REINSPECTION REPORT

**Cumbria Adult Education
Service Reinspection**

21 October 2004

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. 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 learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes 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.

REINSPECTION REPORT

Cumbria Adult Education Service Reinspection

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Cumbria Adult Education Service (CAES) manages adult and community learning provision across Cumbria. The service forms part of the lifelong learning division of Cumbria County Council's education department. CAES has contracted with Cumbria Learning and Skills Council (LSC) since April 2001. Courses are provided at 31 main learning centres, 59 community development centres and approximately 150 outreach venues. Literary, numeracy, language and family learning provision is managed centrally. All other provision is subcontracted to schools, a college, the voluntary sector and private providers. The network of community development centres has become the responsibility of the service in the past year. There has been a reduction in the number of smaller, main learning centres since the previous inspection. Courses are offered in 14 areas of learning for accredited and non-accredited programmes. Five areas of learning were reinspected, comprising information and communications technology (ICT); hospitality, sport, leisure and travel; visual and performing arts and media; modern foreign languages; and foundation programmes.

2. In 2003-04, approximately 19,737 learners made 24,008 enrolments on CAES programmes, which is approximately 5.2 per cent of the county's adult population of 381,200. Twenty per cent of the enrolments were by learners over 60 years of age, 25 per cent were by men and 6.6 per cent were by people with disabilities. Forty-seven per cent of the enrolments were made for accredited courses and literacy, numeracy and language provision. At the time of the reinspection, 8,252 learners had made 9,945 enrolments on courses. Twenty-eight per cent of these enrolments are by learners over the age of 60, 24 per cent are by men and 6 per cent by learners with disabilities.

3. Since the previous inspection, CAES has been restructured and a new senior education officer now manages the service. The number of area co-ordinators has been reduced to two and a new post has been created for local planning and widening participation. The roles of county adult education officer and quality and curriculum planning development officer remain the same. New teams for literacy, numeracy, language and family learning provision have been appointed for the centrally managed programmes. In addition, seven part-time curriculum leaders have been appointed to work across the main areas of learning in the subcontracted provision. Most of the subcontracted provision is in secondary schools and most of the heads of learning centres are school principals. The network of community development centres is based mainly in primary schools, with two of them based in libraries. Each community development centre has a dedicated manager, with central support from five area facilitators.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Information & communications technology

4. Currently, there are 3,106 enrolments on information technology (IT) courses at about 100 locations throughout the area, including schools, community centres and residential care homes. In 2003-04 there were 8,112 enrolments throughout the year. Seventy-three per cent of current enrolments are by women, 6 per cent are by people with disabilities and 20 per cent by learners over 60 years of age. Ninety per cent of enrolments are for courses that lead to a recognised qualification. The remainder provide learners with a wide range of basic computer skills. The provision includes short taster courses, introductory courses, short specialist courses in specific applications, and 30-week courses leading to accreditation. Courses are offered during the day and in the evenings. Some courses are targeted at groups not normally expected to enrol for courses, including disadvantaged young people and those living in isolated communities. All tutors work part time, most for between two and nine hours each week. A curriculum co-ordinator is responsible for curriculum management and quality assurance. Approximately 30 per cent of learners enrol on courses managed by a subcontracted not-for-profit community development organisation. This body has its own management structure.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

5. Sport and leisure courses are offered at 101 locations throughout Cumbria, including secondary schools, sports halls, gymnasiums, church and village halls, youth and community centres and colleges. Learners participate in a range of non-accredited and accredited programmes: outdoor education, tennis, fencing, badminton, golf, volleyball, aerobics, circuit training, yoga, Pilates, tai chi, bridge, and cardio-rehabilitation. Most courses are open to all learners, but some are targeted at specific groups. There are daytime and evening courses and some weekend courses. Programmes vary in duration between 10 and 30 hours, with longer programmes in outdoor education. Some of the courses offer progression from initial taster events, through beginners' level to advanced courses. Several of the courses are designed to prepare learners to follow careers in the sport and leisure industry. Most classes are between one and two hours in duration, and are offered over 20 and 30 weeks each year, during school terms. In the current year 2,160 learners have made 2,624 enrolments. Male learners comprise 16.5 per cent of all enrolments. Thirty-four per cent of learners are over the age of 60, and 1.3 per cent of learners have disabilities. Most tutors are employed part time. Three part-time curriculum leaders support the centre managers and the tutors.

Visual & performing arts & media

6. Course provision in visual and performing arts and media has increased by 15 per cent since the previous inspection. CAES now offers 282 day and evening courses. Most of the courses are in the visual arts and are available during the day and evenings. Courses include drawing and painting, pottery, sculpture, digital photography, singing, guitar playing, soft furnishings and Latin-American, ballroom and Egyptian dancing. Most of the provision is non-accredited, but there has been a slight increase in accredited classes since the previous inspection. In the current year there have been 2,736 enrolments, of which 65 per cent are by women, compared with over 75 per cent in March 2003. The number of enrolments from learners over 60 years of age remains the same, at 41 per cent. Classes are held in a variety of venues: school premises, village and church halls, squash clubs, arts centres and stately homes. Tutors are employed on an hourly-paid part-time basis and are managed by local learning centre managers who are responsible for the programme of courses and recruitment of staff. A full-time curriculum co-ordinator supports the learning centre managers and tutors.

English, languages & communications

7. CAES has 1,896 enrolments for the current year, on over 170 courses in 14 subjects, including English general certificates of secondary education (GCSE), sign language and lip-reading. Spanish and French language courses comprise 65 per cent of the current provision. Italian, German, Greek, Dutch, Russian, Portuguese, Polish, Mandarin Chinese and Latin are also taught. Arabic, Danish, Korean and Japanese have been taught in the past year. Nearly 50 per cent of the courses are at beginners' level, with just over 33 per cent at level 2 and approximately 8 per cent at a more advanced level. Courses are offered at 41 community venues. Thirty-five per cent of courses are based at two large learning centres, both of which are specialist language colleges. Nearly 33 per cent of courses are currently accredited. Most courses are held in the evening, but daytime courses are also offered. Forty-eight per cent of enrolments are by men and 27 per cent by learners over 60 years of age. There are 74 tutors, of whom all but one are part time. Tutors are managed by learning centre managers. A modern languages curriculum development leader has recently been appointed to work throughout the county. Two languages co-ordinators are in post, one at each of the two main language centres.

Foundation programmes

8. CAES offers literacy, numeracy and language provision as part of the government's skills for life strategy, family learning programmes and courses for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities through its 'Moving On' programme. Courses are offered during the day and in the evenings at a range of venues, including community centres, schools' day centres and libraries. Learners on most courses can gain qualifications. These include national literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) qualification, from entry level 1 to level 2 and units from other awarding body qualifications. At the time of inspection, two wider family learning programmes are being offered, and family learning, language, literacy and numeracy courses are offered at five learning centres. A further 11 programmes of varying lengths are scheduled to operate throughout the term. The literacy, numeracy and language provision is managed by a full-time manager with curriculum leaders for family literacy, language and numeracy. The programmes for adults with learning difficulties and wider family learning have separate co-ordinators.

9. There have been 186 enrolments on the literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes and 297 enrolments on the programme for adults with learning difficulties. Seventy per cent of learners on literacy, numeracy and language programmes are women and 8 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Nine per cent of learners have some form of disability. On the 'Moving On' programme, 48 per cent of learners are women and all have some form of disability. There are 23 learners on wider family learning programmes.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	16
Number of inspection days	126
Number of learner interviews	476
Number of staff interviews	137
Number of subcontractor interviews	27
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	99
Number of partner/external agency interviews	18

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

10. The ALI's previous inspection found that the provision in ICT; hospitality, sport, leisure and travel; visual and perfuming arts and media; English, languages and communications; and foundation programmes was satisfactory. Leadership and management, quality assurance and equality of opportunity were unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of the provision were found to be satisfactory, or better. Family learning provision was reinspected as part of foundation programmes.

GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

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

Information & communications technology	3

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3

Visual & performing arts & media	3

English, languages & communications	3

Foundation programmes	3

Grades awarded at reinspection

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

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

Information & communications technology	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Visual & performing arts & media	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

English, languages & communications	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Foundation programmes	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

11. **Learners on ICT courses have good achievement levels.** Eighty-four per cent of learners with the large subcontractor achieved their qualifications in 2002-03. **The retention rate is good throughout the provision,** at 90 per cent in 2003-04. Learners grow in confidence and self-esteem.

12. Achievement levels are very good on the short outdoor education programmes. In 2002-03, 71 per cent of the courses offered had a 100 per cent retention rate and 61 per cent of the courses had a 100 per cent achievement rate. Attainment levels are satisfactory in other sport provision.

13. **The standard of learners' work on visual and performing arts programmes is consistently very good and sometimes exceptional.** Learners gain significant personal and social benefits from their classes.

14. **The standard of oral work is good in most modern foreign language classes.** Learners demonstrate good pronunciation and intonation, and in beginners' classes, they acquire a good degree of fluency after only four or five sessions. Attainments in other

skill areas are satisfactory.

15. **Achievement rates were poor on accredited modern foreign language courses in 2002-03.** Some learners registered for accreditation did not take their examinations. Overall achievement for that year was only 36 per cent.

16. **Retention and achievement rates on literacy, numeracy and language courses and programmes for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good.** Achievement and retention rates exceed the challenging internal targets set by CAES.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Information & communications technology	0	8	12	6	0	0	0	26
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	1	3	7	7	2	0	0	20
Visual & performing arts & media	1	3	14	4	0	0	0	22
English, languages & communications	2	5	8	8	1	0	0	24
Foundation programmes	2	5	10	3	2	0	0	22
Total	**6**	**24**	**51**	**28**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**114**

17. CAES has achieved significant improvements in its standards of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. The proportion of good and very good sessions has increased from 60 to 71 per cent. More specifically, **teaching and learning is good in ICT, visual and performing arts, much of the foundation provision and some of the modern foreign language provision.**

18. **The programme provision for ICT courses is extensive.** It is well planned to meet the needs of learners. Effective provider partnerships meet the needs of the community.

19. **CAES has particularly good initiatives to help ICT learners complete their courses successfully.** Tutors provide learners with effective advice and guidance. Good support is provided outside of the classroom and through the provision of drop-in facilities.

20. Accommodation for ICT programmes is generally satisfactory with a good range of up-to-date equipment. However, some accommodation is drab and seating is poor in some of the outreach venues.

21. **Learners gain good health and social benefits from sports and hospitality courses.** They achieve improvements across a range of fitness indicators. In some classes, learners acquire skills to develop and maintain healthy lifestyles. **The outdoor education provision is good.** It provides a wide range of well-planned courses which meet learners' needs.

22. **The teaching in some sports classes is unsatisfactory.** In these sessions planning is poor and demonstrations are ineffective. The range of teaching methods is restricted.

Poor learner performances are not corrected sufficiently.

23. **Risk management is inadequate for sports sessions.** There are no minimum standards or guidance for exercise and sports activity classes. **Teaching venues are not adequately assessed** for curriculum-specific needs or the changing conditions of multi-purpose areas.

24. **Initial assessments for sports and exercise learners are inconsistent.** The well-designed health questionnaire and initial assessment paperwork are not used by all tutors.

25. **CAES has an excellent current exhibition to celebrate learners' achievements in visual and creative arts.** Learners throughout the county have had the opportunity to exhibit their work in a professional and exciting venue, at the same time as professional artists and crafts workers.

26. **A wide choice of subjects is available for visual and performing arts learners throughout the county.** Since the previous inspection, the range of subjects has been increased by 15 per cent. However, access is restricted on some courses for new learners.

27. Some of the visual and performing arts classes demonstrate excellent examples of assessment. **This good practice is not, however, shared throughout the region.** Some tutors are reluctant to adopt the procedures designed by managers and do not effectively identify or record individual needs, or learning outcomes.

28. **A good range of English and modern foreign language courses is offered by CAES.** Currently, there are classes in one Asian and nine modern European languages, as well as sign language, lip-reading, Latin and English GCSE. Progression opportunities are increasingly available, particularly at the larger learning centres.

29. **Assessments are not used sufficiently to plan learning on language courses.** Insufficient initial or diagnostic assessment of language skills is recorded. Few individual targets are set and on non-accredited courses learners are often unaware of group targets.

30. **Initial assessment is used creatively on some family learning, and literacy, numeracy and language programmes.** Initial assessments are used sensitively and take account of the needs of the target group. Good use is made of self-assessment. Most learners have short- and long-term goals to help them to recognise the progress they are making.

31. **The provision of foundation courses is particularly responsive to learners' needs** both in timing and in content. Many courses are developed following discussions with partner organisations. Courses are well publicised. Learners' achievements are celebrated through events such as presentation evenings. Some very good-quality publicity materials were produced for family learning week.

32. Materials and equipment are now adequate for foundation programmes. Most learning venues are adequate and some are very conducive to effective learning. However, there remains a minority of venues which have drab surroundings, are untidy and overcrowded. Some of the most vulnerable learners are being taught in classes where the ratio of learners to tutors is too high.

33. **A few foundation courses have inappropriate recruitment and selection processes.** Classes are offered to learners whose abilities are far above the designated level.

Leadership and management

34. **CAES has good initiatives to instigate coherence in the county's adult and community learning provision.** The service takes a lead role in developing a system of area-based forums for all adult and community learning providers within the county's districts. Local area plans are being developed, and funding will be linked to those plans.

35. **CAES's partnerships are particularly productive and wide-ranging.** Many of these are effectively related to strategic objectives. Since the previous inspection, new partnership projects have been developed to widen the base of the CAES's subcontracted provision.

36. **The service has focused effectively on operational curriculum management since the previous inspection. A high priority has been given to staff development.** In English, languages and communications the focus is on training tutors in assessment and language teaching methodology. **Staff are offered good development opportunities.** Curriculum leaders have worked with learning centre managers to develop a wider curriculum in some areas. Regular tutor meetings now take place. As yet, not all tutors acknowledge the value of the improved focus on curriculum management.

37. The management of literacy, numeracy and language provision is satisfactory. Discrete provision is operationally well managed and well documented. However, there is no formal policy which clearly articulates how, or when, initial assessments should be done outside the areas of discrete provision.

38. **Curriculum planning is still unsatisfactory at a strategic level.** CAES has instigated a system of targeted provision to widen participation which now relates to all providers. The service's recent analysis has indicated that the courses are not always effective in attracting the target groups. Targets and county benchmarks have been introduced for all of its subcontracted provision, but these targets are not always sufficiently challenging. There is insufficient strategic planning to integrate the large, new ICT subcontractor with the existing ICT provision. **Overall strategic planning is poor in English, languages and communications.**

39. The courses provided at many of the learning centres are based on historical provision, the curriculum being decided principally by the subcontractors. This provision does not always match the strategic priorities of the service.

40. **The management information system is not fully established.** A new system was

introduced in September 2004, but CAES does not have a standard system for moderating achievement and attainment in non-accredited learning provision. CAES does not use the new system for course management information, or to analyse trends in participation and achievement.

41. **CAES does not provide sufficient risk assessment.** The service relies on the Cumbria County Council's education directorate health and safety policy. Each subcontractor is required to adhere to this policy and this requirement is included in the service level agreement. However, these procedures are not adequate to risk-assess the needs of adult learners.

42. **The level of awareness of equality of opportunity and diversity has increased significantly throughout the service.** The local authority equal opportunities policies and procedures have now been fully contextualised for use in the adult education service. CAES is responding appropriately to the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. A wide range of training on disabilities and racial awareness has been made available and staff now have access to extensive local authority training. CAES has produced a very good equal opportunities toolkit. **The provision in foundation learning for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well managed.**

43. **Some additional support arrangements are inadequate.** Learners are not always aware of the range of support available. The response to requests for additional support is inconsistent. In one case, three learners with hearing impairments share one converser and receiver. There is very little childcare and crèche provision, even in the larger centres.

44. **CAES has made significant improvements in the quality assurance arrangements since the previous inspection.** A quality assurance framework has been established and a range of procedures introduced to monitor the quality of provision. These procedures include the observation of teaching and learning, learners' satisfaction analyses, internal auditing, tutor and learner forums, partner and tutor reviews and the start of a new internal verification process.

45. The observation of teaching and learning is now well established throughout the service with existing staff being observed once every three years and new staff observed during their first year.

46. Staff have been trained to complete internal audits. There have been 10 internal audit visits to subcontractors' sites.

47. **The quality assurance framework and procedures are not sufficiently established with the new, large ICT subcontractor.** Not all subcontractors are using the enrolment paperwork supplied by CAES. The main subcontractor has not conducted sufficient observations of teaching and learning.

48. **Good practice is not identified or shared enough in the ICT provision.** Tutors'

attendance at conferences has not had any effect on the standardisation of good teaching practice. A tutors' guide on initial assessment has been produced recently but it is not used consistently by all tutors. Many of them duplicate effort in developing materials for courses where good materials have already been developed by other tutors.

49. In the visual and performing arts provision there are now many more opportunities for tutors to meet and share ideas and examples of good practice. Communications between tutors and managers have improved. **However, despite the improvements made by senior managers, the new quality assurance procedures are not implemented sufficiently in some learning centres.**

50. The self-assessment report is detailed and thorough. It provides an effective overview of most of the provision. One major contractor did not follow the required format, however, and comments about this provision are not sufficiently integrated with the overall report.

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Leadership and management

Strengths
- good initiatives to instigate coherence in county-wide provision
- particularly productive partnerships
- effective action to improve curriculum management
- good awareness of equality of opportunity and diversity
- significant improvements in quality assurance arrangements

Weaknesses
- insufficient strategic curriculum planning
- insufficiently established management information system
- insufficient risk-assessment procedures for adult learners
- some inadequate additional support arrangements
- insufficient quality assurance arrangements in the new large subcontractor

Information & communications technology

Strengths
- good achievement and retention rates
- good standards of teaching and learning
- extensive course provision responsive to local needs
- particularly effective initiatives to support and retain learners
- good progress in curriculum management

Weaknesses

- insufficient implementation of quality assurance arrangements in one large subcontractor
- insufficient sharing of good practice

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good outdoor education provision in one large centre
- good health and social benefits for learners
- some good curriculum development

Weaknesses

- some ineffective sports teaching
- some inadequate risk management
- inconsistent initial assessments

Visual & performing arts & media

Strengths

- good standard in learners' work and achievements
- good standards of teaching and learning
- excellent initiative to celebrate learners' work
- wide range of courses

Weaknesses

- insufficient sharing of good assessment practice
- insufficient implementation of new quality assurance procedures in some learning centres

English, languages & communications

Strengths

- good standards of oral work in class
- some good examples of teaching and learning
- good range of courses
- good staff development opportunities

Weaknesses

- some poor achievements on accredited courses in 2002-03
- insufficient assessments to plan individual learning programmes
- poor overall strategic planning

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- much good teaching
- creative initial assessments
- particularly responsive courses meet learners' needs
- good management of provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Weaknesses

- inappropriate recruitment and selection process for some learners
- insufficient emphasis on strategic planning

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

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.

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT   Grade 3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths
- good initiatives to instigate coherence in county-wide provision
- particularly productive partnerships
- effective action to improve curriculum management
- good awareness of equality of opportunity and diversity
- significant improvements in quality assurance arrangements

Weaknesses
- insufficient strategic curriculum planning
- insufficiently established management information system
- insufficient risk-assessment procedures for adult learners
- some inadequate additional support arrangements
- insufficient quality assurance arrangements in the new large subcontractor

51. CAES has adopted good initiatives to instigate coherence in the county's adult and community learning provision. The service takes a lead role in developing a system of area-based forums for all adult and community learning providers within the county's districts. These forums are currently establishing the extent and range of local provision, including colleges, the voluntary sector, learndirect and local authority-funded provision. The next stage of the process is to ensure that there is no duplication of provision and that there are adequate progression routes within and between providers. A local area plan for each district will be produced. A memorandum of agreement with the local LSC states that the adult and community learning funding will follow the priorities of the local area plans. An effective overview is maintained by a central strategic adult and community learning group.

52. The service's partnerships are particularly productive and wide-ranging. Many of them are effectively assessed and related to strategic objectives. Some partnerships operate effectively on a commissioning basis; for example, CAES has recently started to work with a local charity which provides ICT support for farmers, in response to the needs of the industry following the foot and mouth disease crisis. The charity has developed its own curriculum and CAES provides classes to meet this curriculum. Since the previous inspection, other partnership projects have been developed to widen the base of the service's subcontracted provision, most which is provided through schools. For example, the service is funding a project through a voluntary sector infrastructure group, to involve voluntary sector organisations in the county's local strategic

partnerships. CAES has achieved effective integration with the extended schools' agenda.

53. Curriculum leaders have been appointed since the previous inspection, to focus on the weaknesses identified in the curriculum areas. Positive action has been taken to improve operational curriculum management. A high priority has been given to staff development opportunities and a thorough staff development plan is linked to clear organisational priorities. A range of effective development opportunities is provided, including teacher training courses, short courses, curriculum good practice groups, and tutor meetings. CAES evaluates the staff development provision, but has no system to monitor tutors who do not attend the staff development sessions. Support is provided by mentoring new tutors, or those who receive low grades, using observations of teaching and learning. A group of tutors is receiving accredited training in mentoring. Curriculum leaders have worked with learning centre managers to develop a wider curriculum in some areas, for example, in response to low levels of achievement on some language courses. Regular tutors' meetings cover a range of curriculum-specific and general items. The curriculum leaders act in an advisory capacity. Some tutors do not acknowledge the value of this improved focus on curriculum management.

54. The management of literacy, numeracy and language provision is satisfactory. Discrete provision is operationally well managed and well documented. CAES recognises its responsibility to provide support to any learners who have identified literacy, numeracy and language needs. There is, for example, a statement in the equal opportunities toolkit, confirming the service's commitment to providing assessments in literacy and numeracy; a questionnaire in the equality and diversity action plan relates to the support available to learners from ethnic groups. CAES produces written guidelines for all staff on supporting learners with dyslexia. However, there is no formal, written statement or policy document which clearly articulates how or when initial assessments should be carried out, other than in the area of discrete provision. No written statement or policy exists to describe what steps should be taken where a tutor considers that a learner needs specific literacy, numeracy or language support. There is no indication of how specialist help in these areas is to be accessed.

55. CAES does not carry out sufficient curriculum planning at strategic level. The service has instigated a system of targeted provision to widen participation which now relates to all providers. Each subcontractor has a target number of courses and the proposals are negotiated with the area co-ordinators. CAES's recent analysis has indicated that sometimes courses do not attract the target groups. Information is collected through the self-assessment process, but targets are not always sufficiently challenging and those relating to achievement and retention are not included in the subcontractors' service level agreements. The courses provided at many of the learning centres are based on historical provision and the decision on what curriculum to offer is made by the subcontractors. This provision does not always match the strategic priorities of the organisation. Overall, strategic planning for the central provision of literacy, numeracy and language support and for family learning is not emphasised sufficiently although there are links to wider county plans.

56. The management information system is not sufficiently established. A new system

was introduced in September 2004. This has enabled CAES to collect information from each individual learner's record for the first time. Some of the data that has been used previously contains errors and is not reliable. Not all subcontractors are interpreting data definitions in a consistent manner. CAES does not use a standard system to moderate the definitions of achievement and attainment in non-accredited adult and community learning provision. The service does not use its new system for course management information, or to analyse trends in participation and achievement.

57. Not enough risk assessment is conducted to meet the needs of adult learners. CAES relies on the Cumbria County Council's education directorate health and safety policy. Each subcontractor is required to adhere to this policy and this requirement is included in the service level agreement. However, these procedures are not adequate to risk-assess by curriculum for the needs of adult learners. CAES has no specific system to assess each venue and class location for learners' needs, before introducing the class. Some accidents have not been reported back to the service as required by the service level agreements. In hospitality and sports provision, some weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report have not been resolved. However, in the ICT provision, attention is now given to safe working practices. CAES checks health and safety issues through its self-assessment process and through the observations of teaching and learning.

Equality of opportunity   Contributory grade 3

58. A significant increase has occurred in the level of awareness of equality of opportunity and diversity issues throughout the service. A number of developments have taken place in CAES's approach to equality of opportunity since the previous inspection. The local authority's equal opportunities policies and procedures have now been fully contextualised for use in the adult education service. The service is responding appropriately to the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995. A wide range of training about disabilities and racial awareness has been made available and staff now have access to extensive local authority training. Initially, CAES commissioned a survey of learning centre managers to establish the level of awareness of equality and diversity issues. The results of the survey were used to inform CAES's equality and diversity action plan. The service has produced a very good equal opportunities toolkit. This is now available to all parts of the service and is being used to develop inclusive practices.

59. CAES has introduced several new initiatives to develop equality of opportunity. Curriculum leaders have been provided with guidelines about cultural diversity within teaching and learning; the guidelines for the observation of teaching and learning include a section for comments about equality and diversity. Learners' work has been on public display and evening events have taken place to celebrate learners' achievements. Course paperwork given to learners before and after enrolment clearly states CAES's policy on equality and gives information regarding the grievance, anti-bullying and harassment procedures.

60. Data about learners' gender, ethnicity, age and disabilities is now being analysed

more fully, but data dealing with the target areas designed to widen participation has only recently been analysed. This data has revealed significant issues about the level of interest shown by the target groups, which CAES plans to investigate.

61. CAES has improved access for wheelchair users in some of the larger centres and the family learning bus has good access. However, there are still some instances where learners with restricted mobility are required to climb three flights of stairs to their classrooms. Adaptive technology is available for some learners, but not in all school venues. In some locations, the computer software used by the schoolchildren cannot be reconfigured to meet adult learners' needs.

62. Some of the additional support arrangements are inadequate. Learners are not always aware of the range of support available. Responses to requests for additional support are inconsistent. In one case three learners with hearing impairments share one converser and receiver. There is very little childcare and crèche provision, even in the larger centres. Some partnership programmes do provide childcare, but most of CAES's provision relies on the learner making a request for additional support. Six learners received additional support for childcare in 2003-04. No childcare is available for learners attending the family learning provision.

Quality assurance   Contributory grade 3

63. CAES has made significant improvements to its quality assurance arrangements since the previous inspection. A quality assurance framework has been established and a range of procedures introduced to monitor the quality of provision. These procedures include the observation of teaching and learning, learners' satisfaction analyses, internal auditing, tutor and learner forums, partner and tutor reviews, and the implementation of a new internal verification process.

64. Existing staff can train to become members of teams engaged in observation, internal auditing and internal verification. Staff have welcomed this opportunity to become involved in the quality monitoring of the provision, and to add to their skills and professional development. Part-time staff acting as observers, internal auditors and internal verifiers are paid separately for this work.

65. The observation of teaching and learning is now well established throughout the organisation. Existing staff are observed once every three years and new staff are observed during their first year. The schedule is agreed at the start of the academic year and the appropriate observers are contacted to arrange observations. Currently, very little mentoring is available for tutors who receive low observation grades. However, mentors are being trained to work with these tutors. Observers meet each term to discuss their observations and moderate the process. These meetings are also used as additional training sessions. Observers are required to attend these training and moderation sessions.

66. Staff have also been trained to complete internal audits. CAES has conducted 10 internal audit visits to subcontractors' sites. Good internal audit training is provided,

which includes three study days, an observed practice audit and an examination leading to accreditation. The trained audit staff meet each term to review their findings. Written feedback about each audit is sent to the quality assurance manager and the appropriate learning centre manager. Staff have just begun training in the new internal verification procedure.

67. The new quality assurance framework and procedures are not established sufficiently with the new, large subcontractor. CAES's staff have been trained to become internal auditors. Some of the subcontractor's staff did not receive training until more recently. No internal auditing has taken place in some of the subcontracted provision. The subcontractor's staff attended training for the observation of teaching and learning, but the scheduling of observations was delayed and only nine observations have been carried out. When the self-assessment report was being prepared for parts of the organisation, including the subcontractors, they were required to follow the CAES procedure. The new subcontractor did not do this and it was not possible to fully integrate their report with the overall self-assessment report. The new tutors' handbook refers to CAES paperwork, but no all subcontractors use the enrolment forms. The new subcontractor has only recently started to attend the CAES quality assurance panel. Although the organisation has introduced evaluations for learners and is using the analysis of these to monitor the provision, the new subcontractor does not do this as a matter of routine.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology   Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	3106	2

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- good achievement and retention rates
- good standards of teaching and learning
- extensive course provision responsive to local needs
- particularly effective initiatives to support and retain learners
- good progress in curriculum management

Weaknesses

- insufficient implementation of quality assurance arrangements in one large subcontractor
- insufficient sharing of good practice

Achievement and standards

68. Most learners achieve their objectives well. For the large subcontractor, retention and achievement rates were 92 per cent and 84 per cent, respectively, in 2002-03. Learners make every effort to attend classes and attendance rates were over 90 per cent in sessions observed by inspectors. Overall retention in 2003-04 has improved. Over 90 per cent of learners on courses leading to qualifications completed their courses. Achievement data is unreliable for 2003-04; some learners' results have yet to be confirmed and a significant number of learners chose not to submit themselves for accreditation. Data for attainment on courses that do not lead to qualifications is unreliable. However, sampling of data revealed that significant numbers of learners were achieving their objectives. Learners' development of practical skills and confidence is satisfactory. Their work in classes generally meets the standard required by their target qualifications. A satisfactory proportion of learners use their new skills outside the classroom, for example, in writing official letters, keeping accounts for family businesses, or at work. Learners grow in confidence and self-esteem when helped by tutors to review their own learning in a particularly effective way, to identify and reflect on their new skills, and develop action plans for further learning.

Quality of education and training

69. Standards of teaching and learning are good; 77 per cent of observed lessons were good, or very good. Most lessons are well planned. The better lesson plans and schemes of work include details of how resources will be used, and the practical activities to develop good practical and knowledge skills. In most lessons, tutors take account of learners' wide variations in skills and confidence levels, and support them with suitable tasks to build on their experience and interests. Tutors make good use of their knowledge of the learners to set assignments which will allow the learners to progress successfully. The more able the learners the more challenging the tasks set by their tutors. Technically competent tutors successfully use a variety of imaginative and appropriate teaching methods to maximise learners' activity and maintain interest. Good use is made of visual presentations and questioning. Tutors are responsive to learners' needs and continually monitor learners' development of practical skills. CAES has accessed specialised learning materials for local farmers who use computer facilities at home and in local village halls. A small number of lessons are poorly planned to take account of learners' different abilities and interests. Some tutors do not use questioning techniques sufficiently to confirm understanding, and expect all learners to carry out the same work regardless of their abilities.

70. Courses are provided extensively throughout the country. These have been well planned to meet the needs of learners and include short introductory courses, internationally recognised qualifications and specialist subjects such as digital photography. There is coherence to the curriculum, which allows learners to progress from basic introductory level courses through to advanced level programmes, supported by a variety of skilled teaching. Learning centres offer flexible learning opportunities where possible and encourage learners to study at home. Classes are offered during the day, evenings and at weekends. Drop-in sessions are available where tutors are in attendance to support learners. Some learners have been given support in their own homes and others have been loaned laptop computers. Local partnerships provide classes to meet the needs of the community and local employers. In one learning centre, the needs of shift workers have been met particularly well. Learning centre managers use their local knowledge and contacts to meet the needs of the community. Good practice, to analyse community development or capacity building needs, is limited. There is insufficient strategic planning to widen participation opportunities for the county's key target groups, or to implement the planned integration of courses offered by the large subcontractor. In some learning centres, learners do not have sufficient opportunities for leisure learning and instead enrol on accredited courses.

71. CAES has introduced particularly good initiatives to help learners complete their courses successfully. Tutors give effective advice and guidance which enables learners to make sensible choices. A number of learning centres allow learners to attend taster sessions before enrolment. Some tutors supplement their classroom support with e-mail and telephone support. Many learning centres support independent study particularly well, through homework and tutor-supported drop-in sessions. Most tutors and learning centre managers have a good awareness of how computer equipment can be adapted to

meet the needs of people with disabilities.

72. Induction is generally satisfactory, and is particularly effective in developing learners' knowledge of safe working practices when using computers. Most tutors are well aware of the assistive technology and alternative techniques available to support learners with disabilities, and make good use of partnerships with special needs co-ordinators in local schools.

73. Overall, accommodation and equipment in most of the learning centres are satisfactory. They have a wide range of up-to-date and powerful personal computers, some with flat screens, scanners, data projectors and interactive whiteboards, particularly in community development centres. Laptop computers are taken to a number of venues such as libraries, church halls and community buildings. Technical support is available in many learning centres, including schools using school technicians. CAES finds it difficult to provide support in some areas where the provision is dispersed in isolated areas. In some learning centres the older software in use does not match learners' home systems. Some accommodation in schools is drab. A number of learning centres do not have screen presentation equipment and some classroom layouts inhibit the pace of learning. Seating is also poor in a few learning centres. Health and safety risk assessments of accommodation and equipment are being carried out and where learners have to use non-adjustable seating they are encouraged to adjust their posture and to take regular breaks. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced to the level of the courses they are teaching. Some resources are standardised for accredited courses. A number of staff are not fully trained in the use of initial assessments and individual learning plans, or the use of assistive technology to support learning for people with disabilities.

74. Generally, assessments are satisfactory. Some good initial assessments identify learners' goals and are used by tutors to plan courses accordingly. Many tutors make regular assessments and keep accurate records of learners' progress. Their feedback is clear and supportive, and is sensitive to the age, maturity and abilities of the learners. Most learners are aware of the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve. Assessment practices meet awarding body standards. On non-accredited courses, however, assessment and moderation are not rigorous enough, and some of the initial assessments are poor. Four tutors have qualifications or experience in recognising or supporting learners with literacy, numeracy and language needs. When they recognise these needs, they refer learners appropriately. One learning centre requires learners to identify their needs and refer themselves. In another centre, tutors have not been successful in overcoming learners' reluctance to accept support for their additional needs.

Leadership and management

75. CAES has made good progress with operational curriculum management since the previous inspection. Managers have been particularly effective in raising the quality of teaching and learning and achievement and retention rates. Curriculum leaders support learning centre managers well with frequent meetings and audit visits, and learning

centre managers now follow up the staff development needs identified during observations of teaching and learning. Service level agreements and action plans arising from meetings both allocate responsibilities clearly. However, CAES does not have enough strategic planning to target provision or to integrate the large subcontractor with the overall provision. Learning centre staff use information from student surveys, retention and achievement data and tutors' comments, to produce the annual self-assessment report. This is used by the county to prepare a development plan which is shared with each learning centre. Observations of teaching and learning have been effective in improving weaker practices.

76. Equal opportunities is satisfactory. Most learning centre managers have a good awareness of equal opportunities, particularly in relation to people with disabilities. The new equal opportunities toolkit has been circulated to all learning centres and most tutors are aware of the broader aspects of equality of opportunity. A review of teaching materials has taken place to ensure that these take account of diversity and avoid role stereotyping. Specific courses, such as digital imaging, have been used to encourage more men into courses.

77. CAES's quality assurance arrangements and procedures have not been implemented sufficiently with the large subcontractor. Not enough observations have taken place and not enough staff have been trained to observe teaching and learning effectively. Learners' feedback is gathered and has been used to decide course start times. It has not been analysed to identify patterns or trends. Most strengths identified in the subcontractor's self-assessment report were considered by inspectors to be what is normally expected from a provider.

78. Good practice is not identified or shared sufficiently. The ICT curriculum co-ordinators hold conferences to identify good practice and share the outcomes. This action has not had any effect in standardising good teaching practice. A tutors' guide to initial assessment has been produced recently but is not used consistently by all tutors. Many tutors duplicate effort in developing materials for courses where good materials have already been developed by other tutors.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel   Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	2160	3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- good outdoor education provision in one large centre
- good health and social benefits for learners
- some good curriculum development

Weaknesses

- some ineffective sports teaching
- some inadequate risk management
- inconsistent initial assessments

Achievement and standards

79. Achievement levels are very good for the short outdoor education programmes. In 2002-03, 71 per cent of the courses offered had a 100 per cent retention rate and 61 per cent of the courses had a 100 per cent achievement rate. For the longer courses in outdoor education, the retention and achievement rates at level 2 are very good and the rates for level 3 are good. Overall retention on the non-accredited courses is good. Attendance is satisfactory overall.

80. In the current year, levels of attainment are satisfactory in most classes. In most cases the standard of exercise performance and knowledge demonstrated during sessions is satisfactory. Learners in some sessions are sufficiently encouraged to discuss the benefits of exercise and how this feels in improving their health and well-being. In some sessions learners can identify the progress they are making towards intended learning goals and can relate this to improvements in their health and well-being. However, some learners are unclear about their progress towards specific learning goals.

Quality of education and training

81. The outdoor education provision is good. A wide range of well-planned courses meet learners' needs. These include short, practical experience courses in activities such as canoeing, sailing and rock climbing. These enable learners to progress if they wish to pursue activities individually or through clubs. Courses also provide entry-level experience and progression to the accredited outdoor education courses. The accredited courses provide enhanced personal experiences in outdoor activities and the

opportunity to gain employment in the outdoor education Industry. Outdoor education teaching is very good. Sessions are well planned, with clear learning outcomes and are delivered at an appropriate pace. Prior learning and experience and current learning are linked in session introductions. Good use is made of different forms of learning activities and different teaching styles, including discovery and problem-solving approaches, and peer support. Effective use is made of outdoor learning environments both for skill acquisition and the development of knowledge. Tutors use questioning regularly to check learners' understanding, and they give learners effective feedback. Learners demonstrate good attainment of skills and knowledge during learning sessions.

82. Learners gain good health and social benefits from these courses. They are engaged in activities such as yoga, fitness classes, Pilates and cardio-rehabilitation. Sports activities help them to achieve improvements across a range of fitness indicators. These include improved posture, muscular strength and endurance, cardio-respiratory fitness, and flexibility. In yoga and Pilates classes, learners acquire skills to manage stress and learn to relax. These physical and mental benefits contribute to enhanced personal confidence and self-esteem. In many of the classes, learners also learn how to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Older learners in particular benefit from the health and social benefits of exercise classes. CAES has developed partnerships with general practitioners and hospitals. Referral schemes are provided through which people who are recovering from illnesses or medical interventions can join appropriately designed exercise programmes.

83. Resources are adequate in most cases. Facilities for teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most staff are adequately qualified and have appropriate experience. Learning materials are produced to a satisfactory standard.

84. Learners receive a satisfactory level of guidance and support. They are adequately informed about course contents and requirements. Learners are well supported by tutors in some sessions. A number of tutors provide learners with additional information to practise their new skills at home. Good induction checklists ensure that learners receive adequate information and guidance to prepare them for their programmes. The referral system is adequate enough for those learners with literacy and numeracy needs and for outdoor education learners to access specialist support throughout the programme.

85. The teaching in some sports classes is unsatisfactory. Ten per cent of the observed sessions were unsatisfactory. These sessions are poorly planned. The paperwork involved, including schemes of work and lesson plans, is inadequate. Session and course learning objectives are not precisely defined and the purpose of some specific sessions is unclear. Some skills practices in these sessions are badly designed. Skills demonstrations by several tutors are ineffective. Poor learner performances are rarely corrected or subjected to effective feedback. Learners' progress is not recorded sufficiently. A limited range of teaching methods is used and instruction is emphasised, rather than teaching. The level and quality of learning is not checked sufficiently.

86. Some risk management is inadequate. There is no adult education service specification for minimum standards, or guidance for learning centre managers about

exercise and sports activity classes, for example, the minimum space required by an individual in order to exercise safely. Service level agreements do not specify facility standards for exercise and sports activity classes adequately enough. In some venues there is not enough space for all the learners to exercise. In these locations tutors do not provide effective support to learners. CAES has no standard operating procedure, or specific guidance for learning centre managers or curriculum leaders. Exercise and sports activity tutors must risk-assess their teaching areas on each occasion that they teach. All main sites and many, though not all, outreach centres, have been risk-assessed by the local education authority. However, many facilities, particularly in outreach centres, are used for a variety of activities during any given day, during which the condition of floors and equipment does not remain constant. There is no requirement for tutors to assess these conditions or other aspects of their teaching environment. In two cases, inspectors identified unsafe equipment storage and inappropriate management of a playing surface being used by learners, where water had leaked through the roof. Tutors were aware of these problems but did not take effective actions.

87. Initial assessments are inconsistent. Although there is a well-designed health and medical questionnaire which identifies learners' health issues this is not being used by many tutors. In some cases the questionnaires are issued but not returned. Some initial assessment paperwork is very well designed, incorporating previous exercise history, consideration of preferred learning styles, and the means to identify learning objectives. This is not widely used by tutors. Several examples were identified of tutors using their own initial assessment paperwork, which is not fit for purpose. Although some learners' progress is satisfactorily acknowledged and recorded, in most cases nothing or only very superficial information is recorded. Insignificant baseline data, for example, body weight and dimensions, fitness levels, skills levels, psychological state, is collected to use in measuring learners' progress.

Leadership and management

88. Some of the curriculum development is good at operational level. Partnerships have been developed to widen participation. For example, health and cardio-rehabilitation programmes have been developed with health organisations and general practitioner referral schemes. Links have been established with family learning to provide healthy lifestyle programmes. Some specific groups are targeted effectively. Some effective targeting of men has taken place in the Keswick area, through media articles in the local press, but throughout the region only 16.5 per cent of enrolments are by men.

89. Curriculum leaders give good support and guidance to tutors in developing initial assessment tools, health questionnaires, lesson planning and schemes of work. The newly developed yoga handbook is being used successfully by a number of tutors. They are working well with a number of learning centre managers to develop some provision in remote rural areas, using village halls and other community venues. However, in four of the 21 learning centres, class cancellations have been significant, attendance by learners is poor in these cases.

90. Observation of teaching and learning is providing developmental opportunities for staff and assisting the learning centre managers to identify support needs. There is a shortage of appropriate tutors to meet the demands of the learner groups, particularly in yoga, Pilates and tai chi.

91. Course reviews are satisfactory, most tutors and staff have been involved in the process and have contributed to the self-assessment report. They have a good awareness of the post-inspection action plan. Most staff have good knowledge of the quality assurance system. Some staff have received equality of opportunity training but it is not a fully established procedure with all staff. Communications are satisfactory, and a meeting structure and the development of a database enables staff to share ideas, resources and learning materials. Some part-time tutors are not adequately informed about current practices, issues and developments.

Visual & performing arts & media   Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	2736	2

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths
- good standard in learners' work and achievements
- good standards of teaching and learning
- excellent initiative to celebrate learners' work
- wide range of courses

Weaknesses
- insufficient sharing of good assessment practice
- insufficient implementation of new quality assurance procedures in some learning centres

Achievement and standards

92. The standard of learners' work is consistently high and sometimes exceptional. Learners gain significant personal and social benefits from the classes they attend. They enjoy their classes and comment on the increased confidence and sense of self-worth that they feel. Many return to education following illness, retirement or bereavement and value their contacts with other learners. They comment on how their lives have been improved through the acquisition of new skills that allow them to exhibit and, in some cases, sell their work, and to make artefacts as presents or for their own homes. Attendance is good at 80 per cent for 2003-04.

Quality of education and training

93. Standards of teaching and learning are good. Eighty-two per cent of observed sessions were good or better, a significant improvement of 16 per cent from the previous inspection. The tutors' knowledge, skills and expertise are appropriate to adult learners and in all classes relationships between staff and learners are good. Sessions are usually well planned and introduce a range of technical and creative skills. Tutors are able to direct their teaching at the appropriate level for each individual. In one class the tutor was able to explore the paintings of Edward Hopper with learners who were able to discern his influence on contemporary cinema, 'film noir' and the films of Alfred Hitchcock. Learners are particularly inspired by the beauty of the locality and this is often reflected in their finished work. Tutors give clear verbal feedback and often set challenging targets for learners. They give well-prepared demonstrations that provoke

debate and broaden ideas. Learners are able to work independently and use materials and specialist equipment with confidence. There is much collaborative learning, with the sharing of ideas and opinions. In a few sessions tutors do not plan sufficiently and do not always consider the effect of this on learners.

94. CAES has an excellent current initiative to celebrate learners' work. This year, for the first time, learners throughout the area have had the opportunity to exhibit their work in a professional and exciting venue at the same time as professional artists and crafts workers. All learning centres within the county have taken part in the exhibition. Tutors and learners have been able to meet, compare and celebrate their achievements. The venue and timing of the exhibition gives it a high profile and attracts many tourists, as well as local visitors.

95. The service offers a wide range of provision. Although largely historical and conventional, a wide choice of subjects is available throughout the county. Since the previous inspection there has been a 15 per cent increase in courses offered to learners. Most aspects of the area of learning are offered, including music, dance and two- and three-dimensional arts and crafts. Courses are available throughout the year during the day and evening, in a wide variety of local venues. In some classes learners re-enrol annually and where demand is high, access is restricted for potential new learners.

96. Most accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Many classes are held in picturesque towns and villages which learners often find stimulating. Where classes are held in local schools learners have access to specialist equipment. Learners in a digital photography class were able to use the school's ICT facilities in order to develop their photographs. One painting class is located in a first-floor room which has no access for learners with restricted mobility, or any access to water. Some rooms are too small for the number of learners enrolled. Some Latin-American and belly-dancing classes are held in accommodation with poor acoustics. Over 50 per cent of tutors have teaching qualifications and many are practising artists and crafts people.

97. Support and guidance for learners are satisfactory. Pre-course information is helpful and provides essential advice and guidance. In some cases there is insufficient advice regarding the costs of materials necessary for arts and crafts classes. Tutors are sensitive to learners with aural and visual impairments and arrange their classes accordingly. Specific learning aids, such as magnifiers, left-handed scissors and hearing loops, are available when needs are identified. There are no childcare facilities.

98. During the previous inspection, assessment was regarded as a weakness. The reinspected identified some excellent examples of assessment in some classes, but insufficient sharing of this good practice throughout the region. Some tutors are reluctant to adopt the procedures designed by managers. In some cases the initial assessment, on-course assessment, and the monitoring of progress are all weak. Although tutor handbooks and registers clearly indicate the requirement to record learning, individual needs or learning outcomes are sometimes not identified or recorded. Learners do receive a lot of informal verbal feedback, but it is not recorded in some classes and is not used in curriculum planning. Some tutors design their own

diagnostic and on-course assessments, but in a few cases some of the terms used and the questions asked are inappropriate.

Leadership and management

99. Curriculum management and quality assurance procedures have improved considerably since the previous inspection. A curriculum leader has been appointed and a programme of teaching and learning observation has been implemented. Tutors have many more opportunities to meet and share ideas and examples of good practice. Communications between tutors and managers have improved. However, despite the improvements made by senior managers, the new quality assurance procedures are not implemented sufficiently in some learning centres. Some operational managers do not monitor tutors in their use of the quality assurance systems.

English, languages & communications   Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1896	3

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- good standards of oral work in class
- some good examples of teaching and learning
- good range of courses
- good staff development opportunities

Weaknesses

- some poor achievements on accredited courses in 2002-03
- insufficient assessments to plan individual learning programmes
- poor overall strategic planning

Achievement and standards

100. The focus of most language classes is oral communication. The standard of oral work is good. In most classes, learners demonstrate good pronunciation and intonation. In beginners' classes, learners can acquire a good degree of fluency in the target language after only four or five sessions. Attainment in other skill areas is satisfactory. Learners' attendance and retention rates are satisfactory. In the observed sessions, 82 per cent of learners enrolled were present and tutors could account for almost all absences. The retention rate for learners during 2002-03 was 84 per cent overall. However, non-accredited courses retained 96 per cent of learners, compared with only 72 per for accredited provision.

101. Achievements were poor on accredited courses during 2002-03. Some learners registered for accreditation did not complete their courses. Overall achievement for that year was only 36 per cent. Accredited courses at that time represented less than 20 per cent of the provision.

Quality of education and training

102. Some good teaching and learning takes place throughout the county. Sixty-three per cent of sessions observed were good or better, of which 29 per cent were very good or excellent. In these sessions, there is good interaction between learners in the classroom, and between tutors and learners. Sessions are well organised and well paced, with a good variety of activities. Tutors provide ample time for learners to practise the

language which is presented in a number of different situations. Learners' skills are developed well through constant consolidation and repetition of the language in new contexts.

103. A good range of courses is offered. There are currently classes in one Asian and nine modern European languages, as well as sign language, lip-reading, Latin, and English GCSE. Classes also offered in less common languages, such as Polish and Dutch. Some learning centres have responded well to community demands. Greek has been introduced at one centre this term, after a need was identified through learners' feedback and telephone requests. Progression opportunities are becoming more available, particularly at the larger learning centres. A year 3 Spanish course is being offered for the first time at one centre. At another, all the year 1 Italian learners in one class have enrolled for year 2 and have been joined by other learners who travel into the area in order to continue their studies at a higher level.

104. Overall, learning resources are suitable and sufficient. At one learning centre resources are available through a national broadcasting network and have been appropriately integrated with the languages curriculum. This has provided learners with additional resources to use in addition to classroom sessions. Many tutors and learners do not have sufficient access to computer-based or audiovisual learning materials. Only a few venues offer IT facilities. At one large centre, learners can use the IT suite for extra-curricular study several evenings each week. However, at some other learning centres, where school premises are used, learning materials and equipment on site are not readily available to adult education tutors. In some classes only a limited range of resources and activities are used to stimulate learning. Accommodation is generally fit for purpose, although the layout of classrooms at one major centre, with learners arranged in rows, inhibits communication between learners and tutors.

105. Individual learners are supported adequately in classes. Tutors monitor class activities well and ensure that all learners are participating. Unexplained continuing absences are usually investigated and in one case a tutor has designated a learner to act as mentor to a classmate who has been absent for three consecutive sessions.

106. Insufficient assessment is carried out to contribute to the planning of learning. Although the perceived needs of learners are surveyed at the start of courses, not enough initial or diagnostic assessment of language skills is recorded. Few individual targets are set and on non-accredited courses learners are often unaware of group targets. The assessment of progress and attainment is inconsistent, especially in non-accredited provision.

Leadership and management

107. Good opportunities for staff development are offered by CAES. The focus is on training tutors in assessment and language teaching methodology. Recent training events have had some good outcomes. One learning centre has provided accredited assessor training and tutors are now familiar with the requirements of the awarding

body. Similar events are scheduled for other centres. Twenty tutors have also recently attended differentiation training to help them improve individual learning in mixed-ability classes. Curriculum co-ordinators conduct some training for tutors who are geographically isolated and have been unable to attend tutor development events. Tutors' and learners' awareness of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Arrangements are generally satisfactory for learners with disabilities. One learning centre has good wheelchair access, but access to refreshments for people with disabilities is poor at two other centres. This is a temporary difficulty at one centre while building work takes place.

108. The operational management of the curriculum area is now satisfactory. The appointment of a county curriculum leader and co-ordinators in both main learning centres has ensured progress in resolving the areas of weakness identified at the previous inspection. The number of accredited courses has increased to 31 per cent of the provision this year and new, more appropriate, accreditation paths have been chosen for adult learners. Tutors' and learners' inductions are satisfactory. Observations of language learning sessions are satisfactory. Operational curriculum management is particularly well developed at one large learning centre, with good internal communications between the curriculum co-ordinator and tutors.

109. Overall strategic planning remains poor. The curriculum rationale for the whole service is weak and does not respond sufficiently to the National Language Strategy. Management information data is poorly used in planning provision. Plans to streamline course descriptions, to introduce accreditation and to improve progression routes have been produced, but only have advisory status. Not all learning centres have implemented the necessary changes. There is insufficient overall resource planning.

Foundation programmes   Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	506	2

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths
- good retention and achievement rates
- much good teaching
- creative initial assessments
- particularly responsive courses meet learners' needs
- good management of provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Weaknesses
- inappropriate recruitment and selection process for some learners
- insufficient emphasis on strategic planning

Achievement and standards

110. Retention and achievement rates on the Skills for Life and 'Moving On' programmes are good. Enrolments have increased, as have retention and achievement rates. In 2003-04 there were 1,078 learners on Skills for Life programmes, compared with 202 in 2001-02 and 765 in 2002-03. Of the 1,078 enrolments, 93 per cent were retained and 82 per cent achieved a qualification. These percentages exceeded CAES's challenging internal targets. The number of learners enrolling on the 'Moving On' programme increased from 153 in 2001-02 to 172 in 2003-04. The retention rate of 96 per cent exceeded the internal target. All learners who completed their programmes gained their target qualifications.

111. Sessions for learners with disabilities produce benefits to their mobility, posture and breathing. Attendance is carefully monitored and attendance rates are very good. No reliable data is available for overall achievements and retention for family learning programmes.

Quality of education and training

112. A lot of the teaching in this area is good. Seventy-seven per cent of observed sessions were good or better, nine per cent of them were excellent. In these sessions, tutors are well prepared, have a clear understanding of the learners' needs and set appropriately challenging targets. The 'Moving On' and Skills for Life programmes both have a wide variety of subjects. Learners make good progress in improving their literacy

and numeracy skills and are able to apply their learning to daily situations. Other relevant skills are developed by learners, including computer skills, cookery, first aid, drama and pottery. In the best sessions, tutors are very energetic and motivate learners through stimulating questioning and by individual attention. In one weak session, topics were beyond the learners' experience and they were too passive. In family learning programmes learners actively participate in sessions and are able to make the connections between their own learning and that of their children. For example, parents on a numeracy course gained increased understanding of the terminology used in their children's mathematics lessons. The more skilful tutors give very supportive feedback.

113. Initial assessments are used sensitively and take account of the needs of the particular group. Good use is made of self-assessment and on the 'Keeping Up With the Children' courses, some assessment materials are linked directly to the group's learning plan. In the best cases, learners create their own learning goals. Most learners have short- and long-term goals to help them recognise the progress they are making. A lot of work has been done in the area of initial assessments and in planning for the continuous assessment of learners' progress. Individual and group learning plans have been developed for all Skills for Life courses, including family learning, language, literacy and numeracy courses. However, the plans are new and, although tutors have received training to use them, their effect on the monitoring of learners' progress is minimal at the moment.

114. CAES's provision of courses is particularly responsive to learners' needs, in scheduling and content. A number of short courses took place through the summer holidays . The content of longer courses has been developed following discussions with a wide range of organisations. Content now includes accredited programmes for effective meetings in the Skills for Life programme and accredited courses in independent living, including cooking, health and safety and first aid. Other courses are included following consultations with outside bodies. These courses include a short course to prepare learners for national tests, a storytelling course and a course to help learners to make effective presentations. Plans are very well advanced to offer an accredited course to older learners, based on reminiscences. Courses are well publicised. Learners' achievements are celebrated through events such as presentation evenings. However, not all advertised courses are taking place; for example, publicity leaflets refer to literacy courses, but none were available or operating during the inspection period. Some very good-quality publicity materials were produced for family learning week by the wider family learning team.

115. Materials and equipment are now adequate and the weakness identified at the previous inspection has been resolved. On wider family learning courses, tutors have resource boxes which contain stationery and other materials to support tutors. On the family learning, language, literacy and numeracy courses, resources such as pens, paper and stationery are provided for learners. However, on some Skills for Life courses CAES relies too much on tutors providing their own materials. Most learning venues are adequate and some are very conducive to effective learning. However, there remains a minority of venues which have drab surroundings, are littered and overcrowded. Some of the most vulnerable learners are being taught in classes where the ratio of learners to

tutors is too high.

116. In general, support for learners is satisfactory. Where individual learners are identified as needing a carer, one is arranged. Childcare provision is only available through access funds and is limited.

117. A few courses have inappropriate recruitment and selection processes. On these courses classes are offered to learners whose abilities far exceed the level of provision. In one particular programme, learners with level 4 qualifications are required to complete a level 1 assessment.

Leadership and management

118. The provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well managed. Communications are extensive and effective. Successful initiatives to widen participation have led to the formation of good partnerships with, for example, a community garden project, community homes, Sure Start, the county library service, a lakeside outdoor activity centre, and a local residents' forum. Management and co-ordination arrangements in the area of foundation learning have been revised significantly. A new Skills for Life manager was appointed in May 2004 and, more recently, curriculum co-ordinators for each of the areas of literacy, numeracy, family literacy and ESOL. Wider family learning has a manager and a part-time development worker who are also recent appointments.

119. Quality assurance arrangements are now satisfactory and much improved since the previous inspection. Tutors are well supported. Curriculum leaders do not have teaching responsibilities as part of their duties, and have been appointed specifically to manage the curriculum and support tutors within their respective curriculum areas. Tutors have good access to staff development opportunities. For example, all tutors have had training in using individual learning plans and using quality assurance procedures. Many tutors have attended equality and diversity training. Administrative procedures have been improved. CAES has a clear commitment to widen participation for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

120. CAES does not emphasise strategic planning sufficiently. New staff have prioritised and improved operational planning. Wider family learning and family learning, language, literacy and numeracy programmes are managed separately. Staff have not produced a joint strategic plan for the curriculum. There are no strategic plans for Skills for Life and family learning, although staff refer to wider county plans. Current data is not completely accurate and is not used sufficiently in planning and progress monitoring.