

Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Inspection date: 8 June 2007

Inspection number

300898

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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:

- Arts, media and publishing
- Preparation for life and work
- Family learning
- Community development

Description of the provider

1. Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council (the council) in West Yorkshire is one of the smaller Metropolitan Boroughs. Adult learning is provided through Calderdale Local Education Authority and delivered through the adult and community learning service, Calderdale Adult Learning (CAL). The provision is funded by West Yorkshire LSC. It provides courses for adults in: information and communications technology (ICT); leisure, travel and tourism; arts, media and publishing; languages, literature and culture; preparation for life and work including literacy and numeracy; English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and provision for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. Calderdale CAL also offers family learning. Further enrichment provision is also available in land-based courses, construction, hairdressing and beauty therapy, and humanities. CAL has successfully obtained Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) funding to develop many new courses and capital projects in the community. Programmes are provided at three main centres in Halifax, Todmorden and Brighouse as well as at a wide range of community venues.
2. The inspection covered provision in arts, media and publishing with 124 learners at the time of the inspection, preparation for life and work with 283 learners, family learning with 94 learners and community development with 65 learners. Other sector subject areas were sampled through the paired observation process and information from all areas was used to inform judgements.
3. According to the 2001 census, the proportion of Calderdale's population from minority ethnic groups was 7%, compared with the national average of 9%.
4. The management arrangements for CAL have been restructured since the previous inspection. The service is led by a head of service supported by a deputy responsible for curriculum and quality. The sector subject areas, and development in the community, are led by a team of eight full- and part-time adult learning organisers. They manage a team of full- and part-time teaching staff. The team is supported by a manager responsible for data and five administrative staff. Another manager is responsible for resources across the provision and is supported by an administrator and two caretakers.

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 | Satisfactory: Grade 3 |
| Leadership and management | Satisfactory: Grade 3 |
| Equality of opportunity | Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3 |

Sector subject area

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Arts, media and publishing | Satisfactory: Grade 3 |
| Preparation for life and work | Satisfactory: Grade 3 |
| Family learning | Good: Grade 2 |
| Community development | Satisfactory: Grade 3 |

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievements and standards and quality of the provision are satisfactory. Leadership and management and the arrangements for equality of opportunity are also satisfactory. The quality of provision in arts, media and publishing, preparation for life and work and community development are satisfactory. Family learning provision is good.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

6. Calderdale demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve. It has made steady progress to improve its provision since the previous inspection. The grade awarded by inspectors for family learning was higher than the grade awarded by self-assessment, but all other grades were the same. Grades awarded for preparation for life and work and family learning are higher than at the previous inspection. The grade for arts, media and publishing is the same as at the previous inspection. Community development has not been inspected separately in previous inspections. Most of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been rectified. However, weaknesses remain, for example, there is an insufficient range of literacy, numeracy and language courses, and the implementation of the skills for life strategy is slow.
7. There have been many recent improvements to the quality of the provision including improved structure with clearer roles and responsibilities, better use of data, centralised services and an improved process for observation of teaching and learning. Retention is good. Many more improvements are planned. However, there have been some budgeting and restructuring issues and the pace of change has slowed at times. Self-assessment is broadly accurate and the development plan is used to improve provision. However, the self-assessment process failed to identify some key areas for improvement in recognising and recording progress and achievement.

Key strengths

- Good change management
- Good range of community-based provision
- Good partnership working
- Many recent improvements to the quality of provision

Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient use of initial assessment in planning, and recognising and recording progress and achievement
- Insufficient use of accreditation
- Slow implementation of the skills for life strategy

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

8. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Retention is good across all programmes. In accredited programmes there is good achievement on arts, media and crafts, ICT, languages, literature and culture, and community development. However, apart from community development, the number of learners going forward for accreditation is very low. For instance, in arts, media and publishing only 15% are entered for qualifications. The development of skills and confidence is good for learners in arts, media and crafts, preparation for life and work, family learning and community development. Most learners' progress is measured through the recognising and recording progress and achievement process. However, this process is ineffective.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

9. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, a judgement matched, for the most part, in the self-assessment report. Schemes of work are clear and provide a coherent structure for learning. They are adjusted if learners express new interests as their learning develops. Most learning sessions are well planned with a good emphasis on individual coaching. Tutors give good praise and verbal encouragement to learners. However, CAL makes little use of initial assessment. The information it collects is not used effectively as a basis for recognising and recording learners' progress. Targets and learning objectives are not sufficiently differentiated. Learners' skills for life needs are not clearly identified or responded to across all curriculum areas and courses. Able learners are not given sufficiently challenging activities.
10. CAL provides a good range of learning opportunities at easily accessible locations, based on a good understanding of community needs. The curriculum also supports training provided by other organisations. CAL correctly emphasises first level courses relevant to people reluctant to start learning. Good use is made of community groups as delivery partners to help ensure the provision meets learners' needs.
11. CAL provides satisfactory personal and learning support for learners. Tutors take care to understand learners' individual needs, particularly those who are nervous about learning or have learning difficulties or disabilities. They provide reassurance and encouragement to these learners. Learners have sufficient access to classroom assistants and other support.

12. CAL does not effectively promote accreditation to its learners. This was not identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report. Even where learners have clearly obtained the skills needed to meet the requirements of particular qualifications, CAL provides insufficient guidance for them to understand the advantages of gaining additional qualifications. CAL has some links with external information, advice and guidance services. However, it does not sufficiently publicise these services, particularly for learners who have yet to achieve a full level 2 qualification. Referral relies on the knowledge and contacts made by individual tutors.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

13. Management of change is good. CAL has a clear strategic direction to ensure provision and resources are planned and used appropriately. A major restructuring is underway to ensure the financial viability and the continuity of the service. Job roles have been clarified. The relevance of the curriculum to priority groups has improved. Community development has successfully been introduced. Responsiveness, communication and team-working have been enhanced by integrating community and curriculum functions. Team-working is good. Support has been improved effectively by centralising administration.
14. Partnership working is good. CAL responds quickly and flexibly to partners' needs. CAL has developed specific projects to successfully encourage participation by hard-to-reach learners in deprived areas. Through partnerships CAL has helped refurbish many community learning venues. It also works closely with partners to reduce duplication of provision and to ensure there is sufficient provision in the local area. Partners support CAL well, for example, by providing e-learning training for staff.
15. Many recent improvements to the quality of the provision have been carried out. The curriculum is now designed to meet learners' and community needs and can be changed if necessary. Management information systems are now responsive and provide accurate data. Communication has improved and is mostly good. A comprehensive meeting structure and bulletin have been introduced. Communication and working between curriculum and administration teams has improved. The observation of teaching and learning processes, and moderation, is thorough. Inconsistencies in tutor practices are identified through observations, but there has been insufficient time to address them. The self-assessment process and development plan are used well to implement improvements. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. Some staff, particularly those working few hours, do not have an adequate understanding of self-assessment.

16. Quality assurance arrangements including internal moderation and quality audits are satisfactory. However, there is insufficient quality assurance of partners providing community development programmes.
17. Performance management and staff development are satisfactory. Facilities and resources are satisfactory. However, there is insufficient use of ICT in sessions, even where it is accessible.
18. The process of recognising and recording progress and achievement is not fully developed. Some tutors are using the process well. However, initial assessment is generally weak. Target-setting is poor and not always adequately recorded. Targets are not always reviewed during courses. Achievement is measured by retention until the end of the programme. Moderation of the process is insufficient. Observation of teaching and learning does not identify where the process is used well. There is insufficient sharing of good practice.
19. Although much good work has recently been done, implementation of the skills for life strategy is slow. Skills for life is not sufficiently established in some areas. There is no skills for life co-ordinator. Not enough appropriately qualified staff are available to deliver skills for life training and support. Communication and sharing of good practice are insufficient. Individuals involved in implementing the strategy do not have action plans. Initial assessment is not sufficiently detailed or systematic. Skills for life is currently over-subscribed and there is insufficient provision to meet need.
20. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Good use is made of community based research to inform provision. Good initiatives are effectively widening participation. Participation of learners from minority ethnic groups is good at 16.4 %. However, male participation remains below target. The accessibility of buildings has improved, with two main sites benefiting from major capital developments, but some problems with access remain at other sites. CAL's arrangements for meeting the themes in *Every Child Matters* are satisfactory. Opportunities are missed to raise learner awareness of equality and diversity in sessions. Equality of opportunity practice highlighted through the observation of teaching and learning process as good was found to be standard teaching practice by inspectors. Although support is good for less able learners, in many sessions more able learners are insufficiently challenged. Use of accreditation is insufficient.

What learners like:

- 'Doing things I would not normally dare do'
- Very encouraging and positive tutors who listen and respond
- Meeting other students with similar interests
- Meeting people from different cultures
- 'Doing training that's relevant to my work'
- Learning in a structured environment
- Family learning, 'it's amazing and exciting'
- 'The confidence and the freedom to do things, without it being right or wrong'

What learners think could improve:

- More access to ICT facilities
- More practice of speaking skills in ESOL sessions
- More clarity about the levels of the courses 'so I could start at the right level for me'
- More time for tutorials

Sector subject areas

Arts, media and publishing

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

21. Arts and crafts represent 26% of the total provision, with 424 learners in 2005-06. At the time of inspection 12 classes were running, with 124 learners. Courses include painting and drawing workshops from level 1 to level 3, as well as sewing, beadwork, and sewing accessories. Seventy-five classes ran in 2005-06, of which 15% were accredited. Most classes run for two hours over 10 weeks, or two and a half hours over 12 weeks. Longer courses run for 24 or 30 weeks. Courses are given in the daytime and evenings with some weekend provision at four main sites as well as at several community venues. Men account for 21% of learners and 6% are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Six part-time tutors and one fractional tutor work in this sector, which is managed by an adult learning organiser.

Strengths

- Good gains in technical skills and personal goals
- Good use of partnerships to widen participation

Areas for improvement

- Ineffective use of initial assessment to plan learning and measure progress
- Insufficient encouragement to take qualifications

Achievement and standards

22. Learners gain good technical skills and personal goals. They enjoy their learning and gain confidence and self-esteem. Some learners have progressed to higher education courses. Good enrichment opportunities include visits to art galleries and museums with projects linked to these visits. For instance, following a visit to an exhibition about gloves, learners used mixed media to produce work of a high standard. Older learners value the social setting and the opportunity to keep mentally alert and bright. One learner had suffered badly from depression and found attending classes gave him confidence and social benefits.

23. In art classes learners work with a variety of media to good effect, for example one learner completed a large painting which was to be auctioned to raise funds for the local village hall. They participate in high levels of discussion with increased specialist vocabulary showing good understanding of complex ideas. Debates are lively and informative and learners gain much confidence and skills. Learners enjoy using many different types of media and materials to produce exciting and creative work. Achievement and retention rates on accredited courses are good with retention at 93% and achievement at 99%. Only 15% of

all learners, though, gain accreditation. Attendance during the week of inspection was satisfactory at 75%.

Quality of provision

24. Partnerships are used well to widen participation. Adult learning organisers are highly responsive to local needs when they are contacted by partners such as neighbourhood learning centres, sure start and family services. Community initiatives are run in response to this demand in the centre of the communities. For instance, a short course in card making using recycled materials and a course in sewing ran in a room within a high rise block of flats. Learners value the local presence of these classes and value the expertise of staff and the opportunity to learn new skills. Local residents produce work for community fundraising purposes such as cards, bags and aprons. This work has continued after the end of the course, with residents using their new skills to continue to raise money for community projects.
25. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The better classes are lively, with well planned activities and a variety of teaching strategies. Tutors are sensitive to individual needs and provide good individual personal support for learners. The less successful classes have limited teaching strategies and over-reliance on long verbal instructions by the tutor. Planning for the individual needs of learners is insufficiently considered. Support for literacy and numeracy is satisfactory.
26. The range of provision is satisfactory. Courses are situated in centres in the heart of local communities. Course descriptions are generally full, accurate and well understood by the learners. The website is informative and easy to access. Information and guidance are satisfactory and progression is available on most courses.
27. While teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, initial assessment is insufficiently thorough. Initial assessment, although carried out, is not specific enough to record learners' progress or inform the planning of learning. Initial assessment forms do not allow sufficient detail to be recorded to identify the point from which the learner's progress can be measured. Some assessments of targets on non-accredited courses are informal. Some of the targets which have been negotiated with learners at the start of the course are re-negotiated midway through. These changes are not always recorded or monitored. Most targets are not measurable or time bound, and there is insufficient challenge for more able learners. Understanding and application of recognising and recording progress and achievement varies, with insufficient time given to the initial assessment of learners in practical workshops.
28. There is insufficient encouragement of learners to take accreditation. Only 15% of all learners take accreditation although it is offered to all. Tutors are reluctant to fully encourage learners even though the service is keen to see them progress and have made good links with a local college to encourage this. With low numbers taking accreditation and problems with measuring non-accredited

provision, learners and tutors are often insufficiently aware of learners' actual progress.

Leadership and management

29. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Teamwork and communications are good. Satisfactory use is made of the intranet. Tutors value the critical feedback following their observed lessons. The observation of teaching and learning system is thorough and used appropriately to plan actions for development. Observation grades following moderation agree with inspection findings. Resources are satisfactory. Equality and diversity is satisfactory. The self-assessment report is satisfactory though it is insufficiently detailed in some areas. Two of the key questions are not commented on although the strengths and areas for improvement generally agree with the inspection findings.

Preparation for life and work

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

30. The service manages 15 courses for adults with learning disabilities and/or difficulties some of whom have additional and significant medical and communication needs. Courses are mainly at pre-entry level with one accredited course being offered at level 1. There are eight ESOL courses. All courses run at two of the three main centres with one outreach course at the Asian women's refuge centre. Most provision in ESOL is accredited. There are six courses for skills for life learners. Programmes at levels 1 and 2 are accredited but entry level courses are not. At the time of the inspection there were 283 learners on preparation for life and work courses. There are 13 fractional tutors and a further six learning support assistants. Of the three lead tutors, one for each of the three curriculum areas, only one, a full-time tutor for learners with learning disabilities and difficulties, is currently in place. Most courses run in the day time although there is some evening provision for skills for life and ESOL learners.

Strengths

- Good development of skills and confidence
- Good partnership arrangements

Areas for improvement

- Ineffective assessment procedures
- Insufficient use of ICT

Achievement and standards

31. The development of skills and confidence for all learners is good. For learners following independent living and leisure courses there are good gains in confidence, social and practical skills. Learners successfully prepare and sell food for two popular cafés held on two of the service's sites. One learner who had difficulty making eye contact at the start of the course developed sufficient confidence to talk to others in the group and make good eye contact. On one course learners collaborated with a local museum to contribute to a reminiscence project. The resulting exhibition was of good quality and valued the life experiences of all contributors. Retention in these classes is high and withdrawals are rare. Attendance during the academic year and during the inspection was high, well in excess of 90% on all courses.

32. Learners across the subject area are successful in achieving their learning goals. There are very high pass rates for learners taking GCSE English and mathematics with 89% of learners in GCSE English achieving A and B grades. Certificates of achievement are presented to skills for life learners on completion of their course

which acknowledges a range of both personal and academic achievements. One learner gained so many skills in numeracy that she was able to control the family finances. Retention on skills for life and ESOL programmes is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

33. Partnerships with private providers and statutory adult services are good. There have been some productive curriculum partnerships with local arts and museum groups. A recent project involved learners with learning difficulties collaborating with an arts project to photograph a local heritage site with the resulting images being exhibited at an important local arts centre. Partners are used well to support learners with disabilities and difficulties. There is good communication between partners and any problems that arise are dealt with speedily. Work to reach partners in various ethnic communities is good. Arrangements to plan strategically, evaluate the effectiveness of provision and plan for the new academic year together with partners is not yet fully effective.
34. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most tutors prepare their lessons thoroughly ensuring that learners take part in a wide range of practical, challenging and relevant activities. In some classes there is insufficient peer interaction and paper based-resources dominate. Tutors are well qualified and experienced and bring energy and enthusiasm to their subject area. Learners enjoy their classes and are very happy with the provision made for them.
35. Where learners with additional personal care needs have been identified at enrolment, staff from residential homes have been effectively used to offer support. General support by tutors in skills for life and ESOL classes is satisfactory. Information, advice and guidance is satisfactory.
36. Initial assessment is not effectively given by all tutors. It is not consistently used to inform and individualise course planning. Tutors use a variety of initial and diagnostic assessment strategies. Insufficient use is made of initial assessment to plan learning. Individual learning plans do not always contain targets that are sufficiently detailed to enable learners and staff to assess the distance learners travel during their time on the course. Although there has been some progress on linking existing assessment and recording procedures to the recognising and recording progress and achievement process, the process itself is not understood by all staff and has not yet been fully implemented.
37. The use of information and learning technology (ILT) is insufficient. Most classrooms have no computer technology facilities. In one venue computers were available but were not used. In ESOL sessions insufficient use is made of interactive technologies to stimulate and to reinforce learning points. Some tutors lack confidence to use ILT in their teaching even if it is available. Most session plans and schemes of work showed very little evidence of use of ILT in teaching. Many learners are proficient in using computers and would welcome the opportunity to work with computers on their courses. Some learners are given

websites to access at home, but insufficient direction is given during sessions to make the best use of them.

Leadership and management

38. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership is strong with a developing commitment to quality improvement. The observation of teaching and learning is conducted regularly and supports staff in developing and improving their practice. However, the results of observations are not consistently used in the annual appraisal process. Communication between managers and sessional tutors and learning support assistants is good. All staff are appropriately qualified and experienced and bring energy and enthusiasm to their teaching. Tutors and support staff working with learners with learning disabilities value the support they receive from managers. Arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. The self-assessment report successfully captures the key performance data but does miss some key areas for improvement identified during the inspection

Family learning

Good: Grade 2

Context

39. CAL offers family language, literacy and numeracy courses (FLLN), wider family learning courses (WFL) and core WFL courses which learners pay to attend. The FLLN and WFL programmes are available to parents and carers in areas of greatest deprivation. WFL courses including family arts and crafts, health and modern foreign languages are given in children's centres and community venues across the borough and two main CAL centres. FLLN courses are located in schools. Courses vary from ten to 60 hours. Individual projects and taster courses are used to attract new learners. Courses are mainly held during the daytime with some on Saturday mornings. Currently, 16% of learners are from minority ethnic communities compared with an overall 7% in the borough. Also, 92% of learners are women. There were 224 courses in 2005-06 with 1153 learners. At the time of inspection there were 94 learners. Accreditation is optional on FLLN intensive courses. Provision is managed by an adult learning organiser, with one WFL part-time tutor and two fractional FLLN tutors.

Strengths

- Good development of skills and knowledge
- Good teaching and learning
- Well managed development work with local partnerships
- Wide range of interesting programmes

Areas for improvement

- Poor use of accreditation
- Insufficient targeting of learners for FLLN courses

Achievement and standards

40. Learners develop good skills and knowledge. Their confidence is much improved and they develop good parenting strategies to allow them to talk to their children without shouting. They develop appropriate social skills and behaviour in schools learning to control aggression. Their relationships with teachers are much improved. Learners understand their children's behaviour and develop good skills in making games and activities to help their children learn. Retention is good. In 2005-06 FLLN retention was 85% and in WFL 82%.

41. There is poor use of accreditation. A total of 10 learners in 2005-06 achieved national tests successfully. Learners are advised that they may have to wait several months for tests or for further literacy and numeracy courses. There is no access to online testing and online practice papers for learners in CAL. Learners have to travel to a centre to complete written tests.

Quality of provision

42. Teaching and learning is good. Teaching is well-planned and structured. Thorough schemes of work and lesson plans are used well to plan a wide range of group activities engaging the learners. Initial assessment is sensitive to the needs of hard-to-reach learners. On WFL courses tutors negotiate course content well and use group learning plans. Outcomes are evidenced creatively including the use of photographs, small booklets and wall hanging projects. Learners understand and explain key stages very well. Parents have a good understanding of their own learning and that of their children, including improved knowledge of literacy and numeracy. They understand new school methods of mathematical calculations. Paper and craft based resources are satisfactory. School computers are used for some projects however, tutors do not have laptops to take to outreach centres.
43. There is a wide range of interesting programmes. CAL provides a varied programme with partnerships and across areas of deprivation. Good use is made of taster sessions and projects to attract hard-to-reach learners. CAL works well with teachers and other staff to respond flexibly to requests for bespoke programmes. There is good use of school clusters to maximise funding and resources and extend choice. Most WFL courses are offered in arts and crafts, health and modern foreign languages. Additionally, to extend wider family learning opportunities the service provides family learning courses and weekend courses usually in two main CAL centres. These courses have fees with entitlement to fee remission.
44. Development work with local partnerships is well-managed. Partners appreciate the professional and responsive work and support of CAL. Communication with partners is good, with CAL taking a lead in partnership groups. In one instance, CAL worked with over 30 schools in the borough contributing to the planning and delivery of consultation and awareness raising sessions in schools. CAL takes significant responsibility for recruiting learners to courses, both directly by targeting parents in playgrounds and coffee mornings and indirectly through attractive publicity distributed through schools. Team members are highly enthusiastic and are well-matched in terms of experience and skills to the needs of the various partners. CAL shares good practice well and takes a lead in disseminating information to partners. Recruitment in 2005-06 was good with increasing numbers in 2006-07. Local authority and LSC targets have been exceeded.
45. Support for learners and information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Support in sessions is appropriate and sensitively given. Requests for advice and information are responded to promptly. An impartial careers adviser either visits FLLN classes or contacts individual learners by phone. Interviews are available for learners with below level 2 qualifications only due to external funding restrictions. Learners are signposted to other external providers. Several learners have progressed to courses offered by other providers in the area. However, there is insufficient systematic use of data to identify progression of learners.

46. There is insufficient targeting of individual learners most likely to benefit from literacy, numeracy or language provision. FLLN programmes are not being used to target lower level learners effectively. All partners do try to encourage those learners most likely to benefit. CAL has an open access policy with particular classes and key stages being targeted. Several learners on FLLN courses already have above level 2 qualifications including accountants and graduate parents who are keen to know how their children learn in schools. Information from careers guidance indicates that of 20 people who had requested follow up advice seven had above level 2 qualifications.

Leadership and management

47. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Communications are satisfactory and improving. Partnership work is good and recruitment is improving. Arrangements for recognising and recording progress and achievement are satisfactory. Centres are fit for purpose though space for crèche facilities is a problem on some sites. The self-assessment report is insufficiently detailed but is generally accurate. There was little involvement of tutors in the self-assessment report process. Recognising and recording progress and achievement arrangements for appraisals and training are satisfactory. Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

Community development

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

48. There are 65 learners on seven community development courses. In the current year, 364 learners have been given training. This is an increase from 2005-06 where there were 316 learners for the full year. In 2005-06 there was a total of 38 courses. This has increased to 47. Training is mainly given in weekly two-hour sessions for a 10 week term. These can be both daytime and evening, given in a range of community venues. Currently 85% of learners are women and 27% are from minority ethnic communities. In addition to direct training, the provision also entails building capacity in the community through capital grants and resources. The provision is managed by three adult learning organisers (ALO's) who take responsibility for, respectively, single regeneration budget (SRB) funded provision, NLDC provision and general community development in response to need. Seven part-time tutors also teach on the courses.

Strengths

- Good development of skills and confidence
- Very effective partnerships which meet the needs of vulnerable learners
- Very effective team working

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient use of initial assessment in planning and recording progress
- Some gaps in the monitoring of quality
- Insufficiently developed strategic planning

Achievement and standards

49. Learners develop good skills and gain much confidence through community development activities. They often gain good workplace skills allowing a number to subsequently access paid and voluntary work. Learners on childcare related training programmes are gaining jobs in relevant workplaces. Some from skills for life programmes now confidently sit on management committees. One group that came together for a particular course formed an action group to improve the local environment around the train station. Other learners are gaining certificates in food hygiene, first aid and mini-bus driving to allow them to better support voluntary groups in the community like football clubs, dads and lads groups and youth work. Community link workers are developing their skills to better support and improve their local communities through an accredited course in community development. Capital grants to 10 organisations across the area have greatly improved ICT facilities for local people enabling them to participate in training they might otherwise not have been able to access.

Quality of provision

50. Partnerships are very effective at meeting the needs of vulnerable learners. NLDC projects effectively target areas of deprivation with good use of appropriate partners who have a good knowledge of and presence in the local communities. Minority ethnic organisations are well represented in the partnerships and play an effective role in attracting the 27% of minority ethnic learners in the provision. This is significantly higher than the local population. Capital funding is well used to support partners and ensure some upgrading of equipment and premises is made in areas of most need. Partners work creatively together to combine various funding streams to maximise the learning offer. Partners work effectively to identify specific training to meet the needs of the community, such as the community development course and mini-bus training so that the relevant voluntary and community groups can better operate. They work well together to increase the capacity in the community to provide neighbourhood services. Work with family services has been productive in greatly increasing childcare training, a shortage area. Good work is undertaken with women's centres to recruit very vulnerable learners and build their skills and self-esteem. Individual learners make a valuable contribution to the community and develop good personal skills. Personal and career options improve.
51. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. In some instances there is good access to impartial qualified guidance workers but this is not universal across the provision. The prospectus is satisfactorily distributed. Support for learners is satisfactory.
52. Initial assessment, including skills for life, is insufficiently used to measure accurate starting points of learners. Measurement of subsequent progress thereafter is insufficiently accurate or unnecessarily delayed. Some learners had to re-write an entire module of learning to enable them to continue the course at a higher level. This was despite some initial assessment activities. Some learners complete only rudimentary self-assessment activities that give little if any useful information to tutors. However, in one instance of initial assessment activities, the setting of individual learning plans and targets were good, detailed and used well to drive progress. Teaching and learning overall is satisfactory.

Leadership and management

53. Team management is good. The re-structure has given ALO's much more clarity in their roles and in the mission of the service. Weekly team meetings are used well to ensure that workers understand each others' role and how various projects can work together. The team are highly responsive to community demands. They work well across the geographic area and understand the wide variety of voluntary and community organisations across the patch. They work well across the various curriculum areas. Good use is made of both internal and external partnerships to extend the service the team can give. Use of data is satisfactory.

54. There are gaps in the monitoring of quality. Some good work has been implemented to ensure contracts are financially and legally sound and partners are well supported by informal visits. However, community provision is not specifically included in the observation of teaching and learning process. Initial assessment and individual planning is not sufficiently assessed. Learner progression is insufficiently well monitored. The recognising and recording progress and achievement process is under-developed. While there are a range of partners offering provision and a good quality booklet has been produced to help providers sign post learners to alternative courses, there has as yet been insufficient mapping of the progression routes for learners. There is no systematic monitoring of the progression routes of all learners, though in SRB learner monitoring is being effectively done.
55. Strategic planning is insufficiently developed. While the restructure has been well-managed and roles and responsibilities are now much clearer, the transition has led to heavy work loads for staff. Staff have area plans and individual targets, but longer term strategies across the provision are yet to be developed. The three ALO's work effectively together however, the three strands of work they represent are not yet sufficiently integrated or mapped to ensure they are working as effectively as they could. A partnership group has recently been formed to lead the strategy and build a more coherent programme, but this is not yet in a position to take this forward. Area plans are well researched and are a good tool for planning. Longer term strategies to address crucial capacity issues like the shortage of skills for life tutors are yet to be developed.

