors and provide feedback on lessons. Learners often access good learning materials and complete online tests.
16. Learners' progress is assessed satisfactorily overall. In some sessions tutors plan individual learning well and monitor progress effectively. Learners use these plans effectively to assess their progress. However, learners are not all made aware of the progress they are making and do not always understand the value of their learning plan. Tutors do not always assess and monitor short-term targets when planning individual learning. Learning support workers work hard to help learners to make good progress in their subjects.
17. DCC meets the needs of learners and the community well. DALs maintains productive links with a wide range of partners including local employers, schools and services. DALs provides relevant training for other divisions of DCC, for example in essential skills and computing. It actively supports partners' events and offers training in accessible venues, including learners' workplaces, at suitable times. Extended schools and children's centres create valuable community provision tailored to meet local needs. Although provision is designed to meet the needs of employers and communities, initial assessment is not yet sufficiently

sophisticated to support judgements about how it meets the individual needs of all learners.

18. Guidance and support are good. Before course entry, information, advice and guidance staff are effective at identifying in a timely fashion a wide range of needs and support for learners. They also provide useful individual and group sessions during classroom activities. Close links with nextstep ensure learners receive appropriate and seamless guidance. Thorough analysis and effective actions are taken to improve the information, advice and guidance service. Learners' welfare and personal development are supported well through a wide range of interventions. Tutors and learners benefit from the good support given by the volunteer peer group partnership scheme. DALs recognises that most of its learning support workers are not formally evaluated.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

19. Leadership and management are satisfactory. DCC clearly focuses quality improvement measures on enhancing learners' experience. Observation of the quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly. Most tutors are observed once every two years by an adequately trained team. Some feedback to tutors is too descriptive with insufficient judgements on learning. Detailed recommendations for improvement are not yet followed up sufficiently. Managers now identify trends and implement a more effective process of moderation.
20. Quality audits of files and systems have only recently been planned into an annual calendar. These identify the existence of issues but do not always lead to actions to rectify problems.
21. Following reorganisation, the change in national priorities and focus on vocational skills, DALs now has a much more holistic, strategic and collaborative approach to provision. It involves programme and curriculum staff and takes account of strategic and geographic priorities, under-representation, accessibility, demand and level of need. A clear realignment of the provision focuses on the needs of targeted communities.
22. A wide range of effective staff development is linked appropriately to relevant sector, national and curriculum priorities, including training for recording individual achievement, skills for life, computer-based learning and meeting learners' individual needs. Managers encourage tutors to attend network meetings and conferences. Managers take appropriate action in response to end-of-course questionnaires completed by tutors. However, service-wide training needs are not consistently identified. Managers conduct little overall evaluation of training activities and do not consistently monitor their effect on tutors' teaching strategies.

23. Learners benefit from the provider's significant and mutually beneficial partnerships with local providers in both private and public sectors.
24. DALs now collect plentiful and accurate data which is used both for funding purposes and for performance management at centre level. However, systems to use this data to identify trends and future developments are excessively cumbersome.
25. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. DCC celebrates Derby's multiculturalism and reflects this well in its strategic priorities. Provision is carefully planned to be responsive to the needs of learners in particularly disadvantaged areas where easily accessible centres are located. Remitted and reduced fees encourage participation where appropriate. Complaints are followed up effectively. Although full-time staff and managers can access a wide range of training in equality and diversity, this has not been sufficiently prioritised or targeted at tutors. Less than half the tutors are trained in strategies to meet learners' individual needs. This is insufficient to overcome an area for improvement identified by inspectors and DALs. Most courses provide learners with appropriate additional specialist resources. Learners with physical and learning difficulties are well supported. Although DCC itself has a scheme which complies with race, gender and disability legislation, evidence at service level shows insufficient focus or priority on improving gender and race imbalances within DALs.
26. Skills for life provision meets the needs of most learners satisfactorily. Additional classes are offered to develop learners' skills, but take-up is not sufficiently monitored in some areas.
27. Implementation of processes to recognise and record progress and achievement in non-accredited courses is very slow, and tutors have only received training since January 2007.

What learners like

- Learning to do things that they could not do at home - 'I made this!'
- The support - 'the tutors are brilliant'; 'really helpful'
- Involvement with the community - 'after years working in industry I like giving something back as a learning partner'
- The chance to improve parenting skills - 'it's given my children their mum back'; 'breaking down the barriers with schools'; finding out I'm a good parent'
- Learning at convenient centres
- Improving their social skills - 'I can communicate better with the doctor'

What learners think could improve

- Promotion of what else is available - 'knowing what I can do after this project finishes'
- Information about the structure and expectations of a course before learners start
- The number of classes – there could be more

Sector subject areas

Information and communications technology – ICT for users

Good: Grade 2

Context

28. At the time of the inspection, there were 377 enrolments. Accredited courses account for 63% of provision. Courses include word processing, using the internet and digital photography. Most learners attend one session each week.

Programmes last from 10 to 90 weeks and are offered during the day and evening. Approximately 32% of learners are men, 17% are aged over 55 and 19% are from minority ethnic groups.

29. Courses are held in six venues maintained by DALs with other courses offered at four outreach centres. DALs has 21 part-time tutors.

Strengths

- good standards of work
- good achievement
- good learning and teaching
- very effective monitoring of progress

Areas for improvement

- insufficient support for literacy and numeracy needs

Achievement and standards

30. Learners' standards of work are good. They develop good computer skills and quickly learn how to enhance their own learning through DerbyLearn, the provider's online learning platform. They apply their skills effectively in their work and personal lives. One learner used image manipulation skills to present photographs of a family event. Lessons are purposeful and learners work at a good pace. They are well motivated and make good progress. Effective progress monitoring supports learners to achieve quickly. Attendance was good during the inspection.

31. Success rates are good. Achievement in non-accredited courses in 2005-06 was good at 78%. In accredited courses in the same year the success rate was satisfactory at 60%. There is significant improvement in the current year and achievement rates and retention are good for all courses.

32. Tutors effectively promote safe working habits. Learners are given appropriate advice on progression opportunities.

Quality of provision

33. Learning and teaching are good. Group work is used well and includes learning activities which do not use computers. Learners have clear, good-quality handouts. Tutors use a wide variety of interesting teaching methods. The DerbyLearn online learning platform is particularly good and gives learners easy access to online support where they can leave feedback on lessons, ask questions and access training material from home. Learners who miss lessons can complete the work at home.
34. Progress is very effectively monitored. Learners are given detailed and appropriate targets which are closely monitored by tutors to help them achieve. Learners are clear about the purpose and usefulness of individual learning plans and use them effectively to monitor their own progress. They receive clear feedback to help them improve.
35. Literacy and numeracy needs are insufficiently met. This was not recognised in the self-assessment report. All learners self-assess their needs and can request support through extra classes. In some cases these requests are not adequately acted on. A few learners had not received the support they requested after several months. Clear links are not made between the support given in literacy and numeracy classes and the support needs in ICT classes. Opportunities to reinforce skills are not established in schemes of work or lesson plans.
36. DCC responds well to the needs of learners. When learners identify a need for new courses, DCC offers a wider range of programmes. Sufficient conveniently located centres, with course times to fit in with learners' needs, encourage participation. Employers' needs are met satisfactorily and many of DCC's employees attend ICT lessons to improve their skills.
37. DALs celebrates achievement at a number of events. Learners benefit from these events being publicised through videos and photographs on the learning website.
38. Support for learners is satisfactory. Additional support for learners with disabilities is effective. Learners benefit from the crèche facilities in some centres. Tutors are friendly and approachable and provide appropriate information and guidance.

Leadership and management

39. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff development is good. Regular meetings are highly effective in sharing good practice and are well attended. This strength was recognised in the self-assessment report. Good practice from the meetings is used very effectively to improve learning. Most staff have attended several training events and staff who are unable to attend receive effective follow up. Events have included training on visual awareness and cultural diversity as well as updating ICT skills. An interactive staff induction process is particularly good.

40. Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Most rooms display information on equality of opportunity. DCC recognises some gender imbalance in its recruitment and has taken appropriate steps to target under-represented groups. All staff receive training in equality of opportunity and the provider effectively promotes technology to aid the learning of people with disabilities.
41. DALs has further developed its quality improvement measures. The observation of teaching and learning has successfully improved its quality. Action plans following observation of teaching and learning have been implemented effectively. Methods of observation have been extended to include unannounced observations. Quality improvement processes in other areas are satisfactory. DALs has recently introduced ways of recognising and recording learners' progress and achievements in non-accredited learning but these are not yet fully established.
42. Resources are satisfactory. Rooms are generally bright and welcoming. Some rooms have additional space for non-computer work. Computers are modern with reliable internet access and industry-standard software. A few rooms have unsuitable chairs. This was partly identified in the self-assessment report.
43. Curriculum planning is satisfactory. Courses are delivered in locations easily accessible to learners. One course was offered because there was no other provider in the local area offering it. Curriculum planning responds satisfactorily to learners' and employers' demands.
44. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The report broadly matches inspection findings but some strengths are overstated and some areas of improvement are not identified.

Arts, media and publishing – creative arts

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

45. Currently there are 35 enrolments for accredited courses and 482 enrolments for non-accredited courses. Fifty-six courses, 43 of which run in the day, are offered in six locations across the city, including two adult centres, two secondary schools, one leisure centre and one Sure Start centre. Courses include drawing and painting, pottery, jewellery making, furniture restoration, lace making, embroidery, working in wood, watercolours, quilting, design and textiles, mixed craft, belly dancing and singing. Classes are held weekly and are usually two hours in duration. A programme co-ordinator manages 15 part-time tutors. Women make up 87% of learners and 8% of learners are from minority ethnic groups. Around a quarter of learners have a declared disability and 12% have a declared learning difficulty. Most learners are aged over 60.

Strengths

- Excellent success rates for sewing and textiles
- Good standard of work in design, jewellery and performing arts
- Very good classroom support for learners

Areas for improvement

- Declining retention over three years on accredited programmes
- Ineffective planning of individual learning
- Limited range of courses

Achievement and standards

46. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Pass rates for sewing and textiles and accredited pottery programmes in 2005-06 are excellent. However, retention on all courses was low for 2005-06. Accredited courses show a declining trend for retention over the past three years and an average success rate of 62%. The average achievement rate for non-accredited learning was 65%, well below the provider's target of 81%. In-year data shows a marked improvement in retention at an average of 77% for accredited courses and 87% for non accredited courses.

47. Work in design, jewellery and performing arts is of a good standard. In an Open College Network-accredited design style course at level 1, tie-dying and block-printing skills are supported by historical contextual knowledge of African Adinkra block printing. Learners make imaginative use of materials including buttons in jewellery to make lively, fashionable pieces. A strong group dynamic in singing develops learners' confidence to sing both in unison and in harmony. In belly dancing learners have progressed to performance level and confidently participate in dance sequences which show a variety of fluid and shimmy movements. In lace-making classes learners confidently exhibit their work in regional exhibitions. Learners enjoy their work and develop practical skills effectively. They use

sketchbooks well on accredited courses. However, work in some classes is insufficiently imaginative or exciting and learners repeat familiar techniques and are not encouraged sufficiently to experiment.

Quality of provision

48. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are generally well planned and tutors foster warm and positive relationships. Most lessons meet the immediate needs of learners. A range of multicultural elements enrich lessons. For example, in singing classes learners perform music from a wide variety of cultures. However, tutors' expectations are generally low. In many classes learners rely too much upon the tutor to provide stimulus and individual enquiry is insufficiently encouraged. Although individual learning planning has been introduced it does not enable learners to take responsibility to identify personal targets and consciously work towards them. Many tutors and learners are unclear about the purpose or potential of individual planning. Plans are predominantly completed by tutors. Digital photographs are used well to record progress in some lessons. Although some tutors have attended training in planning for the needs of individual learners it has not led to effective practice. Learners make little use of sketchbooks to plan and record ideas and progress.
49. Learning is satisfactory. Learners are enthusiastic, enjoy their classes and develop social skills and confidence. They make good progress in developing skills and reach a good level of contextual knowledge in design. Individual tuition encourages all learners to work at their own pace. In belly dancing the tutor demonstrates and explains moves effectively and individuals make good progress. Tutors carefully identify appropriate learning goals for learners with disabilities in craft pottery and woodwork. Good displays of work of craft pottery, mixed craft and lace making in some centres inspire learners and celebrate their learning.
50. The range of courses is limited with no design-based ICT courses in image manipulation. Learners have no access to computers in workshops or studios. Tutors make little use of computer technology in classrooms. Too few accredited courses are available to provide opportunities for learners to progress. Few learners progress from leisure to accredited programmes. However, many learners take different courses at the same level to widen their skills. Few courses are currently targeted at minority groups. However, DALs is particularly successful in meeting the needs of disabled learners, who represent over a quarter of learners in visual and performing arts. A pottery course designed for blind learners is successful.
51. Learners receive very good classroom support. A well-established and effective partner scheme for learners enables volunteers with similar interests to give practical support to learners with disabilities. Learning partners enable tutors to give individual attention to learners and supervise workshop activities effectively and safely. Learning support assistants and healthcare assistants also give good support in some lessons.

Leadership and management

52. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Inspection grades generally agree with internal grades for the observation of teaching and learning. However, in a minority of cases normal practices are identified as strengths and the effect of teaching on learning is insufficiently identified. Actions taken to combat poor retention are effective. Absences are promptly followed up and weekly records help managers to monitor attendance and take appropriate action. Communication has improved. An annual conference updates all staff, and tutors have regular individual meetings with managers. Data collection and analysis does not yet fully influence curriculum planning. Curriculum development is driven mainly by historical demand and lacks initiatives to attract under-represented groups.

Languages, literature and culture

Good: Grade 2

Context

53. DALs offers accredited and non-accredited courses from entry level to level 3 in Arabic, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Punjabi, Russian and Spanish. It also offers a large programme of British Sign Language (BSL), Makaton, community interpreting, English GCSE and creative writing. Of 754 learners currently on programmes, 521 attend accredited courses.

Strengths

- High success rates in accredited languages and community interpreting
- Good use of taught language in foreign languages and BSL
- Effective curriculum development to meet employers' and community needs
- Very good support for learners through e-learning
- Well-managed support to develop staff teaching skills

Areas for improvement

- Low retention on non-accredited courses
- Insufficient focus on learning outcomes in lesson planning
- Inconsistent use of initial assessment

Achievement and standards

54. Achievement and standards are good overall. Success rates in foreign languages and community interpreting are high. Learners achieve a good standard of speaking and listening in languages. They are good at listening to unfamiliar language for the gist of what is being said. All learners who took an externally marked dialogue assessment in March 2007 were successful. Learners on level 1 BSL courses generally achieve high success rates. However, success rates on level 2 courses are low. Retention on non-accredited languages courses is unsatisfactory.

Quality of provision

55. The quality of provision is good. Tutors of BSL and foreign languages make good use of the taught language. In the best lessons, the language is consistently used for grammatical explanations and instructions as well as for all incidental and social exchanges. In some classes individual learning plans are translated into the language being studied. Learners are taught the necessary phrases to fill in their weekly records of work in the language. All BSL tutors are deaf and work without interpreters entirely in BSL. Learners 'switch off their voices' as soon as they enter the classroom. Much teaching is lively and varied. In the best lessons, tutors use a wide range of activities and learning materials including some very good ICT resources. Learners enjoy their lessons, participate enthusiastically and are able to risk making mistakes. However, tutors do not focus enough on exactly what they expect learners to be able to do by the end of the lesson. Outcomes in

lesson plans are often expressed as activities. When outcomes are listed for accredited courses, these are not sufficiently broken down into smaller elements. Learners cannot effectively evaluate their progress against broad targets at the end of lessons. Tutors do not always provide enough practise and assessment of the specific skills they are developing. All new foreign language learners take an assessment of their existing skills. However, many learners complete only a self-assessment without the benefit of tutors' input. The results of this assessment do not always lead to enough planning for different ability levels in the class.

56. The curriculum is effective in meeting community and employers' needs. A very large programme of BSL courses caters for the needs of people in contact with the large deaf community in the area. Hearing employees attend courses which improve their communications with the public and with colleagues. Community interpreting successfully trains speakers of other languages to accompany non-English speakers to medical and social services appointments. Accredited Makaton courses greatly benefit playgroup and school staff working with children with communication difficulties. Non-accredited courses develop relevant and useful skills for parents and carers of family members with learning difficulties. Makaton for babies is being developed to offer parents valuable ways of communicating with very young children. Foreign language courses are increasingly provided within companies and on DCC's premises. DALs offers a good range of languages and levels with clear progression routes in foreign languages and BSL.
57. Support for learners is good. Learners receive very good web-based support for their learning outside lessons. Most language tutors now have materials on a specially designed website for learners to catch up on missed lessons, get more practice and extend their learning. The site has well-designed films of the BSL tutors illustrating signs and dialogues for level 1 learners. Almost half of all learners have used the site. DALs offers a range of support, including financial help with fees, childcare for BSL learners, in-class support with note-taking, interpreting or physical assistance. Learners with mental health issues or learning difficulties are supported well by volunteers. The advice and guidance unit visits BSL classes with appropriate information about progression opportunities.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management are good. Managers and co-ordinators provide good support for tutors to develop their skills, including helpful mentoring for new tutors and peer support from tutors working in pairs to exchange their skills. A few tutors benefit from working on a national quality improvement project. Tutors' network meetings keep staff up to date and encourage them to share good practice and materials. A tutors' forum promotes sharing of good practice on the languages website and tutors have access to a good range of internal training events. The curriculum co-ordinator and manager are readily accessible to tutors for advice. Tutors have easy access to very wide range of teaching materials. Feedback from observations of teaching and learning by specialist staff is detailed and helpful. Teaching has improved significantly. However, non-specialist observers do not always focus enough on learning and attainment in observation reports. Progress against resulting action plans is monitored closely in most cases.

A tutors' curriculum representative consults all tutors about the self-assessment report, which accurately reflects provision.

59. Most tutors are appropriately qualified although few have specialist language teaching qualifications. Many are native speakers. An effective new process for assessing applicants' skills in their own language and in English has recently been introduced.
60. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Participation by people with disabilities is good. Men are well represented across the programme. However, participation by members of minority ethnic groups in BSL has fallen recently without adequate investigation into the reasons.

Preparation for life and work

Good: Grade 2

Context

61. At the time of inspection there were 796 enrolments in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), 305 in literacy, 147 in numeracy, 129 in discrete programmes for learners with learning difficulties and eight on the E2E programme. In skills for life, 40 tutors deliver 106 classes during the day, evenings and on Saturday mornings in 20 venues across the city, including partners' and employers' premises. Learners are part time and attend one to four sessions a week. Most learners are on accredited courses. Pre-entry level learners and some entry level 1 learners are accredited against their individual learning goals. Literacy and numeracy courses are offered up to level 2 and ESOL courses up to entry level 3 with the opportunity to progress to nationally accredited speaking and listening or literacy tests. Five tutors offer programmes for learners with learning difficulties to 24 classes during the day at five venues including partners' premises. Learners are part time and attend one or two classes a week. Learners are taking pre-entry and entry level modules or Open College Network-accredited progression awards. Support workers help 32 individuals or groups of learners. The area is led by a programmes manager and managed by four full-time programme co-ordinators and four part-time organisers based in four centres. They are supported by a curriculum organiser shared between skills for life and languages and an organiser for programmes for learners with learning difficulties.

Strengths

- Good development of confidence and skills
- High retention
- Effective planning for the individual needs of ESOL learners
- Wide range of provision
- Good information, advice and guidance

Areas for improvement

- Inconsistent use of assessment and individual learning plans in literacy, numeracy and programmes for learners with learning difficulties
- Incomplete application of quality improvement arrangements

Achievement and standards

62. Achievement and standards are good overall. Retention is high and improving despite increasing numbers of enrolments and learners. In-year retention at the time of the inspection was 85%. Achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications in the workplace and in probation service provision is good. Success rates on entry level ESOL qualifications are satisfactory at 60% overall.

63. Learners develop confidence and skills well. ESOL learners improve in all aspects of English. Learners' satisfaction with their programmes and development of skills is high. Learners with learning difficulties or disabilities improve their concentration and ability to focus on activities and some learners gain employment skills. In literacy and numeracy classes, learners improve their confidence in many aspects of communication, use of numbers and problem-solving. Learners on probation improve their attitude towards learning and many gain qualifications in literacy or numeracy.

Quality of provision

64. The quality of provision is good. Learners' achievements are celebrated with motivating displays of their work in classrooms. ESOL learners' learning needs are effectively met, with good individual support from tutors in sessions. Learners make good progress, learn well and have clear aims and objectives in ESOL lessons. Tutors correct pronunciation and grammar effectively and frequently check spoken and written work. They stimulate learners' interest with a variety of motivating teaching methods and activities such as games, role-play and information technology to reinforce learning. Independent learning is promoted and learners practise in small groups. In the best sessions tutors encourage learners to record what they have learnt at the end of each session.

65. In literacy and numeracy initial assessment of learners' needs is satisfactory and used to plan group learning. However, tutors do not always use this information to set and monitor short-term targets and to plan and monitor individual learning. Although DALs has developed methods of assessing and recording assessments of learners with learning difficulties, tutors use them inconsistently. In some classes, how well learners have understood is insufficiently explored. Learners record the tasks they have done during literacy and numeracy classes but do not evaluate their achievement towards their learning targets. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are encouraged to express what they like or dislike but their progress towards individual targets is insufficiently measured.

66. Provision is focused well to widen participation by learners with low achievement or language skills. DALs has increased its emphasis on developing skills for employment and on workplace provision. Effective partnerships with the Probation Service, Sure Start and employers are used to develop appropriate provision. A good range of classes in local, accessible venues enables programmes to be delivered at times and in places that are convenient and familiar to learners, such as in schools, sheltered accommodation and a community house.

67. Learners receive good information, advice and guidance. Targeted and individual guidance about further training and progression is provided by in-house advisers funded and supported by nextstep. Information and guidance is also provided at all stages of the learning process by adult learning staff. Close partnerships with local communities and voluntary groups provide valuable support in recruiting learners to courses.

Leadership and management

68. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The location of programme organisers in the main venues helps the development of close working relationships with part-time staff and learners.
69. Tutors treat learners with respect and encourage them to treat each other respectfully and fairly. Good visual displays celebrate learners' work and cultural diversity in some centres.
70. The application of quality improvement arrangements is incomplete. Quality audits of course files including individual learning plans and reviews of learning, formal meetings, monthly individual tutor-manager meetings and tutors' network meetings all contribute to the quality improvement process. DALs now collect data to identify trends in achievement and retention by ethnicity, gender, age and disability and to set targets for improvements. However, data management is cumbersome and hard to use to compare and identify trends. The success rates of ESOL learners are not available by the level of qualification they are taking. Insufficient data is held on the progression and destination of learners. Tutors are insufficiently informed on data and have not been sufficiently involved in the self-assessment process.
71. Attendance at some meetings is low and actions from audits, observation and individual meetings are not all sufficiently monitored or evaluated. Staff development is satisfactory although it is not planned in sufficient detail.

Family learning

Good: Grade 2

Context

72. At the time of inspection 297 learners were enrolled on family learning programmes in 30 venues across the city. Of these, 94% were women, 46% were from minority ethnic groups and 6% declared a disability.

73. The provision is funded through the LSC and New Deal for the Community. In addition some sessions are provided in Sure Start children's centres, but these fall beyond the scope of the current inspection. Most learners follow programmes to support literacy and numeracy, with 60-hour courses spread across the year and short courses designed to help them support children in school. An innovative scheme for parents and carers of babies and pre-school children is widely used. Within the LSC-funded provision there is a range of wider family learning including French, swimming and healthy eating.

74. Overall responsibility for family learning falls within the early years and childcare division of the children and young people's department, with a manager, two development workers and 21 tutors. Tutors work collaboratively with 24 school and early years teachers.

Strengths

- Good effect of family learning on learners' lives
- Good tools for initial assessment
- Very good teaching and learning strategies which exemplify good parenting skills
- Particularly good provision for parents and carers of pre-school children
- Effective partnership working

Areas for improvement

- Limited use of systems to recognise and record progress in non-accredited learning to measure achievement and quality of provision
- Poor implementation of the self-assessment process

Achievement and standards

75. Achievement and standards are good. Learners value family learning for the enormous beneficial effect on their children's development, progress at school and confidence levels. Headteachers and school staff confirm enhanced attainment and greater readiness for pre-school children to begin nursery. Parents involved with family learning participate more in school life, showing a greater understanding of the curriculum and the value of play. Several learners have gained voluntary or paid employment as mid-day supervisors or learning support assistants. One learner is now a parent governor. A significant number of learners have gained the confidence to progress to further education and vocational training.

76. Retention is satisfactory, showing a rising trend over the past three years, although anomalies in data and systems for withdrawing early leavers make this hard to evaluate. Learners increasingly take up the opportunity for accreditation, particularly on longer courses and where literacy and numeracy attainment is an explicit outcome.

Quality of provision

77. The quality of provision is good. Family learning tutors use good tools for assessment which match the particular needs of their learners. DALs has designed very useful materials for parents to self-assess their skills, confidence levels and personal aspirations. It has an open and non-threatening assessment of numeracy skills and a specific skills analysis for French.

78. Learners benefit from very good strategies and role models which develop their parenting skills. Teaching and support staff demonstrate positive reinforcement of good behaviour for children in the group and highlight good questioning and communication skills. Learning resources clarify particular techniques and learners are encouraged to try these with their own children. Crèche workers join actively into sessions where appropriate, offering extra insights and support. Parents and carers particularly value and use play resources they have made. Tutors do not sufficiently record the increasing confidence of parents and carers in interacting with their children.

79. Parents and carers of pre-school children attend a particularly well delivered and innovative programme based on the precise needs of babies and toddlers of different ages and adapted to context. The balance between adult and child-focused learning is good.

80. Overall the range of provision is satisfactory. It targets the most disadvantaged parts of the city, and schools where good levels of support promote its continuance. Most sessions are in primary schools during the normal school day. A mixture of long and short courses cover different age ranges of children at key transition points in their education. A small amount of wider family learning has been maintained this year, acting as first steps into learning. Some learners are insufficiently well informed of what is on offer.

81. Learners are adequately and appropriately supported, with good crèche facilities and bilingual support available as required. DCC's staff offer useful advice and guidance at sessions towards the end of a course when learners require it. Very few learners declare a disability and the standard of support for these is mixed.

Leadership and management

82. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The family learning team makes good use of effective partnerships. Intradepartmental links support the development of good crèche facilities, careful targeting of provision and expert input on child safety. External networks, including Sure Start, enhance funding opportunities, the range of provision and curriculum planning.

83. Accommodation for family learning is satisfactory overall, but ranges from superb to poor. Learning resources are satisfactory. Where information learning technology is available, it is used very effectively. Within family learning only limited use is made of Derby's learning website.
84. Support for staff is adequate. Currently, termly monitoring visits, follow up of observed sessions and informal contacts replace formal appraisals. Teaching and support staff have access to a reasonable range of continuous professional development and have satisfactory qualifications for their role.
85. Family learning targeted at disadvantaged learners contributes satisfactorily to the city's targets for equality and diversity. The small number of men who are learners are happy with the support and encouragement they receive. DALs shows respect for the culture and religion of all its learners.
86. Managers make limited use of strategies for recognising and recording progress and achievement in judging the effectiveness of the service. The standard of individual learning plans is inconsistent, and the team acknowledges that more development work is needed. DALs evaluates programmes at course level each year.
87. The self-assessment process is poorly implemented. Teaching staff and learners were not consulted about the self-assessment report in the 2005-06 cycle.

Learners' achievements

Outcomes on Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes managed by the provider/college 2004 year to 2006 year

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
05-06	36	10	28
06-07***	15	8	53

* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

** Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period

*** provider data