

INSPECTION REPORT

Bristol LEA

02 December 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based training for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Overall judgement

In those cases where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, or
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

SUMMARY

The provider

Bristol Local Education Authority is a direct provider of adult and community learning through its community education service. This service is part of the education, inclusion and regeneration section of the authority. The local education authority has two distinct sections of adult and community provision. The first is the general adult education programme providing a range of accredited and non-accredited courses. The second is a range of community learning and widening participation projects in partnership with local groups and other organisations. These projects are targeted at under-represented groups of learners within the city of Bristol. The areas of learning inspected are business administration, management and professional; information and communications technology; hospitality, sport, leisure and travel; health, social care and public services; visual and performing arts and media; humanities; English, languages and communications; foundation programmes, and courses in family learning and community learning.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the quality of provision in teacher training, crèche and classroom assistant training; foundation programmes, and community learning is good. For information and communications technology; sport and leisure; visual and performing arts; languages, and family learning it is satisfactory. The provision for humanities is unsatisfactory. Leadership and management, and quality assurance arrangements, are unsatisfactory. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

GRADES

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	4

Areas of learning	Grade
Business administration, management & professional	2
Information & communications technology	3
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3
Health, social care & public services	2
Visual & performing arts & media	3
Humanities	4
English, languages & communications	3
Foundation programmes	2
Family learning	3
Community learning	2

KEY STRENGTHS

- very effective internal and external partnerships
- particularly effective strategies for widening participation
- good standards of teaching and learning in most areas

KEY WEAKNESSES

- poor strategic management of the general adult education programme
- inadequate analysis and use of data for planning and target-setting
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements
- insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more structured approach to training and development
- more strategic emphasis on adult and community learning within the LEA
- better access for people with restricted mobility

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of 19 inspectors spent a total of 94 days at Bristol Local Education Authority (the LEA) in December 2002. They interviewed 637 learners, carried out 253 interviews with staff and made 74 visits to different sites. Inspectors observed and graded 113 learning sessions. They examined a range of documents, including learners' work, curriculum paperwork, individual learning plans, promotional literature, policies, team plans, minutes of meetings, self-assessment reports and adult learning plans. The first self-assessment report was prepared by Bristol LEA in March 2002, and updated in preparation for the inspection.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Business administration, management & professional	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	5
Information & communications technology	0	3	3	2	0	1	0	9
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	1	1	3	1	1	0	0	7
Health, social care & public services	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	6
Visual & performing arts & media	1	2	8	10	3	0	0	24
Humanities	0	1	2	3	1	0	0	7
English, languages & communications	1	2	3	5	0	0	0	11
Foundation programmes	3	4	9	9	1	0	0	26
Family learning	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Community learning	2	2	5	5	1	0	0	15
Total	9	17	37	42	7	1	0	113
per cent	55.75%			37.17%	7.08%			

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. The LEA's community education service (the service) for providing adult and community learning is managed by Bristol City Council's (the council) director of education and lifelong learning who is supported by four managers. The service is a direct provider of adult and community learning funded through the West of England Learning and Skills Council (LSC), with fees generated from learners and a range of other funds from local and national agencies. The service manages funding which is available to widen participation in adult and community learning. Community and voluntary organisations can bid for this funding to develop their adult and community learning provision.

3. The LEA's main lifelong learning strategic objective is to bring adult learning to communities in the city of Bristol, which have been previously excluded from a range of learning opportunities. It does this while maintaining a traditional general adult education programme for adult learners. There is an increasing emphasis within the LEA on providing more 'first rung' opportunities for learners in Bristol. This has been recognised by the LEA and is covered in the service's new objectives set out in the adult learning plan for 2002-03. The fastest growing area of work is the community learning programme which covers curriculum areas such as community action and employment-related learning.

4. The LEA, together with other providers, is involved in the provision and co-ordination of a number of projects to widen participation. It works in partnership with voluntary organisations, community groups, schools, colleges, universities and other departments within the council to provide its programme of courses. The LEA uses more than 130 venues in the city. Eleven lifelong learning networks have been set up across Bristol to identify the learning needs of local communities and to organise education and training in partnership with other providers. These networks are located in targeted neighbourhoods, including neighbourhood renewal areas.

5. Enrolments on the LEA's adult and community learning courses increased from just over 10,000 in 2000-01 to more than 12,000 in 2001-02. The most significant area of growth over the two-year period has been the widening participation projects, where the number of enrolments has risen from almost 300 to over 2000. Seventy-five per cent of the enrolments are female learners, which reflects the national average for adult and community learning. Fee reductions of 75 per cent are offered to those learners in receipt of means-tested benefits or a disability allowance who are enrolling for courses which do not lead to a qualification. Courses that lead to a qualification are free of charge for these learners. In addition, no fees are charged for learners who attend basic skills courses, English classes for speakers of additional languages, or those attending courses specifically for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The service can, at their discretion, enrol other learners on courses free of charge, if they produce

evidence of continuing financial hardship.

6. Bristol is the largest city in the west of England with a population of approximately 410,000. Historically, the city's economy has been based on its status as a major port, but its biggest areas of commercial expansion are now finance, science, service industries and technology. Bristol has good communications networks. The quality of these communications and the presence of two major universities contribute to the city's relative economic success. In contrast, there are areas of extreme deprivation in Bristol, resulting from the decline of traditional industries in the city. In May 2002, the unemployment rate within Bristol Unitary Authority was 2.3 per cent compared with a national rate of 3 per cent. According to the 1991 census, Bristol's minority ethnic communities represent 5.1 per cent of the population, compared with 6.2 per cent nationally.

Adult and Community Learning

7. Achievement rates are good on most externally accredited courses. On non-accredited courses, achievement rates are mostly satisfactory and sometimes good. In most cases, learners make good progress towards achieving their learning goals and many learners progress to other courses or into employment. Most of the learning sessions observed by inspectors were graded as being good or better. Most teachers are experienced, although a significant number of them do not have a teaching qualification. However, there is insufficient planning of individual learning on many courses. Initial assessment is weak for most courses. Individual learning plans are used effectively to plan and support progress on some courses, but are not used at all on others. Progression routes are not always clear to learners.

8. Good individual support is available for most learners throughout their course. Tutors are sensitive to the needs of adult learners. They often go to considerable lengths to support learners outside the classroom and to ensure that they receive effective advice and guidance. There are some poor enrolment and induction procedures. Course descriptions in the LEA prospectus are the only sources of information available to help learners decide on a course before enrolling. Some learners receive no induction to their course and have insufficient awareness of important procedures.

9. There is a good range of provision in some subject areas. Learners can choose from a wide variety of courses at different levels. These courses are offered at different times of the week in a range of venues. However, in many cases, the subjects offered are based on the expertise of the tutors currently employed and there has been little change to the curriculum offered for a number of years. A large proportion of courses in certain subjects is cancelled.

10. Resources are satisfactory. The LEA uses a wide range of accessible local venues for its adult and community learning provision. Classrooms are adequately furnished and equipped. Learners feel comfortable in familiar surroundings although, in some cases, the accommodation is not suitable for adult learners. Access for learners with restricted mobility is good at some centres, although a number of buildings need to be adapted to meet the requirements of new legislation. The availability of learning resources is inadequate for many courses. Tutors have insufficient access to resources in many centres and frequently have to purchase their own materials.

11. There are good partnership arrangements with a wide range of external organisations and council departments. These help to widen participation in education by many groups of under-represented learners. The LEA has a strong commitment to partnership working and takes a leading role in many community initiatives. It offers a number of effective and innovative programmes for learners who have traditionally been excluded from learning. However, the management of its traditional adult learning programme is weak. Curriculum review and planning of this provision are poor and are restricted by inadequate analysis and use of data for planning and target-setting. There are no targets for enrolments and learner numbers. Arrangements for ensuring equality

of opportunity for all learners are not well established. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate. There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom. Feedback from learners and staff is not used effectively to contribute to the future planning of the provision, or to ensure an effective cycle of continuous improvement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**Grade 4**

12. Adult and community learning provision in Bristol is the responsibility of the community education service which forms part of the education, inclusion and regeneration directorate of the LEA. The adult and community learning programme is managed by the community education team. In total, there are 518 members of staff. Forty-seven full-time staff are employed for the management and administration of the service. There are 461 part-time tutors and 10 staff on fixed-term or externally funded contracts. The community education manager and seven team leaders are responsible for the management of the provision. The managers of two of the learning centres form the remainder of the management team. The team reports to the head of education, inclusion and regeneration who is accountable to the director of education and lifelong learning. The management team is responsible for monitoring the introduction and use of the strategic policy for adult and community learning in Bristol. The most recent adult learning plan for 2002-03 was completed in March 2002. Equality of opportunity is the responsibility of the equalities and community action team leader. The education and lifelong learning department has an equalities action plan based on the council's integrated equalities policy. Quality assurance is managed by the team leader for quality and staff development. There is a draft policy and some written procedures. A number of corporate functions are managed centrally by the council, for example personnel, health and safety and property maintenance. Bristol LEA produced its first self-assessment report in March 2002. An updated self-assessment report was produced in preparation for the inspection.

STRENGTHS

- very effective internal and external partnerships
- particularly effective strategies for widening participation

WEAKNESSES

- poor strategic management of the general adult education programme
- inadequate analysis and use of data for planning and target-setting
- insufficient monitoring of equality of opportunity
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more structured approach to training and development
- more strategic emphasis on adult and community learning within the LEA
- better access to some centres for people with restricted mobility

13. Bristol LEA works very effectively with a wide range of internal and external

partners to offer learning opportunities to adult learners. The LEA has a strong commitment to partnership working and is taking a leading role in recognising the changing nature of adult and community learning in the city. The LEA has good internal working relationships with other departments in the council which lead to direct benefits for learners. Community education service staff often initiate new areas of work with cross-council departments. For example, a joint project with Bristol social services department has led to training in basic skills for home-care assistants. The LEA is taking a leading role in a new lifelong learning strategic forum for Bristol, bringing together a group of adult and community learning providers to consider how provision could be improved. The LEA manages a community learning development project which is trying to find a common approach to 'first rung' learning across four local unitary authorities. The LEA has established a clear commitment to joint working through the evolving local strategic partnership and neighbourhood renewal strategy which are supporting the development of 10 local community partnerships and collaborative action plans. A wide range of multi-agency groups regularly focus on strategically important learning areas across Bristol. The community education team works closely with local residents to develop new learning centres as part of the neighbourhood renewal initiatives. However, there is only limited strategic emphasis on the role of community education in the LEA. The strategic priorities of the education and lifelong learning department primarily support family learning and do not acknowledge the wider benefits that adult and community learning bring to the residents of Bristol.

14. The LEA has been very successful in generating additional funding to support widening participation projects and other learning activities. In 2001-02, external funding of more than 1.5 million pounds was used to support 31 multi-agency projects. Because of its strong external partnerships, the LEA has been particularly effective in using this short-term regeneration funding, together with its core funding, to increase learning opportunities.

15. Professional development and training are satisfactory for the LEA's staff. Staff are well motivated and committed to the development and provision of good quality adult and community learning services. The LEA has a staff development policy and an annual staff development handbook, together with a comprehensive short-course programme detailing a wide range of courses available to all staff. They are encouraged to take part in training courses and are expected to participate in one training and development activity annually, as part of their contract. There is no charge to staff for this training and development activity. Staff are also allowed to enrol on any adult and community learning course free of charge. The handbook states that staff development priorities are linked to targets identified in team plans. However, the training provided does not always reflect the key strategic objectives of the LEA or the weaknesses in provision highlighted in the self-assessment report. Some of the training is only offered once every year and there is insufficient evening or weekend provision to suit tutors who may be teaching during the day. Relevant team-building and social events are held throughout the year and all staff receive a comprehensive newsletter twice a month. Staff induction sessions are arranged every term, but these are frequently held at points in the year when a tutor may already have been teaching for a number of weeks. Some

new staff have not yet attended an induction session. Only half of the core team have received an appraisal within the past year. All part-time tutors are entitled to an appraisal, but few take advantage of this offer. The LEA has recently introduced a new corporate performance management scheme to improve the monitoring of staff.

16. The strategic management of the general adult education programme is poor. The new team leaders were appointed in April 2002 and curriculum teams are not yet fully established. Until this restructuring of the management team, there was no-one with specific subject expertise responsible for the curriculum areas within the general adult education programme. There has been poor curriculum planning in some subject areas, a narrow range of provision and insufficient progression routes for learners. There is inadequate provision at certain times of the week in some curriculum areas, making it difficult for learners to choose courses to suit their needs. For example, there are few evening or weekend courses in information and communications technology (ICT) and very little daytime provision in sport and leisure. The provision in some subject areas is restricted to certain venues or parts of the city. For example, almost all language courses are offered at one site in the north of Bristol. Staff do not know what courses have been cancelled or why courses are no longer available. There is no analysis of the reasons why courses are cancelled. In some curriculum areas, there are not enough staff to manage the wide range of courses. Links between different curriculum areas are incomplete, leading to insufficient sharing of good practice. Managers have not been given clear budgetary allocations for their programme area. There is no review of the curriculum and insufficient integration of the general adult education programme with the community learning projects. There are not enough progression routes from entry-level learning into more mainstream provision.

17. The LEA has no clear strategy for the regular collection of reliable data about learners, its analysis or subsequent use for planning the adult and community learning provision. The small amount of data that are collected is historical and is only produced at the end of the academic or financial year, making it very difficult for team leaders to regularly monitor progress against their team plans. Targets for enrolments and learner numbers are not set, as there are not enough reliable data on which to base future plans. There are no projections for learner numbers, or categories of learners in the 2002-03 strategic plan. The analysis of learners for 2001-02 by gender, disability, age and those needing additional support is inaccurate. Staff are unable to analyse any key trends in performance. They have no confidence in the reliability of the data and are not sure how to use what is produced to plan their learning programmes. For example, the data on retention and achievement rates are unreliable, so staff have poor awareness of these two measures of performance. Answers to requests for data are not always on time, and the data are often incomplete. Until January 2001, the LEA employed only one person to work with all the data produced by the service. Team leaders and tutors cannot easily access data in their workplaces. The LEA has received a grant from the local LSC in 2002 to upgrade and expand the management information system and a consultant has recently been employed to produce more reliable data for the past academic year.

Equality of opportunity**Contributory grade 3**

18. As the result of consultation with community groups and local networks, Bristol LEA offers a number of particularly effective and innovative programmes for learners from under-represented groups. These programmes bring a significant number of non-traditional, excluded and disadvantaged learners into learning. For example, a home tuition scheme for Asian women who cannot attend classes in learning centres has been in operation since April 2000. Some learners feel sufficiently confident to join local English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes. The LEA is managing a project involving a number of other countries to encourage non-traditional approaches to engaging hard-to-reach groups of learners. Somali learners from Denmark are visiting ESOL classes in Bristol to share their experiences of living and learning in a different culture. This initiative has been singled out as an example of good practice by a national organisation for adult and community learning. Short courses are offered to older learners living in sheltered accommodation in neighbourhood renewal areas. The courses are highly valued by learners who would normally have restricted opportunities in their community for acquiring new skills. A men's family learning project, funded by neighbourhood renewal, is involving fathers in a range of learning activities and providing them with childcare facilities free of charge.

19. The LEA does not monitor equal opportunities sufficiently. The service uses an integrated equalities policy drawn up by the council. This policy has recently been revised to include social inclusion and anti-harassment policies as well as policies that relate to disability, age, religious belief, gender, young people, race and sexual orientation. This comprehensive policy requires each department to establish its own equality of opportunity targets annually. Departmental targets are published in an annual equal opportunities action plan. Following consultation, this new policy will be implemented across all of the LEA's services and each department will be required to carry out race impact assessments, audit current practices and carry out equality impact assessments. However, training for this has not yet taken place. An equalities and community action team was appointed in May 2002 and they are now developing a clear equal opportunities strategy for the service. There are new procedures, but it is too early to judge the effect of these on the learners. Until recently, the LEA has not monitored course registration by gender, ethnicity or disability in order to identify gaps in the service or to plan provision. Data relating to learners and staff are unreliable and cannot be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the equal opportunities policies, or to set targets for improvement. There is no analysis of retention and achievement relating to different groups of learners. A comprehensive programme of training on equality of opportunity is offered to staff regularly, but the LEA is unsure whether staff have used the training in their teaching practice.

20. Bristol LEA directly owns and manages four venues that are used exclusively for adult and community learning. Courses are also offered at a wide range of other sites owned by the LEA and by other organisations. Access for learners with restricted mobility is good at some centres. Ramps and lifts are available and there are dedicated car parking spaces for disabled people in car parks close to the centres. There are also accessible

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toilets. However, other centres are not fully accessible. An access strategy is being developed in response to the recent legislation to ensure that all buildings meet the needs of people with disabilities. Some buildings will no longer be used for classes and others will be adapted to meet the requirements of the new legislation.

Quality assurance**Contributory grade 4**

21. Although Bristol LEA is committed to the continuous improvement of its adult and community education provision, the current quality assurance arrangements are inadequate. The self-assessment report recognises many of the weaknesses in the quality assurance arrangements. A draft quality assurance policy has been prepared by the LEA, but this is still under consultation. It includes a list of aims, but does not currently specify the procedures that need to be employed to achieve these aims.

22. There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning. Internal moderation of the observation scheme involves paired observations and meetings between observers to discuss issues arising. Some tutors have never been observed in the classroom and the outcomes of the lesson observation scheme do not contribute to staff appraisals. There are a significant number of tutors without teaching qualifications. There is poor teaching in some curriculum areas. A new observation system has recently been introduced. Observers have been appointed and trained in those curriculum areas where there have previously been insufficient observations. Lesson observations are now being graded. Seventeen graded observations have taken place so far in the 2002-03 academic year. Feedback from learners is also collected during their courses, but it is unclear what happens to the information produced. The results from a tutor survey carried out in October 2001 have been collated, but not analysed or used for future planning of the service. Internal verification is not carried out on some accredited courses.

23. There are examples of poor health and safety practices. Learners are informed of health and safety procedures at induction, but some do not know where to find fire exits in classrooms. New health and safety procedures are currently being written by the LEA. There is poor seating and lighting at some teaching venues. Very few risk assessments have been carried out for sports and leisure venues. Staff have now been trained in how to assess risk.

Good Practice

The LEA has a trainee tutor scheme to increase the number of tutors whose backgrounds are representative of the local communities. These trainee tutors shadow an experienced tutor for up to one year. The responsibilities and entitlements of both parties are clearly identified and include payments for the tutor and the learner. Seven learners graduated from this scheme in 2001-02 and are now employed by the service in a variety of roles.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Grade 2

24. At the time of the inspection, there were 386 enrolments on teacher training courses operated by the LEA. These courses are currently available at five centres across the city and there are plans for the courses to be offered in two neighbourhood renewal areas. Training individuals to be their own community's educators, or to promote learning in their own community is one of the local LSC's key objectives and the LEA is targeting these two areas to widen the representation of excluded communities in the service's team of tutors. The teacher training programme includes externally accredited teaching certificates and a number of other short accredited courses, covering specific areas of teaching and learning support. The programme of accredited courses is also supplemented by a range of non-accredited provision, particularly in ICT and a short-course programme which is designed to meet the changing needs of tutors. A five-week introductory course on how to teach adults is offered free of charge. All courses are open to the general public, practising tutors or other community education staff. A tutor organiser and 11 tutors are responsible for the provision of the teacher training programme. They liaise with other community education staff and a range of external organisations to identify the needs of learners and to provide appropriate training.

STRENGTHS

- excellent individual support for learners
- good achievement of additional qualifications
- well-planned courses that meet the needs of learners

WEAKNESSES

- inadequate analysis and use of data for planning and target-setting

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better publicising of additional support for learners
- better access to learning resources

25. Learners on teacher training courses receive excellent individual support from staff. There is a comprehensive system for enrolling learners on courses, including a detailed individual interview with a tutor and a pre-course meeting. Impartial guidance from tutors enables learners to pick the most appropriate courses to suit their individual needs. Good individual support is available throughout the courses. Learners

interviewed spoke highly of the fact that tutors are often available at times outside their normal working hours to provide advice and guidance. Weekly learning logs are regularly monitored and used effectively to update tutors about the progress of individual learners. Staff are knowledgeable in guiding learners towards the best opportunities available to them once they have completed their studies. Support offered by staff is sensitive to the individual needs of learners. Additional support is available if required, to meet specific learning needs, or to help with the costs of travel, books and childcare. However, not all learners are aware that this support is available.

26. Learners achieve a wide range of additional accredited qualifications during their teacher training, in areas such as report writing, presentation skills, education guidance and equality of opportunity. Those learners interviewed are very positive about the difference that these qualifications make to them, and report increased confidence and self-esteem. Many of the learners who have previously achieved teacher training qualifications with the LEA are now tutors themselves and are acting as positive role models within their local communities.

27. Teacher training courses are well planned and meet the needs of learners. All courses have detailed aims and objectives. The tutor organiser for teacher training works closely with other community education staff and a range of external organisations to identify local needs and provide appropriate training. Suggestions for new courses are often forwarded by the 11 lifelong learning networks or the development workers based at a number of the venues.

28. Retention and achievement rates for the main teacher training courses are satisfactory. In 2001-02 the retention and achievement rates were 92 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively. Attendance in lessons is good and learners are enthusiastic about their learning experiences.

29. The standard of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lesson plans are clear and concise. Tutors evaluate their own teaching at the end of each learning session and make alterations to lesson plans if necessary. In the best sessions, tutors use a good variety of teaching techniques to cater for different learning styles. In a number of classes, learners are encouraged to work together and learn from each other. However, in some learning sessions graded by inspectors as satisfactory, the teaching styles used are insufficiently stimulating. Learners are required to evaluate their own progress each week in a personal development journal which is reviewed by their tutor.

30. Teacher training is carried out at six centres across the city of Bristol. Most centres have good physical resources and are planned to encourage a comfortable learning environment. Learning resources are used effectively by tutors and a wide variety of up-to-date textbooks and videos are available to support their teaching. Most tutors and learners have access to computing facilities. However, all the learning resources are based at one centre which restricts access for some learners, and for those tutors who are part time and based at other centres.

31. The assessment and monitoring of learners' progress is satisfactory. At the start of the teacher training courses, learners are provided with a course handbook which explains the assessment requirements. However, there is no initial assessment of learners' additional learning needs or skills before they start their course. Assessments have clear criteria and tutors give continuous support to learners to enable them to complete their work. Regular and useful feedback is given to learners on how they might improve. Where appropriate, learners are given additional time and tutorial support after the course has ended to finish their work and achieve the qualification. All assessed work is internally moderated and records are held by the tutor organiser.

32. The analysis and use of data for planning and target-setting is inadequate. Data are not systematically collected, analysed or used to monitor the recruitment, retention, achievement or progression of learners. They are not used for planning continuous improvement. There are some gaps in quality assurance processes. Although classroom observations of tutors are used to identify their training needs, there are not enough overall reviews of the quality of teaching and learning. Examples of good or poor teaching practice are not shared. However, there is some effective use of learners' feedback, for example, to introduce new courses and to change the timing of some courses for the convenience of learners.

33. Those learners interviewed enjoy their courses and are impressed by the levels of support offered by all staff in teacher training. They feel that staff are dedicated and provide a supportive learning environment. They welcome the opportunity to attend a wide range of courses provided locally, at times which suit their needs. Learners feel they have benefited from the courses. They gain new skills, meet new people and their confidence and self-esteem improves, enabling them to contribute positively in their community and find employment.

Information & communications technology**Grade 3**

34. Currently, there are almost 400 learners enrolled on ICT courses. There were over 1,000 enrolments on 144 courses in 2001-02. Most of the provision takes place at two main sites. Other courses are provided at a range of venues around the city and at several secondary schools. There is also a range of community projects involving ICT. These community projects involve a number of partnership arrangements. Open access provision is offered to a number of community groups through the many UK online centres across the city. The UK online centres in the north and south of Bristol are managed by two development workers, one of whom is acting ICT co-ordinator for the community education service. Tutors use shared laptops in community locations, setting up networks for access to the Internet. There are 70 tutors, who mostly work part time and at a wide range of learning centres in the city. A variety of ICT programmes is available, ranging from introductory short, single session non-accredited courses to longer, accredited courses which last for up to a year. Most courses are offered during the day with a small amount of evening and weekend provision. Courses are designed for learners to progress from introductory level to accredited provision. In addition, there are a number of open access learning sessions where learners can study for qualifications, revise learning from their main course or simply use the computers for leisure.

STRENGTHS

- good standards of teaching and learning
- successful sharing of learning resources
- effective partnership working

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient monitoring and assessment of learners' progress
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better information, advice and guidance
- better analysis and monitoring of staff training needs

35. There are satisfactory retention and achievement rates on accredited courses. In 2001-02, the retention and achievement rates were both almost 80 per cent. Attendance rates are currently poor, averaging 66 per cent. Most learners are achieving their main goals, gaining in confidence and often progressing to other

courses. The open access sessions enable students to study their own chosen topics at a pace that suits them.

36. There are good standards of teaching and learning in ICT. Almost 70 per cent of the teaching observations were graded by inspectors as being good, or better. Classes are well planned with clear schemes of work and learning objectives. The best learning sessions are very well structured, providing a good learning experience in which learners' abilities are challenged. Learners are encouraged to support each other and share ideas. In the better sessions, learners set their own learning goals and sometimes evaluate each other's performance. However, in some learning sessions there is insufficient planning to meet with the different needs of individuals in the group. In larger classes, learners sometimes have to wait a long time for help from the tutor.

37. There are good learning resources at most of the centres used for ICT courses. These resources are successfully shared between the centres. The UK online centres have very good resources, including an extensive range of computers, laptops, projectors and cameras. Learners with disabilities have access to a range of specially adapted computer hardware and software. Staff are given training on how to use this equipment. All sites have fast Internet access. However, where centres are linked to the Internet via the city education network, there are problems accessing some sites. Good learning materials are provided in most lessons, but one workshop did not have enough material to practise with. Animation software is inadequate for some specialist courses. There are not enough technical staff to maintain the large number of computers.

38. There are a number of effective partnership arrangements providing a wide range of accessible ICT courses. These partnerships have been used to develop entry-level courses which attract under-represented groups, including families into learning. For example, the community education service successfully works in partnership with the libraries' service to provide taster courses in ICT in a number of branch libraries. The service has taken a leading role in the development of two UK online projects in Bristol which support the development of community-based access to ICT, through joint working with a wide range of community groups, voluntary organisations and schools.

39. The initial assessments of learners' needs or skills are inadequate. In a few learning sessions tutors devise their own methods for assessing learners' previous experience of ICT. Other additional support needs that may be required are not always identified, although support is made available quickly if a requirement is subsequently discovered. Individual learning plans are not used consistently and those that are used have unclear targets and are not reviewed regularly. Although learners clearly progress and achieve their own goals, there is insufficient formal monitoring and assessment of learners' progress. Most feedback to learners is verbal. There is insufficient use of written feedback.

40. Learners find out about ICT courses through the annual prospectus produced by the LEA. Learners frequently enrol on courses without any additional advice or

guidance. Tutors are not involved in the recruitment process and this can lead to learners enrolling on courses which are unsuitable due to their prior learning. The standard of the induction for learners is inconsistent. There are appropriate progression routes available, but these are not always clearly understood by learners. Although a new learner handbook is being piloted, no learners on the ICT programmes observed had received one at the time of the inspection.

41. There are more than 70 ICT tutors who are mostly employed part time. Many of these staff do not have teaching qualifications. Subject-specific and general staff development sessions are available for tutors, but they are not always well attended. Tutors' training needs are not formally analysed. Very few tutors have had their teaching observed. Some tutors do meet together every term to discuss concerns, which promotes the sharing of good practice.

42. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate. Although learners' feedback is collected and analysed, the results are not used to promote continuous improvement. Only a small number of the courses offered are reviewed. Data are not used to set or monitor targets. Health and safety arrangements are inconsistent. In one centre, the chairs are not adjustable. The computer rooms in some centres are not accessible to learners with restricted mobility.

43. Those learners interviewed described the tutors as being patient and supportive. They find the centres friendly and easily accessible. They appreciate the benefits that flexible patterns of attendance can bring. They feel comfortable in the environments offered by many of the centres, but several of the learners interviewed commented on the restricted workspace at one of the learning centres. There was also criticism of there being no reduced course fees for the elderly. Most learners consider that they are working at the right pace and level, although a few are not sufficiently challenged. Learners enjoy their learning experience and report increased self-confidence and self-esteem.

Good Practice

The learners in one class have devised a schedule that they can complete which indicates when they need help from the tutor. This makes the most of the tutor's time and ensures that all problems are dealt with fairly and promptly.

Poor Practice

In one learning session the tutor had completed the register for the previous week as if all students had attended. It transpired that the lesson had not taken place as the tutor was unavailable. When asked, the tutor considered this practice to be acceptable as the time would be made up by adding 30 minutes to each of the remaining sessions.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**Grade 3**

44. Currently, there are 23 courses available in sport and leisure, covering a wide range of subjects including keep fit, yoga, bridge and wine appreciation. In 2002-03, 472 learners enrolled on courses in this area of learning. Eighty per cent of these learners are women. Six per cent of learners are from minority ethnic communities, a proportion reflecting that for minority ethnic communities in Bristol as a whole. Many courses last for one term, which is 10 to 12 weeks. A few courses last for a shorter period of five or six weeks, as in the case of the archery course. Some longer courses, such as basketball and weightlifting, operate over the full academic year, which lasts for up to 36 weeks. Most classes are for mixed-ability learners. One full-time adult learning co-ordinator and one full-time development worker are responsible for curriculum management. There are currently 29 part-time tutors who work for between two and six hours each week.

STRENGTHS

- significant promotion of learning by enthusiastic teachers
- particularly effective strategies for widening participation

WEAKNESSES

- inadequate curriculum management
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more participation by stakeholders in the self-assessment process

45. Retention rates are good. In 2001-02 there were 90 and 82 per cent on accredited and non-accredited courses, respectively. Almost all the learners starting in 2002-03 are still in learning. Achievement rates are satisfactory. Learners on non-accredited courses are performing at an appropriate level, or better, at this stage in their courses. Achievement rates on accredited courses are satisfactory, but fell from 80 per cent in 2000-01 to 52 per cent in 2001-02. There are excellent achievement rates on the basketball for wheelchair users course, where the learners have progressed from the lowest division to division one of a national basketball league over the past three years.

46. Enthusiastic teaching promotes students' confidence and motivation in their approach to their work. Teaching was graded as good or better in over 70 per cent of lessons observed by inspectors. Very knowledgeable, experienced and well-qualified tutors enhance learning. Most schemes of work are detailed and lessons are well

planned. Mixed-ability classes are well managed, using a variety of teaching methods to suit different learning styles and abilities. Clear and challenging aims and objectives are set and achieved for most learning sessions. Learners show a keen interest in learning, participate fully in lessons and are very supportive of each other. Learners demonstrate good skill development in most learning sessions. Considerable use is made of questioning to confirm individual learning and to challenge learners.

47. Resources on most courses are satisfactory, but some teaching rooms are too small and in one observed class there was an insufficient number of desks for the numbers of learners present. Risk assessments have been carried out in some venues. The LEA provides additional resources for learners as part of the course, for example, specialist maps for a wine appreciation course. However, many tutors have to provide their own resources such as tape recorders, music, balls and hoops for classes.

48. The assessment and monitoring of learning is satisfactory. Initial assessments are based on the learners' own self-assessments. Information about learners' medication and medical conditions is collected and recorded. Tutors check for any health problems at the start of each session and adjust activities according to individual needs. Health and safety issues are frequently referred to in classes. Assessment on most courses is informal and is carried out mainly by observations, questions and answers, or discussions. Written assessments are used on accredited courses. Assessment results and the progress of learners are not always recorded.

49. There are some innovative and successful initiatives to widen participation and meet the needs of local communities. A particularly effective consultation and partnership arrangement with one of the lifelong learning networks and the health service has resulted in the launch of popular armchair exercise sessions for the elderly and the disabled. These exercise sessions allow the learners to discuss health concerns appropriate to their circumstances. Close links with a local basketball club allow learners from as far away as Cheltenham and South Wales to access the provision. All resources for the basketball classes are provided by the club. There are effective strategies to recruit learners who have previously opted out of learning to a learning programme which is linked to skills shortages in the local community. Sixty learners have obtained credits in subjects such as sports coaching and life saving. But there are not enough daytime classes to meet the needs of learners.

50. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory. Adequate initial information is provided in the LEA prospectus for potential learners to be able to determine whether a particular course is appropriate for them. Learners receive more specific details from tutors at the start of their course. A new handbook for learners is currently being piloted, but it is too early to evaluate its effectiveness. Progression and career prospects are discussed between tutors and learners where appropriate. For some learners their objective is to maintain their current skills rather than to improve them. There are some good arrangements to support learners on the project. These include additional learning support within learning sessions and assistance with transport costs. Basic skills support is also offered, but some learners do not attend these sessions as they do not

form an integral part of their learning programme.

51. Curriculum management is inadequate. There is insufficient collection and analysis of data to help identify curriculum areas requiring development. The LEA has however recently produced an appropriate action plan for curriculum development which contains realistic and achievable targets.

52. Staff training and development is not sufficiently planned to meet individual or LEA objectives. Tutors have no formal appraisals or performance reviews. There are some examples of poor communication with part-time tutors.

53. Arrangements for quality assurance are weak. Not all LSC-funded partner organisations have service level agreements. There are no procedures for the monitoring of equal opportunities or health and safety in these organisations. Only two lesson observations were completed during the period 2001-02. There is no evidence of identified areas for development being followed up. Although there is a system for collecting learners' and tutors' feedback through evaluation forms at the end of the course, few of these have been completed. The self-assessment process is satisfactory, but there is insufficient consultation with learners, staff and other partner organisations involved in adult and community learning.

54. The learners interviewed value the social benefits provided by the courses. They also welcome the new skills they can acquire during the course. Many of them wish to improve and maintain their physical and mental fitness. Learners identify a wide range of health benefits such as improved flexibility. Tutors make learners feel at ease and they value the tutor's subject knowledge and expertise. Learners talk about growing confidence, the enjoyment of learning and meeting new people.

Good Practice

One tutor provides a flipchart for learners to feed back their views at end of every learning session.

Health, social care & public services**Grade 2**

55. There are currently 65 learners enrolled on an accredited intermediate course in crèche training. In 2001-02, there were 122 enrolments on 13 courses. Courses are provided in a range of different venues across the city, nine of which are in neighbourhood renewal areas. The crèche training course consists of 20 learning sessions which each last for two hours. Learners are also expected to spend up to 40 hours in a work placement. There are 44 learners enrolled on the intermediate classroom assistant course. In the period 2001-02, there were 40 learners on three courses of this type which were held at different venues in Bristol. Local schools requested a classroom assistant course, to enable them to recruit their own classroom assistants. The classroom assistant course consists of 24 weekly learning sessions which each last for two hours. Learners also spend 20 hours in a work placement. All the learners on both the crèche training and the classroom assistant courses are women. Most learners also work additional hours in a local school or nursery, as volunteers. Learners arrange their own work placements, although the community education service does provide assistance in finding work placements.

STRENGTHS

- good progression and achievement rates on classroom assistant courses
- good standards of teaching and learning
- effective partnerships to widen participation
- good learning support for individuals and groups

WEAKNESSES

- poor retention rates on crèche training courses
- poor induction procedures
- inadequate management of work placements
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more support for new and inexperienced tutors
- better resources

56. There are good achievement rates for classroom assistants. In 2001-02, 80 per cent of those learners who started the courses achieved their qualification. Most of these learners have progressed this year to a higher level of the same course. Learners achieve the learning objectives set for them and produce good standards of work. They

clearly understand their achievements and know how they can apply their classroom learning to the workplace. Retention rates on the crèche training courses are poor. There are no strategies to deal with this situation. In 2001-02, just over half of those learners who started the 13 courses completed the course. Of these, 91 per cent achieved their qualification. Many of these learners come from parts of the city targeted as neighbourhood renewal areas and do not have a background of formal education. All learners who achieve the crèche training qualification are offered employment with the LEA.

57. There are good standards of teaching and learning on both courses. Effective teaching strategies make the courses accessible and relevant to learners from non-traditional backgrounds. Tutors are often residents of the communities in which they teach and use issues of local importance to stimulate learners. Both courses have clear aims and objectives. Tutors make sure that time is allowed in class to check that learners' written work and portfolios are up-to-date. Teaching styles are appropriate and there is good use of practical activities. Tutors are enthusiastic and very well motivated. In some lessons, they bring their own materials into class to enrich the learning experience. Most tutors have a teaching qualification. New tutors are offered support if requested, but there is no formal mentoring system.

58. Resources for crèche training and classroom assistant courses are satisfactory. Courses are held in a wide range of accessible venues across the city. However, some classrooms have furniture designed for children, which is not suitable for adult learners. There is no specific budget allocated for the purchase of teaching resources. Tutors frequently have to use their own materials to enrich the learning experience. Childcare is always available during the courses.

59. Induction procedures are poor. There is no identified induction programme at the start of the courses. The first introductory classes focus only on the content of the courses. Learners are not told about important policies and procedures relating, for example, to complaints and health and safety. Until recently, there has been no formal system of initial assessment of learners' needs or skill levels before they start the courses. However, the LEA has introduced assessments for basic skills this year and additional learning support is now available. Learners' work is regularly assessed and tutors give helpful feedback on progress made. Class numbers are deliberately kept low to ensure that learners can be given individual help with their work.

60. The needs and interests of learners are met through effective partnership working. The LEA has links with a wide range of partners to the benefit of the learners. Some partnerships provide the LEA with additional funding for courses, enabling the classes to take place with a small number of learners and at a number of different venues. Most learners can also enrol free of charge on these courses. Staff have good working relationships with colleagues in areas surrounding Bristol, which allows them to share good practice and new ideas. For example, staff who provide crèche training are developing a new playwork course following discussions with early years workers across Bristol and south Gloucestershire. The LEA relies on partners to provide the work

placements provided. Courses have developed as a result of local demand. An introductory teaching assistant course is also available for learners who wish to progress from the crèche training course. Courses have also been set up in direct response to the needs of learners who are enrolled on other adult and community learning programmes.

61. There is good learning support for individuals and groups. Some learners receive individual support in the classroom, or at other venues of their choice. For example, one learner meets her support worker at a local library. The small number of learners in every class enables tutors to give learners individual attention. Learners who miss a learning session are able to catch up at another centre where the same course is held.

62. There is inadequate management of work placements. There is no single member of staff responsible for the management of the work placements. Many learners who receive training in the workplace only receive a visit from a tutor towards the end of their work placement. Learners frequently do not know the member of staff responsible for visiting them. Links between background knowledge learning sessions and practical work in the work placements are weak.

63. Quality assurance arrangements are inadequate. Until recently, there has been no routine classroom observation of teaching or learning. A new scheme has now been introduced, but it is too early to judge what the effect of this might be on learners. Many staff are unclear how the results of classroom observations will be used to improve their teaching practice. There are no arrangements to assure the quality of work placements through the organisations providing them. The work placements are not checked to ensure that they will meet the needs of learners or the course. Data are not collected to assure the continuous improvement of the courses.

64. The learners interviewed appreciate the chance to study for qualifications, with realistic employment opportunities. They find this very motivating. They like the fact that the courses are offered in easily accessible venues. Learners comment on the helpfulness of the staff, many of whom provide support outside of their normal working hours. Learners would like more support on their work placements, although most of them enjoy their time in placement.

Good Practice

In one class, the tutor displayed prompt cards at the end of each learning session, enabling students to give their opinion of the quality of teaching.

Visual & performing arts & media**Grade 3**

65. The provision in arts, crafts and performing arts is the LEA's largest area of adult and community learning. In 2001-02 there were almost 3,000 enrolments on over 300 arts-based courses, accounting for more than one quarter of the total enrolments throughout the service. For 2002-03, almost 800 learners are enrolled on accredited and non-accredited courses. Arts and crafts courses constitute most of the provision in this area of learning, with a smaller number of performing arts courses. The current provision broadly matches that offered in previous years. Classes are held at a wide range of sites, including schools and community venues across the city. Most learners are on courses offered directly by the service. A small number of courses are operated by partner organisations. A range of mainly non-accredited courses is available every year, with both daytime and evening provision. Most courses are part time and are taught for two hours every week, for between 10 and 32 weeks. There are a few full-time courses and Saturday workshops. Learners can study some subjects at a range of levels. In arts and crafts there is a traditional range of subjects, such as drawing and painting, textiles, dressmaking and photography. In addition, specialist subjects such as stained glass, quilting and botanical art are offered. Performing arts provision includes ballet, Arabic dance, recorder playing and introduction to drama. In 2001-02, almost 90 per cent of learners were women and 2 per cent were from minority ethnic groups. There are 83 tutors, most of whom work part time, working for an average of four hours each week. There is also a small number of fractional appointments. The adult learning team leader is responsible for the planning and provision of the curriculum. Two team leaders are responsible for quality assurance and the management of resources.

STRENGTHS

- good achievement rates on most accredited courses
- good practical work in some areas
- good teaching and learning in some areas

WEAKNESSES

- poor initial guidance and support
- poor curriculum management
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better monitoring and assessment of learners' progress

66. Achievement rates for learners on most accredited courses are good. Achievement and retention rates in dance and performing arts are very good. Attendance is generally satisfactory. On non-accredited courses, achievement and retention rates are mostly satisfactory and sometimes good. In most cases, learners make good progress towards achieving challenging learning goals. The standards of practical work are good in life drawing, watercolour painting, patchwork quilt making and photography. Many learners demonstrate high standards of exploratory work, with good research and critical evaluation skills. Portfolios of learners' work reflect an appropriate range of activities. In performing arts, many learners demonstrate good, and in some cases excellent, practical work. They perform confidently and are able to relate background knowledge to practical applications. However, in arts and crafts, some learners struggle with their basic drawing and design work. In the performing arts, some learners' technical skills are weak.

67. There are good standards of teaching and learning in some areas. In the better learning sessions, learners are highly motivated, work productively and with great enthusiasm. Tutors demonstrate appropriate specialist knowledge and expertise and most are sufficiently well qualified. They develop good working relationships with learners that promote effective learning. Some lesson planning is particularly detailed and related to good schemes of work. Some tutors make good use of demonstrations that introduce learners to a varied and challenging range of topics and performance techniques. Tutors provide learners with useful handouts. However, some learning sessions are unsatisfactory, with a lack of consistency in the quality and thoroughness of lesson planning. Schemes of work are not always obvious. In these learning sessions, there is insufficient focus on learning outcomes and there is inadequate structure and direction. Teaching methods used do not always meet individual learning needs. There is not enough use of individual learning plans to monitor learners' progress. Among the less-effective learning sessions, the teaching of basic design and the theory of art and design are weak and do not relate to practical work.

68. Accommodation is generally satisfactory with a reasonable range of classrooms, studios and performance rooms. Most performing arts facilities are good. However, a small amount of provision takes place in poorly equipped and badly maintained accommodation. Some studios used for landscape and watercolour painting are small, which restricts learners' choice of projects. In a few instances the use of specialist art studios for other, inappropriate activities, results in poor standards of cleanliness. On several sites there is poor signposting and many walkways are badly lit. There are shortages of equipment and tutors sometimes use their own materials to support their teaching.

69. The assessment of learners' progress on most courses is satisfactory. In the better learning sessions, tutors plan and carry out regular and effective assessments that support learners' progress. In some classes, individual learning plans are used effectively to plan and document learners' progress. Tutors give clear and constructive verbal feedback to learners. In performing arts, a small number of learners complete detailed course evaluation sheets which document their learning and allow them to

reflect on the progress they have made. Internal verification is satisfactory on accredited courses. However, there is insufficient evidence of any consistent internal moderation on non-accredited courses. In the weaker learning sessions, learners' progress is not effectively assessed or monitored. Learners do not receive sufficient written feedback. The monitoring of their progress and progression to higher-level courses is poor. There is no assessment policy for the curriculum area and there is not enough guidance on appropriate assessment practices. Tutors make insufficient use of the results of assessment to aid curriculum planning.

70. There is a wide range of courses in most disciplines, with some good progression opportunities in arts and crafts. However, a large number of courses are cancelled every year because of insufficient enrolments. The courses offered often reflect the availability and expertise of established tutors. There has been little change to the curriculum offered over recent years and the needs of some local people have not been fully met. Performing arts provision is restricted to a narrow range of subjects.

71. Initial guidance and support for learners are poor. There is no evidence of formal recruitment, selection or induction procedures. Management of the enrolment process is inadequate and the suitability of learners for a particular course is not always appropriately assessed. Initial guidance is inadequate and there is no diagnosis of individual learning needs. Sometimes learners are enrolled on a course without adequate support. Most learners are unaware of the complaints procedures, or of their entitlement to support and guidance, and many are not given appropriate information about progression routes. Some learners on full-time courses receive insufficient tutorial guidance. On some courses, poor punctuality is allowed to interrupt learning.

72. Curriculum management is poor. The management structure in this area of learning has recently undergone substantial changes. It is, however, too early to assess if there has been any benefit to learners as a result of the restructuring. Managers recognise that they do not have a comprehensive overview of the provision and are now carrying out some analysis and evaluation of the curriculum offered. However, strategic plans for the future direction and development of visual and performing arts are unclear and not understood by tutors. There is insufficient monitoring of progress towards meeting development targets.

73. Tutors are poorly managed and supported. Many tutors are unclear about line management responsibilities and about who has responsibility for budget management or allocation of resources for the curriculum. They do not have sufficient opportunities to discuss their concerns and are frustrated by poor communications. Their expertise and local knowledge are not fully utilised.

74. Quality assurance procedures are inadequate and not fully understood by tutors. There are too few classroom observations of teaching and learning. Staff appraisal and professional development are not yet established. Few staff are taking advantage of development opportunities, but there is evidence to suggest that recent teacher training is having a positive effect on learners' experiences. Good practice is not shared in order

to raise standards of provision. There is insufficient monitoring of overall learners' performances. Where they exist, course reviews, achievement data and learners' evaluations are not used to inform curriculum planning and development.

75. Learners are enthusiastic in their support of the teaching which they receive. They choose their courses for pleasure and personal development. They are positive about their own progress and the opportunity they have been given to improve their basic artistic skills and knowledge.

Good Practice

Learners on accredited dance courses are given extensive information about local and national progression routes. They attend auditions regularly and are fully informed of past and current learners' successes. This helps to build learners' confidence and also sets challenging standards to which learners can aspire.

Poor Practice

In one learning session there were conflicting roles between a support worker and a tutor. The support worker often answered questions directed at learners. As a result, learners frequently missed out on opportunities to solve problems and consolidate learning.

English, languages & communications**Grade 3**

76. Bristol LEA offers a range of both accredited and non-accredited modern foreign language courses at nine different community venues. Overall responsibility for the management of the modern languages programme lies with the adult learning team leader, who is assisted by two full-time development workers. The adult and community learning team currently employs 35 part-time language tutors. Various levels of courses are offered, in Arabic, French, German, Greek, Spanish, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish and Swahili. The more established language courses such as French are available at five different levels, from beginners to advanced. Newer or less well-established courses such as Greek and Swahili are offered for beginners only. Much of the provision is evening based, although some courses also run during the day. At the beginning of the current academic year, just over 100 classes were offered, but only 78 have subsequently started. There were 950 enrolments on modern foreign language courses for 2002-03. This number is marginally more than the number for 2001-02. Accredited courses, which begin in September, operate over 30 weeks. However, some programmes begin in January or are offered to learners for a shorter period. For example, one-day taster courses are offered during the spring and summer terms.

STRENGTHS

- good achievement of learning goals
- effective learning supported by well-qualified and experienced tutors
- good range of language provision

WEAKNESSES

- inadequate resources
- insufficient strategic planning of provision
- inadequate operational management of the curriculum
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- further development of specialist training for language tutors

77. There are good achievements within a diverse range of individual learning goals. Those learners interviewed confirmed that they feel they are achieving their personal goals. For example, they feel that they are able to communicate in the chosen language when they are travelling abroad. Achievement rates on externally accredited courses

are good. For example, in the academic year 2001-02, the achievement rate for learners in the Portuguese general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) was 100 per cent. Learning session objectives were clearly achieved in those learning sessions observed, at grade C or above. For example, new language structures introduced during the learning session are used correctly by the end of the session and are often consolidated by written tasks set for homework.

78. There are effective learning opportunities, supported by well-qualified and experienced tutors. Many tutors are native speakers of the language which they teach. Most demonstrate a good range of teaching methods which are appropriate for the preferred learning styles of the different groups. The chosen language is widely and consistently used in classes to encourage fluency. Tutors are actively involved in promoting the learning of languages beyond the classroom. For example, there is a regular exchange programme for learners in German, and film shows are frequently made available to learners in Spanish. Some tutors use a more limited range of traditional approaches to language teaching.

79. There is a good range of languages courses. Seventy-eight courses in 10 languages are currently operating in nine centres across the city. Progression routes for most languages are clear, although these are not available in the less-popular languages, such as Greek and Swahili. In addition there is a good range of short holiday programmes and imaginative one-day courses.

80. The resources to support the language programme are inadequate. Although most centres have sufficient teaching rooms, some have inadequate resources for language teaching. For example, in one centre, there are poor-quality tape recorders, unsuitable for listening practice activities. In another centre, there are not enough video recorders. In several centres, there are no suitable photocopying facilities for the preparation of learning materials. There are not enough teaching materials available to staff and although some language teaching materials have been purchased recently, there are few central resources for tutors. There is no effective loan system for teaching materials, and tutors are frequently required to purchase their own resources, such as textbooks. There is no clear system to link the purchase of teaching materials to planned programme delivery. In one centre, there is very poor access for learners with restricted mobility. In another centre, there are no disabled toilet facilities for male learners on the ground floor. There is a generic induction process for all new tutors, however there is no effective mentoring system for tutors in this area of learning.

81. There is insufficient strategic planning and target-setting for modern language courses. Current provision is based on those courses which have been offered in the past. There is insufficient effective use of enrolment data to analyse trends, or to contribute to curriculum planning. For example, around 30 per cent of language classes offered each year are subsequently cancelled. In addition, there is not enough research or analysis of external data to identify potential demand for less common languages, or additional community languages. There are no clearly defined targets for recruitment, retention, achievement or progression. However, this weakness has been recognised

and new management structures have recently been introduced to improve the planning of the curriculum. It is too early to judge the effect of these changes on the provision offered.

82. The operational management of the everyday curriculum is inadequate. There is no formal monitoring of the schemes of work by a language specialist to ensure overall coherence and consistency of approach. There is no system for the regular review of the 10 language courses currently operating, or for the ongoing development of the language curriculum. There are insufficient opportunities for tutors to share good practice or ideas to improve the standard of teaching.

83. The quality assurance procedures for modern languages are inadequate. There are not enough classroom observations to support teaching or to monitor the overall quality of the language provision. For example, no language tutors were observed last year, and one tutor interviewed has not been observed for several years. This weakness has been recognised by the LEA and there are now plans in place to observe half of the teaching staff this year. Learners' feedback is not used effectively to contribute to curriculum development or to improve teaching resources. Results of learners' course evaluations are not shared with language tutors or learners.

84. The learners interviewed are very satisfied with the modern language courses. They feel that the classes are both enjoyable and useful. For the more commonly offered languages, learners appreciate the range of day and evening provision and the convenient locations. Other learners are willing to travel considerable distances to attend courses for one of the less-frequently offered languages. Learners praise the skill and commitment of tutors and the supportive learning environment which tutors create. Learners also feel there is a good balance of activities in the courses. Tutors are skilful in successfully managing a wide range of learners' linguistic abilities in their classes. Learners' motivations for attending programmes vary considerably. Most wish to gain fluency in the target language. Some state that the course keeps them mentally active and that they enjoy the social aspects of mixing with other learners. Some groups also meet outside the classroom. Other benefits cited by learners include improved confidence and the acquisition of language skills in preparation for visits or longer stays in the relevant countries.

Good Practice

To support self-selection of modern language programmes, learners are provided with a clear self-assessment sheet which uses simply expressed questions. These questions assist the learner to determine the most suitable class, by describing language levels in clear and easily understood terms.

Humanities

Grade 4

85. The LEA offers a small number of part-time humanities courses. Currently, there are just over 170 learners enrolled between 12 courses. In 2001-02, almost 260 learners enrolled on humanities courses. There are no full-time courses. Most are taught at two centres. At one centre there is a range of non-accredited courses in family history, Italian culture and the history of the English language which each last for 12 weeks. At a local school the LEA provides daytime and evening courses in GCSE psychology and sociology, and advanced supplementary (AS) and advanced (A2) level courses in psychology, sociology and philosophy. Only GCSE psychology and A level philosophy and sociology are currently in operation. Accredited courses are taught over longer periods of up to one year. There are also short history courses taught at a number of outreach learning centres in the city. The short courses are repeated throughout the year. Learners often study several short courses in succession at the same level. Most learners on the accredited courses study for interest only and do not sit the examination at the end of the course. This area of learning is managed by the team leader for adult and community learning. There are two full-time development workers and nine part-time tutors.

STRENGTHS

- good standards of learning and achievement

WEAKNESSES

- poor retention and achievement rates in AS and A2 level philosophy
- insufficient variety in lessons
- inadequate initial assessment
- inadequate curriculum planning
- insufficient quality assurance arrangements

86. Most of the teaching observed was graded as satisfactory or better. In the most effective lessons, learning and achievement are good. Learners are encouraged to participate in class discussions and they demonstrate good levels of understanding. In a creative writing class, a learner had prepared a first draft of a short story which had then been distributed to the other learners. The teacher invited the other learners to critically evaluate the text of the story. All the learners were thoroughly prepared for this activity and they offered critical and insightful analyses of the characterisation and the plot of the story. In the less-effective lessons, there is insufficient variety in the range of teaching methods and resources used. These lessons are characterised by long periods during which the teacher talks to the class without emphasising the main points or checking learner's understanding. Learners are not able to participate sufficiently in

these lessons. Handouts are often poorly reproduced and do not always clearly relate to the subject matter of the lesson. The pace of learning in these lessons is slow and learners are insufficiently challenged.

87. There are poor retention and achievement rates in AS and A2 level philosophy. In 2000-01 and 2001-02 the retention rate in AS philosophy was 73 and 41 per cent respectively. The achievement rate for this course in 2000-01 was 33 per cent and in 2001-02 it was 18 per cent. The retention and achievement rates for A2 level philosophy were also poor in 2001-02.

88. Resources are satisfactory. Teachers are well qualified and experienced in their subjects although they do not always have a recognised teaching qualification. Classrooms at both learning centres are adequately furnished and equipped. Learners and tutors have access to appropriate learning resources. However, at one of the centres, staff do not have access to a photocopier or to audio-visual resources.

89. The initial assessment of learners in this area of learning is inadequate. Learners' additional learning needs are not formally assessed in any of the humanities subjects. Some learners are on inappropriate courses. The assessment of learners' work on accredited courses is satisfactory. Assignments are appropriate and cover the requirements of the awarding body. Learners' work is marked and returned promptly. Tutors' assessments are accurate and feedback to learners about their work is helpful and constructive. Assessment practice for non-accredited courses is satisfactory. There is no procedure for internally moderating or verifying work in this area of learning.

90. Courses and learning programmes in humanities meet the needs and interests of a limited number of learners. For example, at one learning centre, there is a range of courses in family history, which learners enjoy. However, many learners complete one course and proceed to another at the same level with little evidence of progression. Some courses are established because learners on existing courses request them, but attempts to meet the needs of other learners in the local community are inadequate.

91. Learners receive appropriate guidance and support. Initial advice and guidance is available through course leaflets and in the general prospectus. Further advice is available from the course tutor, but it is not always possible to speak to a tutor before a new course begins. Learners are not interviewed before they enrol on a course. All learners are entitled to additional learning support and the enrolment form asks learners to identify any additional learning needs. However, the LEA does not formally monitor learners' additional learning needs.

92. Curriculum planning in humanities is inadequate. There is a restricted range of courses available. The humanities curriculum is not managed by a subject specialist and there is no coherent plan for developing the provision. Many humanities courses are publicised in the general prospectus, but few of them actually take place. One current course has only four learners. Courses are frequently offered which express the tutors' interests and background, rather than the needs of the local community. The absence

of reliable and accurate data on enrolments, and rates of retention or achievement makes curriculum planning difficult. The LEA does not formally monitor the progress of learners. There are no data on learners' progression. There are insufficient opportunities for learners to progress onto more advanced courses.

93. Quality assurance arrangements are weak. A scheme for the observation of teaching and learning exists, but it only covers 30 per cent of teaching staff. Some part-time staff have not been observed teaching for up to three years. The provider routinely collects information from learners about the provision, but there is insufficient analysis of the information and no feedback to tutors.

94. The learners interviewed like the variety of courses that are on offer. They state that tutors are approachable and accessible and learners feel that they are well supported. They appreciate the fact that tutors will amend or adapt the course they are teaching to suit the learners' needs. All the learners interviewed say that they have gained in confidence during their time on the courses and that they enjoy the social aspects of being a learner. Many of those on non-accredited courses return to follow other courses, usually in a similar subject.

Foundation programmes**Grade 2**

95. Bristol LEA's foundation programme consists of two types of provision, ESOL and basic skills. Currently, there are just over 300 learners enrolled on approximately 500 places on ESOL courses. For the period 2001-02, there were 765 basic skills learners and 741 ESOL learners. During the first term 2002-03, 350 ESOL learners had enrolled. Most ESOL provision is concentrated in the five areas of the city with the largest concentration of prospective learners. Many of them enrol on more than one course. Learners can join an ESOL course at any time of the year. Seventy per cent of the learners are female. There are currently over 350 learners on basic skills courses, compared with the 830 enrolments last year. Most of the basic skills courses are provided at venues owned by the LEA, with a small number operating at partners' premises in places such as libraries and community centres.

96. Learners on ESOL courses attend for an average of 3.5 hours each week in classes which operate for 34 weeks of the year. Classes take place at various times of the week including weekends. The average class size is seven. The LEA directly provides internally and externally accredited courses, ranging from entry level to level 1 of the national ESOL syllabus. Level 2 ESOL provision is provided by a local further education college. Sixty-five per cent of the provision is at entry levels 1 and 2. Learners can progress from ESOL courses to a higher level of the same course, or to other courses, such as English for employment, driving test theory or a bilingual crèche workers' course.

97. The basic skills programmes for literacy, numeracy and ICT are taught in two-hour learning sessions which most learners attend twice each week. Most classes take place during the day. The average class size is six. Courses are offered for a number of ability levels and are linked to the new literacy and numeracy core curriculum, introduced as part of a government strategy aimed at improving basic skills.

98. A team leader is responsible for the ESOL and basic skills provision. There are three tutor organisers responsible for the provision of basic skills in different areas of Bristol. Forty part-time tutors are employed by the LEA. Four part-time tutor organisers manage a team of 30 part-time ESOL tutors and 16 language support workers. Ten of these support workers are bilingual in English and Somali, Urdu, Arabic or Punjabi.

STRENGTHS

- good achievement of personal objectives
- good standards of teaching and learning
- detailed assessment practices that promote learning in basic skills
- good range of ESOL provision in many local venues
- good support for learners in basic skills
- effective management in basic skills

WEAKNESSES

- ineffective use of learning resources
- insufficient planning for individual learning for ESOL
- insufficient support for ESOL learners
- ineffective strategic planning of ESOL

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- closer working with similar curriculum areas

99. Learners make good progress in achieving their personal objectives. They report having increased self-confidence and regularly use the skills they are learning in their daily lives. For example, they are able to write cheques, read letters sent home from their children's schools and help their children with their homework. There are good rates of achievement in accredited ESOL qualifications. In 2001-02, 60 learners passed an examination for spoken English. Almost 70 per cent of them achieved results in the top grade. Almost 130 learners achieved a basic skills qualification from a wide range of accredited courses offered by a variety of awarding bodies. The percentage of basic skills learners achieving an accredited qualification fell from almost 85 per cent in 2000-01 to just over 60 per cent in 2001-02. There was a change in the basic skills qualifications which means that some new accredited courses were not immediately available nationally.

100. There are good standards of teaching and learning. They meet the needs of most of the learners. Most lessons are well planned. All learners are clear about their goals and how to progress towards them. Learners can articulate what has been taught during learning sessions. Learners are well motivated. There are good working relationships between them and the tutors. The most effective learning sessions use the interests of the learners as the context for learning. For example, in one class the group is using crime prevention as a theme for the development of their basic skills. There are many examples of challenging teaching and learning in ESOL classes. ICT is effectively incorporated into lessons. In an ESOL learning session, the learners acquire new skills and then carry out a computerised exercise to test their knowledge. The use of ICT as part of the ESOL course helps to attract new learners to the courses. Basic skills learners have regular access to computers as a tool to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Accredited courses in word processing are used effectively to improve learners' writing and spelling. In one beginners' class for basic skills, computers are used successfully to help learners make a range of posters. Not all basic skills learners are set sufficiently challenging goals. There is a heavy reliance on worksheets in some basic skills classes and insufficient use of group work to stimulate discussions among learners.

101. Tutors are well qualified and experienced. Most have a teaching qualification. Basic skills tutors meet regularly in their area teams. Recent staff development has focused on national training in the new basic skills curriculum. Tutors have been paid to attend this training. There is good support for individual tutors. However, there is insufficient classroom observation of teaching and learning and new tutors are not automatically observed as part of the quality assurance procedures.

102. Learning resources are not used effectively. Responsibilities for budgeting and the allocation of resources are not clear to managers or tutors. Each ESOL learning centre has a bank of resources. Tutors have access to computers and other resources for reference purposes, such as bilingual materials, commercially produced learning resources, sets of books, computerised materials, audio and video tapes. Staff do not make sufficient use of these resources. ESOL learners do not always have access to learning materials to carry out their studies independently. Basic skills tutors who are not based in the main learning centres have poor access to teaching materials. New basic skills tutors often create learning resources without any knowledge of what is already available. Most of the centres are easily accessible for learners. However, one of the venues used for ESOL courses has poor facilities and there is no office cover in the evenings. At this centre, learners have nowhere to relax during breaks in classes and there is insufficient access to computing facilities.

103. There are detailed assessment practices to promote learning on the basic skills programme. Standard paperwork for the recording of assessment results is used by all staff, which helps to promote consistency. Detailed records are kept on learners' progress. All learners have an individual learning plan. This is specific to the needs of each learner and linked to the national standards for basic skills. Learners' individual learning goals are assessed regularly and monitored in relation to objectives set out in their individual learning plans. Verbal and written feedback to learners is detailed. Learners maintain a comprehensive record of tasks they have completed and further work needed for each learning session. Every new learner has an interview with the tutor organiser responsible for basic skills in the area in which they live. Tutors carry out a prompt initial assessment with learners to identify their prior learning and any additional support needs they may have. Learners are placed in appropriate groups based on this assessment.

104. There is insufficient planning for individual learning on ESOL courses. The initial assessment of learners' needs or prior learning is weak. All learners are interviewed, but their development needs are not fully identified. Individual learning plans do not accurately reflect the needs of individual learners. Target-setting is imprecise. No consideration is given to any prior learning and the different contexts in which learners might develop their language skills are not considered sufficiently.

105. There is a good range of effective ESOL provision in local venues. Learners can choose from a wide variety of courses for different ability levels. These courses are offered throughout the week in a range of venues. A number of the courses have been

set up following requests from local minority ethnic communities. These include classes for Somali and Pakistani women and Asian elders. However, there is no full-time ESOL provision and too few evening classes to meet the demand from learners.

106. Basic skills learners receive good support. They feel able to approach their tutors for specialist advice and guidance. There is effective use of support workers. Learners are aware of the support available to them and regularly take advantage of financial help for childcare and transport costs. Learners on basic skills courses who were interviewed commented on the helpfulness of tutors in assisting them with applications for this support. Tutors often attend information and guidance training and recognise this as an important aspect of their role. Where a learner is not yet sufficiently confident to progress to a higher level course, the tutor will encourage them to enrol on another basic skills course similar to the one they are already attending. There is insufficient support for ESOL learners. ESOL classes held at community venues are for mixed ability groups, but do not have any bilingual support. There is a shortage of bilingual support workers. Those that are employed are not being used effectively and do not plan or evaluate the learning sessions jointly with the tutor. ESOL tutors are required to follow up non-attendance, but they do not always have sufficient time to do this. Some ESOL learners who join the courses during the year do not receive an induction. Advice and guidance is now being offered to all ESOL learners, but the commitment to offer this service to everyone is inadequately resourced.

107. The basic skills curriculum is effectively managed. A basic skills action plan developed by the management team gives clear direction for the basic skills programme. The managers and tutors take a leading role in a number of local and regional strategic initiatives to promote the importance of basic skills. Staff have visited other European countries to learn how basic skills provision is managed and offered. Links are now being established for learners to take part in an exchange system with learners from other countries. Managers meet frequently to agree how they can best achieve points on the action plan and to ensure consistency in the provision throughout the city. Managers use data from neighbourhood surveys, student satisfaction surveys and enrolment and achievement data to plan new provision. Although tutors from a number of curriculum areas have recently attended training to raise awareness of basic skills, there are few formal links with staff in other parts of the service. The LEA has no overall strategy for its ESOL provision. There are poor mechanisms for developing new courses and attracting new learners. In some cases, where new courses are set up in response to specific needs of groups of learners such as asylum seekers, there is no subsequent evaluation of the community's need for the course. As a result, some classes have very few learners attending. Not all staff understand how to use data to monitor and improve performance. Managers are unable to accurately assess how many learners are on a particular ESOL course.

108. Learners enjoy their courses and welcome the opportunity to attend them locally, at times to suit their needs. They feel they benefit considerably and learn skills that they find very useful at home and work. One basic skills learner was very pleased to have one of her stories published. Another learner frequently lost jobs because of poor

reading and writing abilities but since attending basic skills classes, has been doing well at work. Learners increase their confidence in dealing with everyday situations. ESOL learners would like more classes at advanced levels and more opportunities to gain accreditation for their studies. They would appreciate more structured activities outside the classroom so they can practise their language skills with native speakers.

Good Practice

A summer school linking art with basic skills led to a group painting a mural in a primary school corridor where one of the group members is a caretaker. The group then wrote about their experiences and used ICT to produce a booklet and scan in photographs of the mural. The tutor involved wrote standards for the activities and submitted them successfully to an awarding body so that the learners could be accredited for their work.

Family learning**Grade 3**

109. There are currently 120 learners enrolled on a mixture of accredited and non-accredited family learning courses. A team leader and 12 tutor organisers are responsible for the management of the family learning programme. Most of the tutor organisers are part time. They manage the work of 40 part-time tutors. During 2001-02 there were approximately 200 family learning courses, an increase of almost 50 per cent on the previous year. Courses operate throughout the year, at various times of the day to meet learners' needs. Some courses are offered in the evenings and at weekends. Courses vary in length, but most last for two hours each week over 10 weeks. Courses take place, where possible, in schools within the target communities. Community centres and other venues are also used. Examples of courses offered include family literacy, 'keeping up with the children' and 'exploring computers together'. Most learners enrolled on family learning courses are women, but an increasing number of men are joining the programme. Some courses and activities are specifically aimed at fathers.

STRENGTHS

- good achievement rates
- productive links with external organisations
- good support for learners and staff

WEAKNESSES

- poor resources on some courses
- inconsistent initial assessment of learners

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better implementation of equal opportunities practice

110. There are good achievement rates on both accredited and non-accredited courses. In 2001-02, almost 80 per cent of learners gained full or partial accreditation on family learning courses. Planned learning outcomes are met in most learning sessions.

111. Teaching and learning are both satisfactory. Learners are enthusiastic and well motivated. Those interviewed commented on the progress achieved through the family learning courses. Courses are planned with clear aims, objectives and learning outcomes. However, some learners are not set challenging individual goals. Most staff understand the needs and interests of learners and plan the courses effectively. They

have a range of teaching qualifications and some also have subject-specific higher level qualifications. They have a variety of relevant experience which they bring to their teaching and they use it effectively to teach, guide and support learners. Tutors also have a good understanding of the barriers faced by learners. This is particularly evident from the work of the tutor organisers responsible for encouraging male learners into family learning.

112. Resources are poor on some courses. Many of the courses take place on school premises. There is insufficient space and sometimes the classrooms allocated for family learning courses are inappropriate for the needs of the learners. For example, one class is held in a school dining hall and learners have to wait 20 minutes for the hall to be cleared before beginning their class. In another school, learners on an ICT family learning course have to use primary school chairs and tables. There is no technical support for the tutor at this school and problems with equipment sometimes result in learners not being able to print out their work during a class. Teaching resources for a number of part-time tutors are not always easily available. On some family learning courses, resources are good and tutors receive payment for developing and writing their own courses. On other courses, resources are poor and tutors have to develop and write the course in their own time. This means that some tutors develop course materials in isolation without being able to build on the experience of other tutors, or share good practice.

113. There is inconsistent initial assessment of learners' needs, interests or aspirations. In some cases, initial assessment is only taking place informally, by discussion, and is not recorded. On some courses, there is no initial assessment. The information that is gathered is not being used to measure achievements, or to contribute to the development of individual learning plans. Learners' needs are not always identified and given attention. For example, in one observed learning session, a learner who had language support needs which had not been identified could not complete a task set by the tutor. This learner had nearly reached the end of the planned programme. There is formal monitoring and assessment of learners' progress on accredited courses. Monitoring sheets are used to record when and how learners are achieving learning outcomes. Learners' work is internally moderated on these courses. However, there is no system for the monitoring or review of work produced for non-accredited courses. It is difficult to assure the quality of the provision or the achievement rates on the courses.

114. The management in this area of learning has developed productive links with a range of external organisations. Local schools and community groups have carried out a recruitment campaign which has resulted in large numbers of learners enrolling on family learning programmes. Staff work hard to pilot new courses, in partnership with a variety of local, regional and national agencies involved in family learning. These links are often used to raise funds to establish courses for under-represented groups of learners. Twenty-six per cent of learners on family learning courses come from minority ethnic backgrounds. An increasing number of fathers are participating in family learning. A number of courses are targeted specifically at male learners. Staff from the community education service and representatives from external organisations attend

family learning network meetings, where adult and community learning providers from the area meet, and theme group meetings, where tutors meet to discuss their curriculum areas. These groups ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to family learning in Bristol and they work together effectively to ensure that there is no duplication of provision across the city. This strategy contributes to the development of an overall provision of learning that is relevant to communities and learners.

115. Learners receive good learning support from tutors. They also receive support with personal issues and these discussions are handled sensitively and in an appropriate manner for adult learners. The LEA employs male development workers to encourage fathers into family learning who might otherwise be reluctant to join courses. Learners are encouraged to progress to other courses, or to move into more mainstream provision. There is good guidance for learners on the range of family learning courses available and progression routes. Staff from this area of learning work with the local advisory service for minority ethnic groups to support learners with identified language needs.

116. Staff are well supported by managers. There is a culture of continuous improvement within this area of learning and a comprehensive programme of staff development is provided. Staff frequently participate in training courses and are well supervised and supported by their team leader. There is a schedule for regular classroom observations and tutors find the observations useful for improving their teaching practices. Staff have a good understanding of the key objectives for family learning provision. Curriculum planning is sometimes difficult because of the short-term funding used to operate some parts of the programme. A steering group and the family learning network do, however, have curriculum and strategic planning meetings.

117. Learners feel well supported by tutors and are highly motivated. They are confident about assessing their own progress and can articulate clearly their progress since starting on their family learning courses. Many learners also report that they benefit from unexpected outcomes such as increased self-confidence, an ability to manage their learning, and better parenting skills. Some learners interviewed consider that the LEA should publicise the courses more and give family learning a higher profile within local communities.

Community learning**Grade 2**

118. Bristol LEA has developed a range of community learning projects in response to national regeneration strategies and the needs of local communities. Eleven lifelong learning networks in the city support community groups and work with other providers to identify the learning needs of the community and to develop learning programmes. There are a number of key projects which comprise the community learning provision. Many courses are held in neighbourhood renewal areas. All the community learning projects focus on widening participation in education. These projects are funded by the LSC and a wide range of local, national and international partners. The LEA has a widening participation fund which is used by self-organised groups and organisations to reach under-represented learners. Bristol LEA also provides funds for short courses through the lifelong learning networks. The LEA is a lead partner in two UK online partnerships in Bristol, generating funding to establish and enhance access to ICT and to design and develop ICT courses for the Bristol community. Currently, there are over 200 learners enrolled on the various community learning projects. In 2001-02, more than 1,000 learners were enrolled on these projects. Learners are recruited through outreach workers, liaison with community and voluntary organisations, social services, housing providers and lifelong learning networks.

STRENGTHS

- good standards of teaching and learning
- effective partnership working to widen participation
- good support and guidance for learners
- clear strategy contributes to curriculum planning

WEAKNESSES

- insufficient recording of learners' progress and achievements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better support for tutors
- better sharing of good practice

119. There are well-motivated learners making good progress on a wide range of community learning courses. Managers, tutors and community workers clearly understand the aims of community learning in Bristol. Community learning programmes are well planned, with achievable and realistic goals for learners. One of the community initiatives is the 'level 2' project which aims to encourage young people

aged between 16 and 25 years of age, who have few qualifications, onto courses which deal with skill shortages in the local community. These include catering, construction, furniture restoration, sport and performing arts. There is good achievement of basic first aid and food hygiene certificates. Learners on the construction courses use their skills in practical community tasks. In many lessons there is a good achievement of learning goals. There are also unexpected outcomes for learners, including increased confidence and self-esteem. On a complementary therapies course, learners demonstrate good critical analysis and are making good progress. Learners with learning difficulties on the art and personal development course are able to progress to higher level courses or take a more active role in their local communities.

120. Standards of teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and have clear objectives, carefully matching the needs of learners and closely linked to their individual learning plans. On the level 2 construction project, there are carefully planned assignments, with clear objectives matching the needs of a diverse range of learners. Tutors continually check learning and adjust teaching methods to best meet and challenge the learners' needs. Assessment takes place during practical lessons and learning points are constantly reviewed. Community projects have clear aims and objectives and learners on many courses are involved in shaping the course content before the start of the activity. Tutors and development workers are sensitive to the needs of under-represented learners in their communities. On many courses individual learning plans are clear and achievable. Learners on the art and personal development course have individual learning plans that allow them to achieve their goals and demonstrate skills of a good standard. In one history class for older learners, the group was encouraged by the tutor to reflect on past learning through good use of a quiz. There are not enough classroom observations to support the teaching provision, or to monitor the overall quality of community learning. Many tutors do not have formal teaching qualifications. Although new tutors are encouraged to study for a teaching qualification, they are not inducted into community learning and they do not receive sufficient tutorial support.

121. Community learning courses are held in a wide range of venues, including schools, community centres, youth centres, nurseries, small workshops and libraries. Most are accessible to learners with restricted mobility. Materials and equipment for learners on all courses are appropriate to meet their needs. The construction course workshops at one centre are well equipped, but are not big enough to meet the demand from learners on the course. The UK online project provides learners with modern computing resources that are used extensively.

122. Learners' progress and achievement details are not all formally recorded. On most community learning programmes, learners assess themselves at the end of their courses to reflect on their progress. However, the outcomes of this self-assessment are often not formally recorded. Learners have individual learning goals, their targets are closely monitored and they receive feedback from the tutor during lessons. This feedback is not recorded for future use.

123. There is a wide range of courses to meet the needs of learners in community learning. Managers, tutors and community development workers make effective links with learners from under-represented groups in a variety of appropriate ways. These learners' needs and interests are well understood by the community learning team. For example, a training course for young mothers has been developed to encourage their participation in learning. The course is jointly provided by a youth worker and a basic skills tutor to give learners with poor literacy and numeracy skills, the support required to achieve accreditation. On many courses, the content and assessment methods are negotiated with learners. Courses are well planned and designed to be accessible to as many learners as possible.

124. The lifelong learning networks communicate effectively with specific groups of isolated or otherwise socially excluded learners on the types of courses they want. The networks jointly monitor provision across the city and identify gaps in existing and planned programmes. There are learner representatives in six of the 11 learning networks who provide useful feedback from local communities to the community learning service. There is effective partnership working in the networks and courses are designed to be accessible to as many learners as possible.

125. There is good support and guidance for learners. Most learners are clear about the aims of their learning programme and are well supported by community learning staff to achieve these goals. Learners are easily able to access the community projects. The learner representatives provide valuable informal support. Learners are knowledgeable about the wide range of support that is available to help them attend their courses. For example, on the training course for young mothers, learners are offered free transport and childcare. At the end of community learning courses, appropriate advice and guidance is given to learners on possible progression routes and learners are encouraged to progress to further courses. Some learners become tutors on courses operating in their own communities.

126. The community learning team has a clear strategy for the future of the service. This strategy contributes to curriculum planning. Community learning objectives reflect local and national government priorities for neighbourhood renewal and social regeneration. The LEA's approach to community learning has received national recognition from organisations involved in the promotion of adult and community learning. The LEA has been invited to contribute to government strategies for widening participation. The community learning staff are experienced in working with the types of learners who enrol on the courses. They are able to respond quickly when the need for new courses is recognised in local communities. However, good practice in teaching is not always shared between staff and there are not enough links with other curriculum areas within the LEA's adult and community learning service.

127. Those learners interviewed value the opportunities provided for them to return to learning through the community learning courses. Local residents take great pride in their involvement in projects which have stimulated local regeneration. One learning centre in Bristol is located on the site of a former secondary school. The projects

operating from the centre provide an important replacement facility for the community. Learners feel very involved in the decisions that are taken about the courses that are provided for them.

Good Practice

In a very good lesson on brazing and plumbing techniques, the tutor used a digital camera to give instant feedback to the learners about their progress. They included the photographs in their portfolios.

Language of the Adult and Community Learning

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework*. The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.