

INSPECTION REPORT

Derbyshire LEA

31 January 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 and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based 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
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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

Overall judgement

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

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

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

INSPECTION REPORT

Derbyshire LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Derbyshire Adult Community Education Service (the service) is part of the education department of Derbyshire Local Education Authority (LEA). The service is administered through eight areas broadly corresponding to the local district councils. Much of the local industrial base, including mining, has declined. The adult population of Derbyshire is 568,000. The service has grown considerably since 2001 and in 2002-03 there were over 45,000 enrolments. The service received just over £8.7 million funding from Derbyshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in 2003-04 for its adult and community education provision, roughly half of which is for accredited courses. The service receives additional funding for learner support, family learning, literacy and numeracy, learndirect provision and other community projects. The current annual budget for the service is in excess of £11 million.

2. Very extensive information and communications technology (ICT) provision is available for learners in local centres, in the workplace and online, and through learndirect. Literacy and numeracy provision is used to improve life chances, employability and learners' access to the curriculum. Family literacy and numeracy is a strong feature of the provision and the service works in close partnership with Read On-Write Away! (ROWA!), a literacy initiative for Derbyshire set up as an independent partnership, to provide this support. The service offers a comprehensive learner support package including 20 permanent crèches, a full-time nursery and an extensive network of temporary crèches run throughout the year in over 200 community settings. Each area team has an advice worker to deliver information, advice and guidance in partnership with the information, advice and guidance partnership for Derbyshire. Learndirect provision accounted for over 4,000 enrolments in 2002-03.

3. The service delivers employee development for a range of small, medium or large employers including Derbyshire County Council and national companies. From January 2003 the service took over approximately 50 staff and six centres from a local further education college at the request of the local LSC. The service has also been operating three community economic development teams in disadvantaged communities, mainly in former mining towns and villages.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Information & communications technology

4. The service is the largest ICT training provider and learndirect provider in Derbyshire. In addition to the 30 fully networked UK online learning centres and six learndirect centres, it provides training through a large number of community-based learning venues. These are in schools, village halls, community centres and libraries, and in premises shared with other organisations. The service provides 200 laptop computers for use in those community centres where there is no computing equipment. These are also used in the

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three mobile learning buses that travel around the county to provide local residents with ICT training. The number of ICT courses offered has increased considerably during the past four years and it is now the main curriculum area. In 2002-03, 800 courses were advertised. ICT courses account for one-third of all course enrolments and half of all vocational course enrolments. A total of 6,101 learners enrolled on ICT courses during the first term of 2003-04. Enrolments on learndirect ICT courses have increased from 3,800 in 2001-02 to 4,200 in 2002-03.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

5. Approximately 250 mainly vocational courses are offered in hospitality and sport, mostly during weekday evenings. A small number of courses run during the day and at weekends. Courses are held at over 80 learning centres including schools, churches, village halls and community centres. Some courses lead to nationally accredited qualifications and some allow learners to progress through a number of levels. Most courses are sports-related, including tai chi, karate, keep fit and badminton. A large number of yoga courses are offered throughout Derbyshire. Catering courses include sugarcraft and food hygiene. Most courses run for two hours a week for 10 to 12 weeks. Some longer courses are offered, such as a 36-week fitness instructor's award, and shorter one day and taster courses are also available. During the first term of 2003-04, 2,703 learners were enrolled on courses in this area of learning, compared with 8,135 learners in 2001-02 and 7,046 learners in 2002-03. Currently 88 per cent of learners are women. Seven per cent of learners have been identified as having additional needs. Only 1 per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups. Most part-time tutors teach for between two and six hours a week, although some work for much longer. The programme is managed by a curriculum group leader.

Health, social care & public services

6. The service currently provides 24 accredited and non-accredited health and social care courses, from entry level to level 3. Courses are taught during the day, in the evenings and at weekends. Some courses provide learners with progression routes leading to childcare qualifications. Courses last for between two and five hours a week and last between 10 to 39 weeks in duration. The courses are provided at a variety of learning centres across the county. In 2002-03, there were 1,945 enrolments. To date in 2003-04, there have been 1,321 enrolments. Most learners at the time of inspection were women, with a small proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups. Most teaching staff are part-time employees. A new curriculum group leader was appointed in November 2003, with the post having been vacant for most of 2002-03.

Visual & performing arts & media

7. Currently 3,941 learners are enrolled on 331 visual and performing arts and media courses. In 2002-03, there were 9,329 enrolments. Courses are provided at 80 learning centres, spread geographically across the eight districts of the county, including full-time adult education centres, village halls, schools, churches and community centres. Courses include painting and drawing, history of art, stained glass, pottery, furniture restoration, guitar, line-, modern-, jive-, belly- and salsa-dancing, drama, singing, photography and digital imaging. Classes take place during the day, evening and on Saturdays. Eighty per cent of the courses are non-accredited: the remainder leading to nationally recognised qualifications. Most classes are of two hours duration and courses run for 10 or 12 weeks. Some accredited courses run for up to 30 weeks, and a small number of taster courses are of one or two weeks' duration. Many classes have a mix of beginners and improvers, although some specify the level at which the classes will be taught. Most of the main sites have childcare provision.

English, languages & communications

8. Currently 172 courses are provided in English, languages and communication. Of these, 17 are English courses, 136 are modern foreign languages courses, six are creative writing courses and 13 are sign language courses. Approximately 38 per cent of the courses lead to qualifications. In 2002-03, there were a total of 3,087 enrolments. A total of 1,800 learners enrolled during the first term of 2003-04. The modern foreign language courses, which include Spanish, French, German, Italian and Greek, last from six to 30 weeks and take place at approximately 50 community venues. Learners can work towards qualifications at levels 1 and 2 in many classes, and some are able to work towards level 3. Spanish, French and German are also available on family learning and learndirect courses. English is currently taught at general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) level. Sign language is provided for beginners and at level 1. Some of the creative writing courses provided lead to qualifications, while others are taught at beginner and intermediate levels.

Foundation programmes

9. Literacy and numeracy courses are provided through 65 learning centres in the eight districts of Derbyshire. Most of these courses are on a roll-on, roll-off basis. Learndirect literacy and numeracy skills provision is provided at six learning centres. There is also discrete provision for learners with learning difficulties, courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), ICT-linked courses and programmes at entry level and level 1. Some courses are for mixed-ability groups. Courses take place in the morning, afternoon and during the evening. A summer programme comprises short courses to enhance the literacy and numeracy skills of adults with learning disabilities. Literacy and numeracy courses are also provided with partner organisations, including the probation service, Connexions and social services. Learners can work towards external accreditation. In 2002-03 there were 2,287 learners on programmes. Currently 1,503 learners are enrolled.

Family learning

10. Derbyshire LEA provides family learning courses including family literacy and numeracy programmes in partnership with ROWA!. ROWA! is contracted to manage the family literacy and numeracy programme and is responsible for arranging the provision with infant, primary and secondary schools, Sure Start, and Home Start: the family support organisation. Adults on these programmes are largely taught by Derbyshire adult education literacy and numeracy skills staff. The service also provides wider family learning programmes in a range of areas including languages, computers, arts and cooking. Courses run from one-hour taster sessions up to 60 hours. Most classes take place during the day with some evening and weekend provision. Programmes are provided in infant and primary schools with wider family learning provided in a range of community venues throughout Derbyshire, which include youth centres, adult education centres and a scout hut. Fifty-three tutors teach on the programmes. Since September 2003, 22 learners have enrolled on two family numeracy courses, six on a literacy workshop, 130 learners have enrolled on 14 courses to extend parents' skills in supporting their children's literacy and numeracy, 68 on eight programmes in developing toddlers' language skills, and 50 on 10 programmes in storytelling using supporting materials. Four hundred and seventy-nine learners have enrolled on 40 wider family learning programmes.

11. Family literacy and numeracy programmes are managed through ROWA! by a full-time co-ordinator. The co-ordinator manages three development workers who organise the provision and work with schools. The provision is monitored through a steering group. The service has recently appointed a co-ordinator who is also responsible for wider family learning provision. Each district receives a budget to run family learning programmes as part of their commitment to widening participation.

Community development

12. The community development initiatives target under-represented groups and communities identified as deprived according to the government's index of multiple deprivation. Community development provision is concentrated in 56 of the most deprived wards in Derbyshire. Provision is funded through the LSC and external sources such as the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and European Social Fund (ESF). Community development initiatives accounted for approximately 21 per cent of the service's budget in 2001-02, and provision increased in 2002-03. Three community economic development teams are based in the districts of Chesterfield, northeast Derbyshire and Bolsover and are funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). These staff collaborate with adult community education staff to develop provision in local communities. There are other community regeneration and capacity building initiatives, such as the Mobile and Coalfields project, which provides vocational guidance and accredited and non-accredited training in the former coalmining areas. Five SRB-funded projects in Derbyshire aim to encourage new learners into learning. A project designed to provide ICT and other learning activity is based with an employer in the High Peak district.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	29
Number of inspection days	215
Number of learner interviews	1255
Number of staff interviews	238
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	228
Number of visits	272

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

13. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, leadership and management and arrangements for equality of opportunity are good. Arrangements for quality assurance are satisfactory. Provision is good in ICT, health and social care, visual and performing arts and media, foundation programmes, literacy and numeracy, and community development. Provision is satisfactory in hospitality and sport, English, languages and communications, and family learning.

GRADES

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

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	2
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

Health, social care & public services	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

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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

Family learning	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Community development	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

14. **Retention and achievement rates in ICT are very good.** The retention rate was 82 per cent for the 2001-02 and 2002-03 intakes. The retention rate for 2003-04 is currently 94 per cent. Seventy-one per cent of the 2001-02 learners successfully achieved qualifications, increasing to 73 per cent for the 2002-03 intake. Most learners achieve their personal learning goals by acquiring computing skills which they use at home, to help local organisations or to improve their job prospects. Some learners progress to more advanced courses and many acquire the skills and qualifications required for employment.

15. Achievement and retention rates are satisfactory in hospitality and sport. Learners gain good social, physical and psychological benefits through classes such as yoga, tai chi and cookery. The social benefits are particularly important for older learners who develop good relationships and friendships through the classes. Some gain in self-confidence and apply their learning to daily life. Learners produce satisfactory standards of work, and some learners' work is displayed to celebrate success.

16. **Most health and social care learners complete their courses and progress well.**

Many join more advanced courses, some take a number of courses at the same level and some get jobs. The standard of most learners' work is satisfactory. Some learners, such as those on the classroom assistants' course, work at a good level early in their programme.

17. Achievement rates are good on visual and performing arts and media programmes, with 88 per cent of learners on accredited courses gaining nationally recognised qualifications. Most learners successfully achieve their individual learning goals and many use their skills in social and cultural contexts and for the benefit of the local community. Retention rates are good. **Learners produce a good standard of work.** Completed work in classes is generally proficient and professional as are the displays of learners' work in many learning centres and the performances in the community.

18. Achievement rates of individual language goals is good in English, languages and communications. Most learners use language confidently and demonstrate good levels of fluency. Creative writing learners develop good writing skills and produce work with good awareness of their audience. In modern languages, approximately 70 per cent of retained learners on accredited courses achieve their certificate. Some learners use their skills to improve their career prospects and gain jobs.

19. Learners' personal and learning skills are developed well in most foundation learning sessions. Learners develop good self-confidence and produce good standards of work. They develop good ICT skills and are able to use ICT to learn more independently. Learners are able to clearly describe their learning outcomes and their progress towards their goals, such as filling in forms and developing good writing skills. Many learners progress to more advanced literacy or numeracy courses and some become trained volunteers or support assistants. In 2002-03, 75 per cent of retained learners achieved an external qualification.

20. Learners on family learning courses make satisfactory progress in achieving group learning goals and their own personal objectives. They gain confidence in helping their children and this raises their own self-confidence. Standards of learners' work are satisfactory. Retention and achievement rates are satisfactory. In 2002-03, 47 per cent of learners on accredited programmes achieved a qualification.

21. Community development learners attain very good personal and community development skills. Participants in projects learn skills such as problem solving, managing budgets, and managing the risks associated with refurbishing a community centre. Unemployed learners improve in self-confidence, are motivated to look for jobs and some are now passing on their skills to others in their community. Local residents in the Rother area of Chesterfield have developed an area of waste ground into a garden for the community.

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	1	13	30	27	2	0	0	73
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	2	13	12	1	1	0	29
Health, social care & public services	0	4	11	8	0	0	1	24
Visual & performing arts & media	4	10	7	5	1	0	0	27
English, languages & communications	0	6	8	10	3	0	0	27
Foundation programmes	0	11	20	14	3	2	0	50
Family learning	0	3	14	8	2	0	0	27
Community development	0	3	6	5	1	0	0	15
Total	5	52	109	89	13	3	1	272

22. **Outreach provision in ICT is very good.** ICT courses are offered widely throughout Derbyshire in a wide range of locations. Learners not used to participating in ICT classes in their communities are strongly encouraged. They are supported well by tutors who fully understand the difficulties many adult learners face when they return to learning. Good crèche facilities are available in many learning centres. Learners receive good initial and on-course information, advice and guidance. **ICT resources are of a good standard and learning centres are equipped very well.** Outreach centres are equipped with laptop computers and portable printers. Learners with particular learning needs have access to special equipment and software. Learners receive very good advice and guidance on whether their learning requirements can be best fulfilled by a learndirect course or in a learning workshop. **Initial assessment is inadequate.** Although learners complete an application form and discuss their learning requirements with tutors, not enough information is collected on their written and spoken language skills and their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are not formally assessed. ICT learning materials are not used enough to help learners improve their literacy and numeracy skills. **Individual learning plans are not used effectively to set short-term targets for learners and to record their progress.** Learners are not set homework tasks to enable them to extend their computing skills. Learners have access to good ICT textbooks which they can borrow or purchase to use outside of the class. **Learners have poor skills in using keyboards** and not enough attention is paid to helping them acquire good keyboarding techniques when they begin their ICT training.

23. **Teaching is good on hospitality courses** and mostly satisfactory on sports courses. The better lessons have an appropriate range of activities to suit learners' needs and involve learners in their own learning. The service has formed successful partnerships with other council departments and voluntary and community agencies to help widen participation by new learners. One particularly successful project enables unemployed

people to gain qualifications such as pool lifeguard and swimming teacher awards to help them gain jobs. Learners receive good support, including pastoral support from tutors as well as good information, guidance and advice before starting courses. Financial help is available for learners with tuition fees, travel costs, materials, books and equipment. Learners' progress is not adequately monitored or recorded. Initial assessment is not used adequately to influence individual learning plans. Learners' health is not checked consistently at the start of some courses. Learners cannot always view their progress records to check how they are getting on or to identify achievements made. Learners' individual performance is not monitored enough and some tutors do not provide learners with feedback.

24. Teaching and learning was good or better in approximately two-thirds of health and social care lessons observed. A range of teaching techniques are used well to ensure that all learners can develop their knowledge and understanding, and many learners are challenged by the complexity of the tasks they are set. Many learners discover that they have acquired skills through their life experience that they had not previously recognised. Many tutors use questioning effectively to encourage less-confident learners to contribute fully to lessons. In a few lessons learners are not sufficiently motivated to develop their skills. **Courses in health and social care are widely available across the county, in many subjects and at many levels.** The most popular courses are available in all areas. **Learners' experience and abilities, including their literacy and numeracy skills, are not assessed at the beginning of many courses.** Some learners decide for themselves what level of course to join and some tutors do not know whether learners have the literacy, numeracy and language skills to complete the written work. Not enough teachers are available to cover the range of national vocational qualification (NVQ) courses offered, and some classes are too large to ensure that all learners get enough individual attention.

25. Teaching and learning is very good in visual and performing arts and media. Tutors set demanding learning activities to enable learners at all levels to creatively explore their own ideas and experiment with a wide range of techniques. Tutors have very good technical expertise and experience. **Arts and crafts learners have access to a wide range of courses available throughout the county, and learners can progress to accredited courses.** Learners with learning difficulties are successfully integrated with mainstream classes. Resources and accommodation are generally suitable although some rooms are inappropriate for specialist activities. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support, including effective pre-course information. Initial assessment is not used consistently and the recording of learners' progress is inadequate. Many tutors have designed their own ways of recording learners' progress and some learners do not always know what they need to do to improve their performance. Some features of curriculum management are ineffective.

26. Language tutors manage effective learning in small groups. In these lessons, tutors regularly use small group and pairwork and organise learning well. Learners apply the target language well in clear contexts and practise new skills successfully. **The service has launched many effective initiatives to attract new foreign language learners.** Learner numbers have increased regularly over the past three years. Successful initiatives have

included family learning and learndirect. New community venues are regularly added when needed. **Tutors use an inadequate range of teaching methods for larger groups.** They rely too much on handouts and do not make good use of appropriate learning materials. Tutors in some foreign language lessons do not use the target language enough, often using English for basic commands and to check learners' understanding. Learners do not practise new words in context and pronunciation is not regularly corrected. **The range of language courses offered is not wide enough.** Only five European modern foreign languages are provided. The range of creative writing courses available is also inadequate.

27. **Volunteer and learning support staff are used well on foundation programmes to enhance learning.** This enables learners to progress at their own pace and to consolidate their skills. The service has formed effective working partnerships with external bodies to meet local and community needs. Classes are provided through 65 learning centres to ensure that learners can attend courses close to their homes. **Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory, particularly in the outreach centres.** Some outreach centres do not have adequate access for people with restricted mobility or adequate ICT facilities. Not enough staff have sufficient expertise to teach and support all learners, particularly those who are dyslexic or who speak English as an additional language. **Learners' portfolios are poorly organised.** Tutors do provide learners with appropriate help to develop the necessary skills to structure their portfolios adequately. **In most sessions, the evaluation of learning activities is inadequate.** Although activities are recorded, learners' progress is not monitored enough. Evaluation and co-ordination of learning is inadequate for some learners who attend many times a week.

28. **Teaching and learning are good on most family learning courses,** especially in lessons where learners have an initial assessment and staff keep up-to-date learner records. In the best learning sessions, teaching is planned well with a good range of activities and children and adult learners participate well. Teaching is poorly planned and carried out in some sessions. **Resources for teaching and learning are good.** Resources for language programmes are very good and include games and activities to motivate all learners. ROWA!'s Backpack project provides a wide range of resources including stationery, audio equipment, games and books. **Initiatives to widen participation are good.** ROWA! provides two buses to take provision to communities where suitable accommodation is unavailable. The buses also provide a mobile crèche unit. The service has increased participation by men by introducing specific courses such as family computers and building robots. Taster sessions are used well to recruit learners. The achievement targets set for learners are inadequate. Learners are not always assessed to identify their literacy or numeracy support needs. **Most parents and carers enrol on courses to gain skills to help their children at school, and are not set individual targets for their own learning.** Learners on accredited courses are not set sufficiently demanding targets. Staff do not consistently maintain progress records. **Monitoring and assessment are inadequate on non-accredited courses.** No recorded initial assessment takes place on wider family learning programmes and individual learning plans are not always produced for these learners. Tutors do not routinely keep records of progress.

29. **Teaching is good and informal learning is promoted well on the community**

development projects. Tutors use a good range of teaching styles to meet learners' needs and learners fully understand what they have learnt. Courses are flexible and arranged around learners' other commitments, such as shiftwork or childcare. **Working partnerships are very effective in meeting community needs.** Staff work productively with a wide range of agencies on innovative projects that aim to build capacity and develop employment in local communities. **Tutors do not sufficiently integrate the development of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills into their teaching.** Learning activities to promote these skills are not included in lesson plans or individual learning plans. Many staff members do not understand the role of initial assessment in identifying individual learning needs and planning learning activities.

30. Arrangements to self-assess the effectiveness of community development are inadequate. The service does not perform enough critical evaluation of the effect of community projects on linking regeneration and adult learning. It does not identify strengths and weaknesses on which to base action-planning for continuous improvement. The two community development staff teams in Derbyshire do not adequately exchange good practice to aid development and improvement. Project evaluations do not relate the findings to the self-assessment process using the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Community development projects are managed well by project managers and administrative staff, and good use is made of interim reports to evaluate the projects' effectiveness. However, not all tutors are sufficiently aware of project aims in promoting regeneration and many see the purpose of the class as solely to teach the subject.

Leadership and management

31. The service is managed well and provision for approximately 75 per cent of learners was judged by inspectors to be good. **The service co-ordinates strategic and operational planning effectively.** The strategic objectives for adult education are clearly linked to the council's priorities. Managers at all levels fully understand the strategic objectives and plans are monitored regularly at team meetings. This effective planning helps ensure good progress towards the achievement of objectives. Some targets, such as general enrolments and increased numbers of learners with disabilities, have already been exceeded.

32. The service has a very good network of working partnerships at strategic and local levels to meet community needs. Partners include Connexions, ROWA!, the probation, youth and social services, local employers and other training providers. These partnerships have helped the development of well-targeted projects without any duplication of provision. Links with external agencies are very good. These provide a wide range of courses which meet the needs of learners and target under-represented groups.

33. The service makes good use of external funding to enhance levels of provision and to target the more hard-to-reach learners. It has well-established arrangements that involve partners collaborating well to bid for these additional funds.

34. **Initiatives to widen participation are very good.** They include the ROWA! bus for the provision of family literacy and numeracy courses and two buses for the provision of ICT courses for the long-term unemployed in the former coal mining areas. Good use is made of a large network of outreach learning centres. Cookery classes are used well to improve learners' cultural awareness. Initiatives to promote learning to minority ethnic groups include a bus that visits an African-Caribbean centre each week.

35. **Support for learners is very effective.** The crèche facilities are excellent. They are free and places are available to all learners. Childminders will be paid for if the crèche is full or the learner is attending an outreach centre where there is no crèche.

36. **The service's management information system is ineffective at programme level.** The quality of management information is not monitored enough. Data are collected from learners' enrolment forms and registers but staff have not yet received sufficient training in collecting this information. Retention and achievement rates are not consistently defined on non-accredited courses, and the input of these data is not accurate. Managers are not able to access the management information system.

37. **Staff development programmes are not sufficiently linked to individual targets that staff have to improve their overall performance.**

38. **The service's system for observing teaching and learning is thorough and effective.** It provides clear feedback on what tutors need to do to improve and helps them identify their training and development needs.

39. The service has a satisfactory self-assessment process. The process successfully identified the service's strengths and weaknesses. However, not all staff were sufficiently involved in the self-assessment process.

40. Quality assurance arrangements are not systematically or fully applied in all areas. The service's procedures do not include arrangements to quality assure subcontractors.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- effective strategic and operational planning
- very good network of working partnerships to meet community needs
- good use of external funding to support additional projects
- very good initiatives to widen participation
- very effective support for learners
- comprehensive and effective system for observation of teaching

Weaknesses

- ineffective management information system at programme level

- inadequate linking of staff development to individual targets
- incomplete implementation of quality assurance arrangements

Information & communications technology

Strengths

- very good retention and achievement rates
- good-quality ICT resources
- very good support from tutors
- very good outreach provision
- well-integrated learndirect provision
- good strategic management

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment
- inadequate use of individual learning plans
- poor keyboarding techniques

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good teaching in food studies
- effective collaboration to widen participation
- good pastoral and learning support

Weaknesses

- inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- insufficient curriculum development

Health, social care & public services

Strengths

- good retention rates on accredited courses
- good progression
- wide range of provision at different levels across the county
- good teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- poor initial assessment of literacy and numeracy skills
- too few staff to cover NVQ courses

Visual & performing arts & media

Strengths

- learners' successful achievement of individual goals
- good standards of work
- good-quality teaching and learning
- wide range of courses

Weaknesses

- inadequate recording of learners' progress
- some ineffective curriculum management

English, languages & communications

Strengths

- good achievement of individual learning goals
- effective management of learning in small groups
- effective initiatives to attract new language learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate range of teaching methods used in large groups
- insufficient range of language courses

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good development of personal and learning skills
- good teaching and learning
- good use of ICT to support learning in main centres
- effective use of support from volunteers and learners
- effective measures to widen participation

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory accommodation and resources at some learning centres
- poorly organised learners' portfolios
- poor evaluation of learning activities

Family learning

Strengths

- good teaching and learning on most courses
- good resources
- good initiatives to widen participation

Weaknesses

- insufficient achievement targets for adult learners
- inadequate monitoring and assessment on non-accredited courses
- inadequate quality assurance

Community development

Strengths

- very good attainment of personal and community development skills
- good teaching and learning
- very effective working partnerships to meet community needs

Weaknesses

- poor awareness by staff of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills development
- inadequate arrangements to self-assess programme effectiveness

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT DERBYSHIRE LEA:

- the feeling of achievement - 'I am proud of what I do on the course'
- the crèche facilities
- the opportunities for neighbourhood-based learning in school hours
- the way the courses build confidence - 'I can do so much more than I could in September'
- the good opportunities to display work - 'some of the paintings actually sell'
- meeting other people and making new friends
- the family learning courses - 'I can keep up with the grandchildren now'
- making up for missed opportunities - 'I would never have gone to college'
- the support from fellow learners - 'I love the fellowship that exists within the group'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK DERBYSHIRE LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- 'on the next course we shall have to pay fees and I am not sure I will be able to pay.'
- the range of courses available - it could be wider
- access at Alfreton Hall - a lift should be installed
- the number of places on ESOL courses - 'I can only attend one class per week. Other classes are full. It's not enough to develop skills'
- the provision of progression routes after GCSE at centres learners are used to attending

KEY CHALLENGES FOR DERBYSHIRE LEA:

- develop fully and apply the quality assurance arrangements
- improve programme managers' access to and training in the management information system
- accelerate integration of provision, staff and resources from a former local further education college
- develop effective procedures and practice in initial assessment and the use of individual learning plans
- improve keyboarding skills for ICT learners
- improve the monitoring and recording of learners' progress on both accredited and non-accredited courses
- develop staff knowledge and skills in supporting learners with additional literacy, numeracy and language needs

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 INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- effective strategic and operational planning
- very good network of working partnerships to meet community needs
- good use of external funding to support additional projects
- very good initiatives to widen participation
- very effective support for learners
- comprehensive and effective system for observation of teaching

Weaknesses

- ineffective management information system at programme level
- inadequate linking of staff development to individual targets
- incomplete implementation of quality assurance arrangements

41. The service effectively co-ordinates its strategic and operational planning. The strategic plan for adult education reflects and expands the key objectives of the county council and LEA and is linked to the targets of Derbyshire LSC. Clear links show how each organisation contributes to, and values the importance of, widening participation. The adult education plan is used to formulate area team plans. However, these do not contain measurable or time-bound targets for tutors. Managers at all levels fully understand the strategic objectives. Plans are monitored regularly at team meetings locally and at progress reviews by area and county. This effective planning helps ensure good progress towards the achievement of objectives. Some targets, such as for general enrolments and increased numbers of learners with disabilities, have already been exceeded.

42. The service has formed a very good network of working partnerships at strategic and local levels to meet community needs. Partners include Connexions, ROWA!, the probation, youth and social services, local employers and other training providers. These partnerships have worked well to develop successful, well-targeted projects that complement the skills of each partner and avoid duplication of provision. For example, one learning centre is managed by the service together with two further education colleges. Different divisions of the county council work together strategically and locally on joint planning and writing bids. Working relations with Derbyshire LSC are good. For example, during the transfer of part of the provision from a local further education to the service, joint risk management by both parties was good.

43. The service makes good use of external funding sources, such as the ESF, ERDF, SRB, learndirect and the local initiative fund to support additional projects. These include

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the mobile project, the coalfields vocational training project, online ICT suites and a bus containing a mobile broadcasting studio and ICT facilities operated by a national broadcaster. The service has identified the risks involved in the short-term nature of this type of funding and has plans to ensure continuation through further funding bids or to incorporate the projects into mainstream provision. If necessary, contingency funds in the county council's budget can be used to cover delays in European funding approvals.

44. Resources are satisfactory. Some learning centres are equipped well, particularly in ICT. Tutors in some outreach venues have insufficient access to teaching equipment. Some areas have staff shortages. Visual and performing arts and media programmes do not have enough funding for resources.

45. Curriculum management is satisfactory. Recent curriculum board development and the appointment of curriculum leaders is rectifying previous curriculum problems and improvements have been made. Internal communications are satisfactory. Many well-focused and accurately recorded meetings are held at senior management, area, programme and curriculum levels. Some programme managers are not able to access e-mail. Some inconsistencies exist in the quality of communications and dissemination of information between tutors. The frequency of curriculum meetings with tutors varies according to the area of learning. Senior managers work hard to promote a positive culture with which staff can identify.

46. The service does not sufficiently monitor or control the information entering the management information system. It collects data from learners' enrolment forms and registers. Staff have not received sufficient training in collecting this information. For example, inconsistencies exist in the definition of retention and achievement rates on non-accredited courses, and data are not inputted accurately. Managers are not able to access the management information system. Most managers have devised their own, mostly paper-based recording systems, but these records cannot be checked regularly against centrally held data. Specific information has to be searched for manually. From September 2003, the entire provision has been included in the management information. Plans are in place to provide all managers with relevant hardware and software to enable them to access management information and e-mail.

47. Staff development is not adequately linked to individual target-setting. Supervision meetings are held each term between individual staff members and their line managers. Some tutors who deliver substantial amounts of teaching also have supervision sessions. Most of these sessions are recorded, but these sessions do not identify measurable or time-bound objectives to improve individual staff members' performance. Development needs are identified in some supervision meetings but are not automatically linked to the achievement of targets. No system is in place to communicate these needs to the staff development officer. It is often up to the individual member of staff to request and apply for training. In some cases, this also involves finding external sources of funding for training and equipment. Plans are in place to implement management development programmes, but area and programme managers have had insufficient management training, even though many of them have identified the management of personnel as an urgent training need. The staff development officer responds well to requests for training

from individuals and curriculum leaders. Many short training courses are provided in areas including literacy and numeracy skills, ICT, equality of opportunity and in specific management techniques.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

48. The service's promotion of equality of opportunity is effective. It has clearly written policies and procedures that meet relevant legislation. The policy is reviewed every two years and is available online as well as in large print, on cassette tape and in Braille on request. Not all staff have been provided with training in equality of opportunity. Data are collected and analysed and are used by staff to promote learning to under-represented groups.

49. The service has very good initiatives to widen participation. A staff team is responsible for giving learners information, advice and guidance. The team has established many strong and effective partnerships with local agencies which learners can be referred to if necessary, such as the careers service, Jobcentre Plus, colleges and universities. A range of partnerships exists to widen participation. The service and ROWA! provide mobile classrooms on buses. These offer literacy and numeracy courses for families, life skills and healthy eating programmes through Sure Start, and ICT courses for the long-term unemployed in former mining areas. The service uses funds effectively to meet learners' needs, and also makes good use of a large network of outreach centres including public houses, community houses, local schools and church halls. It runs taster sessions and uses feedback from learners to design new programmes. Cookery classes are used well to improve learners' cultural awareness. Initiatives are in place to promote learning to minority ethnic groups, including a bus that visits an African-Caribbean centre each week. The service has made arrangements with a local Asian centre to provide courses at the centre. Although not all venues have good access for people with restricted mobility, a development plan is in place to rectify this.

50. Very effective learner support is provided. Most learning centres have a freely available crèche. If the crèche is full, the service arranges and pays for a childminder. Two teams of appropriately trained staff provide learners with support, information, advice and guidance. For example, one learner who wanted to take a computer course was advised to follow a more appropriate course in upholstery, in line with her personal interests. The learner has successfully completed several pieces of work and has now moved onto curtain making. Not enough learning support assistance is currently available to meet the number of learners. However, a register of voluntary learning partners exists and learners can also bring a learning partner of their choice along with them.

51. A wide range of adaptive equipment is provided, particularly in ICT, including large print keyboards, voice-activated software, height-adjustable desks and tracker balls. Some adaptive equipment is also used in some of the cookery classes, such as utensils designed for learners with arthritis. Coloured paper is used to help learners with reading difficulties.

Quality assurance**Contributory grade 3**

52. The service has implemented a comprehensive and effective system for observing teaching and improvements to teaching. In September 2002 it introduced a two-year plan for 50 per cent of staff to be observed each year. Currently 473 of the 700 staff have been observed, including some new members of staff. Observations are analysed and feedback is given to the tutor, the area manager and the curriculum manager. Staff are given action plans to develop and improve their skills. The service has established a moderation panel to standardise the observation process. Observers have been trained and minutes of quality assurance group meetings record the planning of further training. Managers use the outcomes of the observations to help with the planning of their curriculum areas. The senior management team has received a presentation on the observation process and identifies resourcing topics for action. Some observations do not identify any training or development needs. As not all observers are curriculum specialists in the areas they are observing, specific curriculum area guidelines have been produced to aid their observations.

53. The process for collecting feedback is satisfactory. Learners complete questionnaires in the middle or at the end of a course and tutors complete course evaluation sheets. The information is evaluated, actions taken and improvements made. Data are used satisfactorily throughout the quality assurance process and internal verification is also satisfactory.

54. The service's most recent self-assessment was thorough, and was led by a senior manager working with the senior management team and the quality assurance group. The self-assessment report was created from reports from local and county curriculum teams, district teams, cross-service teams and the senior management team. It includes aspects from the council's plan, the LSC's plan and the council's New Millennium strategy for the development of education in Derbyshire. However, although area and programme managers were involved in producing the report, not all tutors were involved. Team plans have not yet been produced. The self-assessment report was accurate and thorough, and identified the key strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors.

55. Implementation of the quality assurance framework is inadequate. The framework has not been in place long enough to have a sufficient effect on the provision. Not all of the planned quality assurance improvements have been implemented. Some systems have only recently been introduced. Some members of staff are not aware of the procedures, and some do not carry out tasks according to the procedures. The procedures are contained in a number of different locations including the tutors' handbook. Some procedures adapted from the council can be found in a number of different council documents. No easily accessible set of standardised procedures has yet been produced. One subcontractor is not currently quality assured. The quality assurance arrangements are not systematically applied across the whole of the provision. Processes and procedures vary in content and quality across the geographic areas. For example, different areas do not approach staff induction consistently or systematically use tutors' course evaluations. The service did not systematically review its progress against the quality assurance development plan for 2002-03 for approximately three

months during early 2003. This is now taking place, but it is too early to judge its effect.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	6101	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- very good retention and achievement rates
- good-quality ICT resources
- very good support from tutors
- very good outreach provision
- well-integrated learndirect provision
- good strategic management

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment
- inadequate use of individual learning plans
- poor keyboarding techniques

Achievement and standards

56. Retention and achievement rates are very good. Retention rates are 82 per cent for the 2001-02 and 2002-03 intakes. The retention rate for 2003-04 is currently 94 per cent. In 2001-02, 71 per cent of learners successfully achieved qualifications. This increased to 73 per cent in 2002-03. Most learners fulfil their personal learning goals, such as acquiring and developing computer-based skills for personal use and improving their employability skills to gain jobs. Some learners progress on to more advanced courses to develop their skills in word processing, databases, desktop publishing, spreadsheets, e-mail and the internet. Many of these learners acquire skills and qualifications required for employment. One learner, who started an introductory text-processing course, has progressed to level 2 and has recently been interviewed for a job. Many retired learners are using their skills to help local charities, in their churches and in family businesses. One learner has used her spreadsheet skills to organise fixture dates and scores for her bowling team.

Quality of education and training

57. Outreach provision is very good, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. Through a network of working partnerships and local arrangements, courses are provided in a wide range of locations including village halls, miners' clubs, youth centres,

church halls and community centres. The service makes efficient arrangements for laptop computers to be taken to the appropriate outreach centres. Good work is carried out to encourage hard-to-reach learners to participate in ICT classes running in their communities. A member of staff is seconded to a bus run by a local radio station to publicise ICT courses and other provision. Although many outreach centres are maintained very well, some are not adequate. For example, some outreach centres have poor heating facilities. Furniture in some learning centres is unsuitable for computer users. Some learning centres and one of the buses are not easily accessible by people with mobility difficulties. The self-assessment report identifies the difficulties of ensuring that outreach centres' provision is the same standard as the main learning centres.

58. Learners are given very effective support. Tutors fully understand the difficulties many adult learners face when they return to learning. Some tutors have considerable experience of working with adult learners. Other tutors, however, do not have sufficient ICT qualifications and some do not hold a teaching qualification. Not enough work is done to ensure that all tutors are adequately qualified. The difficulty of recruiting adequately qualified staff is identified in the self-assessment report. Tutors encourage learners to work at their own pace. Good crèche facilities are available in many learning centres and are provided free to the learners. Learners receive good initial and on-course information, advice and guidance. Staff make effective use of the county fee remission policy, learner support funds and the access fund. This helps to ensure that no learners are unable to join an ICT programme for financial reasons. A small number of tutors have been trained to provide literacy, numeracy and language skills support.

59. ICT resources are very good in most learning centres, most of which also have broadband internet access. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. The hardware consists of flat-screen monitors, scanners, laser printers and colour printers, copy-holders, new chairs and new desks. Some tutors have access to surveillance technology that allows them to observe and guide learners from a central point in the classroom. Some tutors do not fully understand how to use this resource. Outreach centres are provided well with laptop computers and portable laser printers. Learners with particular learning needs have access to special equipment and software. Equipment in some libraries is not up to date and one learning centre has networking problems that prevent learners from printing in colour. One learning centre has only one computer with internet access, and a number of other learning centres have problems obtaining or maintaining internet connections. Most learning centres have very good technical support, but some have insufficient staff to maintain the equipment and tutors have to spend considerable amounts of time solving problems. Although teaching resources are generally good, learners in some centres are not given enough additional exercises and tasks to practise their skills.

60. In six learning centres, learndirect is integrated well with other provision. Learners receive very good advice and guidance about the suitability of the learndirect provision and whether their learning requirements can best be fulfilled by a learndirect course or in a learning workshop. Some learners are advised to do learndirect and workshop study. Although learners can access learndirect courses away from the learning centres, many learners prefer to attend a learning centre where there is access to a tutor. The basic

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computing courses introduce learners to a range of applications at an elementary level. Learning centre staff are well informed about the range of courses available and give learners good advice about progression. Course enrolments increased from 3,800 in 2001-02 to 4,200 in 2002-03. The tutors are well supported by the Leicestershire and Derbyshire Hub. Staff also attend the regular managers' meetings and the frequent networking and operational meetings, at which they obtain a wide range of relevant and helpful information and ideas to use in their learning centres.

61. Initial assessment is inadequate. Although learners complete an application form and discuss their learning requirements with the tutors, not enough information is collected on their written and spoken language skills. Their literacy, numeracy and ICT competences are not formally assessed. Learners do not take a basic screening test or a diagnostic assessment to identify their individual learning needs. Some tutors are aware that learners have difficulty when working with text, but do not have more detailed information. For example, one tutor was aware that a learner could only work with short sections of text, but did not have access to a range of support strategies to meet the learner's needs. ICT resources are not used enough to help learners improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

62. Use of individual learning plans is inadequate. Although some learners have an individual learning plan, the plans are used to record what they have done during the period rather than to plan learning. The emphasis placed on negotiating and setting short-term targets is inadequate. Many learners are not provided with sufficiently challenging tasks and do not work at an adequate pace. Tutors do not have a system to measure and record learners' progress. Learners are not set out-of-class tasks to develop their computing skills. Some learners find it difficult to maintain their skills when they only attend a learning centre for one session each week. Many learners are unable to work on applications of ICT that relate to their own hobbies and interests. Learning centres do not have enough displays of learners' work.

Leadership and management

63. The services' planning and strategic management of ICT provision is good. It establishes clear aims and objectives with a good strategic focus to develop ICT provision. The service has a significant number of working partnerships and links with external bodies. For example, a successful joint bid with a computer supplier provided funds for 18 new computer suites and the modernisation of older learning centres. A consistent specification for software and hardware in the learning centres ensures that all are equipped to the same standard. Management selected appropriate locations for learning centres and outreach provision, targeting 57 very deprived wards. Six learndirect centres have also been established.

64. Central planning of provision is very good and learning materials and resources are developed consistently. Tutors have developed new computer literacy learning materials by sharing good practice and resources such as worksheets and assessment activities. Tutors' files are consistent. However, tutors do not ensure that learning materials are appropriate to learners' needs. Quality assurance is satisfactory.

65. Some staff do not fully understand their job roles and responsibilities. Although area managers have been trained in recruitment, selection and supervision techniques, some programme managers have responsibilities for which they have not been given appropriate training. Appraisal and target-setting for staff is inadequate.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	2703	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good teaching in food studies
- effective collaboration to widen participation
- good pastoral and learning support

Weaknesses

- inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- insufficient curriculum development

Achievement and standards

66. Achievement and retention rates are satisfactory. Achievement rates for courses such as food hygiene and first aid are in line with industry norms. Retention rates have remained good on courses such as yoga and sugarcraft. However, a large number of learners repeat classes year on year. Seventy-one per cent of lessons observed were graded good or better.

67. Learners gain good social, physical and psychological benefits through classes such as yoga, tai chi and cookery. The social benefits are particularly important for older learners, who develop good relationships and friendships through the classes. Some gain in self-confidence and apply their learning to daily life, such as assisting during times of bereavement. Learners produce satisfactory standards of work, and some learners' work is displayed to celebrate success.

Quality of education and training

68. Teaching on hospitality courses is good, with 72 per cent of observed lessons graded as good or better. Most sports teaching is satisfactory, with some observed classes graded as good or better and some as less than satisfactory. Lessons are organised well with good preparation, pacing, timing and varied activities appropriate to learners' needs. In some lessons learners are fully involved in their own learning. Tutors have good occupational competence and subject knowledge. Learners are encouraged to develop their own creative approaches in classes such as sugarcraft.

69. Collaboration with external partners effectively widens participation. The service has formed successful partnerships with different departments within the council and other

organisations such as voluntary agencies, local communities, schools and other educational establishments. The service and a college are working in partnership on a bid for a new multi-use games area with the intention of running courses that will attract traditionally under-represented groups. The service has close working relationships with local leisure services to meet local needs. It has launched a project to provide unemployed people with industry-recognised qualifications, such as pool lifeguard and swimming teacher awards, that will help them gain jobs. Consultation and partnership work has taken place with local health promotions and the healthy living network: a partnership of local agencies which targets the courses and effects of rural deprivation. For example, a local residents' association group identified a need to encourage a healthier lifestyle and courses were promoted around this theme. A collaborative project uses mobile provision on a specially adapted bus. This promotes learning on catering and healthy eating in the community, and provides information for learners. The service has developed close working relationships to capture referrals from general practitioners, and has promoted initiatives such as 'exercise on prescription', which provides patients with incentives to access beneficial exercise or adult learning, and 'change for life', which uses adult and community learning as a catalyst for changing individual approaches to personal health. This active approach to collaboration is part of the LEA's commitment to widening participation and increasing adults' involvement in education.

70. Support for learners is good. Learners receive effective pastoral support. They are provided with information, guidance and advice before starting courses from sources such as the learners' guide. Financial help is available for remission of tuition fees and the costs of travel, materials, books and equipment. Crèches are open at different times and across different venues. Funding for childminding is available in some cases for learners who cannot access crèche facilities in their area. Additional literacy, numeracy and language skills support is provided. Tutors are responsible for identifying any literacy, numeracy and language skills needs during their sessions and referring learners to the basic skills manager. Some tutors have attended literacy, numeracy and language skills awareness training. Learners with additional needs are adequately supported. For example, staff adapted a tai chi course to allow a learner with visual impairments to attend. A volunteer was provided to discreetly support the learner in class, the tutor adapted the lesson so that demonstrations and instructions became explicit and the lesson was recorded for the learner to review later. Learners in some catering classes were supported in some instances by a personal support worker.

71. Resources are satisfactory. A mixed range of venues is used for sports and hospitality courses. These vary in their levels of provision and access. Some venues have inadequate provision for people with restricted mobility. Some rooms used for learning are inadequately maintained, but most are good. Some lessons are carried out in rooms that have been risk-assessed, but are still unsatisfactory. Equipment is satisfactory. However, tutors and learners in some practical sport classes provide their own equipment, such as mats and cushions. Learners in some catering classes bring their own ingredients and equipment. Some courses have not run due to staff vacancies and lessons are not adequately covered during absences.

72. Learners' progress is not adequately monitored or recorded. Initial assessment is not

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always adequately carried out and is not always used to support the individual learning plan. Initial assessment takes place and new paperwork is being piloted in some courses. However, this is not fully integrated with all provision. The self-assessment report identifies this and plans are in place to implement initial assessment by September 2004. Learners' health is not consistently checked at the start of their courses. Progress sheets are not always used to inform learners about their progress or identify their achievements. Individual learners' performance is not monitored enough and some tutors do not provide learners with feedback. Learners' progress is not always matched to their individual needs or developments. Most tutors are aware of learners' progress but do not keep records or keep learners informed. Learners make significant health improvements and maintain their fitness levels. For example, one learner suffering from osteoporosis has benefited from a fitness course. Another learner attends a yoga class to help retrieve a back injury.

Leadership and management

73. Management of the curriculum is satisfactory. The curriculum is being reviewed in local centres and districts in response to learners' feedback. Learners speak positively about how well their needs are met. The service has recognised that the information collected locally is not adequately fed into the overall review of the curriculum, and that the curriculum has not been developed sufficiently to meet changing community and individual needs. Not enough time has been made available in the curriculum group to carry out effective development, standardisation and review of the provision. The service is starting to improve the range of progression routes in the subject areas. Greater emphasis is being given on catering courses to ensuring that learners become more aware of cultural factors that influence the choice of foods. The sport and health policy was updated most recently in November 2002. The current curriculum group leader has been in post for less than two months, following a long period when the post was unfilled. However, priority has been given to reviewing the curriculum in March 2004 as part of the quality improvement development plan.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1321	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good retention rates on accredited courses
- good progression
- wide range of provision at different levels across the county
- good teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- poor initial assessment of literacy and numeracy skills
- too few staff to cover NVQ courses

Achievement and standards

74. Retention rates are good on accredited courses, which account for approximately 85 per cent of the provision. The retention rate in 2001-02 was 85 per cent and rose to 88 per cent in 2002-03. It is 95 per cent so far for learners in 2003-04.

75. Learners' progression from entry and level 1 courses, and into employment is good. Some learners have progressed from entry-level courses to level 3 of the early years childcare and education NVQ. In 2003, seven learners gained jobs after completing their qualification. Of 94 learners interviewed, 51 had successfully gained a lower level qualification. In addition, four learners had gained a number of qualifications at one level before progressing to a more advanced level.

76. Learners' work is generally satisfactory, with the standard of some being good and most learners making good progress. For example, the work produced by classroom assistants working at stage 1 and stage 2 is of a good standard at an early stage in the course. Some NVQ learners are aiming to complete their qualification in one year and are progressing at a rate in excess of one unit a month.

Quality of education and training

77. Teaching and learning were good or better in approximately two-thirds of observed lessons. Staff make good use of a range of teaching techniques to ensure that all learners can develop their knowledge and understanding. Learners on counselling courses are encouraged to work together and to develop questioning and listening skills. Many learners are challenged by the complexity of the tasks they are set. Through this they

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develop good professional skills in early years and childcare. For example, a group of childcare learners were required to plan a play area for children with special educational needs. In groups, they explored how to ensure that all children with a variety of additional learning needs could get access to the play area. Many learners discovered that they have acquired skills through their life experience that they had not previously recognised. An appropriate variety of learning materials is used to meet the needs of most learners. Many tutors use questioning effectively to encourage less-confident learners to contribute fully to the lesson. Less-confident learners on counselling courses were encouraged by the tutors' strong support to share their experiences and views with other learners. Basic background knowledge on complementary therapy courses is taught well in a way that enables all learners to understand. Learners in a few lessons are not sufficiently motivated to develop their skills. In one lesson, learners were kept waiting for a more than an hour for a tutor who arrived late.

78. A wide range of programmes are provided at different levels across the county. Learners are able to gain qualifications in a range of childcare, care, counselling and complementary therapy courses, ranging from entry level to level 3. The most popular courses are provided across all eight regions of the county. For example, counselling courses are available in all areas and at most levels.

79. Learners on all levels of counselling courses record their progress well. To meet awarding body requirements, all learners complete a weekly professional learning log. Tutors record specific targets for learners to achieve. In addition, learners on 10-week courses complete an individual learning plan recording their aims and previous experience. On completion of the course, learners evaluate their personal growth and development using the individual learning plan.

80. Resources are satisfactory. Tutors are all vocationally competent and hold relevant qualifications. Resources such as practical craft materials for use in childcare sessions are readily available at the learning centres and are used appropriately by tutors. Good use is made of visiting speakers to support the learning programmes and to broaden learners' knowledge and understanding of specialist subjects such as equality of opportunity. Resources such as tape recorders are used well in some sessions. For example, one tutor records all sessions as a way of collecting evidence for learners who have specific literacy and numeracy needs and find it difficult to record written evidence.

81. Assessment of learners' work is appropriate and meets the criteria set by awarding bodies. The monitoring of learners' progress is satisfactory overall, but inconsistencies in assessment exist between the learning centres. Internal verification of learners' work is satisfactory, with tutors following a clear and effective sampling strategy. Moderation of work is effective and thorough.

82. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory. Pastoral support is generally good and includes regular tutorials and access to tutors outside of course hours. However, literacy support is currently only provided when learners or their tutors request it. There is no consistent approach to the assessment and provision of literacy and numeracy support. Appropriate action is taken when literacy and numeracy support needs are

identified, either through separate skills lessons or support in the classes.

83. Initial assessment is poor. Some learners do not receive any form of initial assessment. Other learners receive skill scans and basic literacy and numeracy testing. Tutors have an inconsistent approach to initial assessment. For example, some tutors do not allow learners to join a level 3 course unless they have evidence of study at level 2, while other tutors do not apply these criteria. Some learners decide themselves what level of qualification they will work towards. For example, some learners are working towards a level 3 NVQ. As they have not completed any initial assessment, it is difficult for tutors to assess their suitability for the course, particularly the level of literacy required for written assessment.

84. The service does not have enough staff to cover NVQ courses. Some staff have recently left and have not been replaced. The service is experiencing difficulty in appointing new staff and some tutors have had to work with particularly large groups of learners. One group contains year 1 and 2 learners, with the year 2 learners occasionally having to repeat work. Some areas do not have enough NVQ assessors to carry out regular practical assessments.

Leadership and management

85. Many features of the programme are managed well. The service is responsive to the needs of learners throughout Derbyshire. It provides courses for which there is a demand and widens participation effectively with projects such as literacy and numeracy skills for the homeless, men into childcare and courses in community outreach centres. Equality of opportunity is taught as an integral part of all provision.

86. A new curriculum manager was appointed in November 2003 and is currently reviewing the curriculum area. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss course developments, but these are held at the individual learning centres and the service is working towards a greater sharing of good practice. Some management practice is not consistent across the learning centres. Some tutors working at a number of sites are required to report to several different line managers. Paperwork is not always standardised to ensure consistency. Appraisals and lesson observations are held annually and contribute to quality improvement. The self-assessment report has a clear focus on the curriculum. Although inspectors identified some of the strengths and weaknesses identified in the report, they identified additional strengths and weaknesses.

Visual & performing arts & media**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	3941	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- learners' successful achievement of individual goals
- good standards of work
- good-quality teaching and learning
- wide range of courses

Weaknesses

- inadequate recording of learners' progress
- some ineffective curriculum management

Achievement and standards

87. Achievement rates are good, with 88 per cent of learners on accredited courses gaining nationally recognised qualifications. Most learners successfully achieve their individual learning goals and many use their skills in social and cultural contexts and for the benefit of the local community. For example, learners in belly-dancing classes perform in public to raise money for national charities. Learners in one embroidery class have completed embroidered panels for display in a local hospital. Health benefits are good, particularly for learners with physical or mental disabilities, and learners interviewed report an increased self-confidence in participating in classes. New and more experienced learners are enthusiastic regarding their progress. Retention rates are good, at 89 per cent in 2002-03 and 84 per cent currently.

88. Learners produce a good standard of work. They skilfully produce pieces of lace, embroidery, pottery and digital imagery, and perform music, dance and drama. These activities are often recorded using photographs, video and audio. Completed work in classes is often proficient and professional, as are the displays seen in many learning centres. One class is designing and constructing a small garden for a garden show, which will later be reconstructed at one of the full-time learning centres. This project will involve learners from a number of classes, including those studying mosaics, woodwork and pottery.

Quality of education and training

89. Teaching and learning are of a good quality. A very good range of demanding learning activities creatively challenges learners. Learners experiment with a wide range of techniques in visual media and dance. Tutors have in-depth technical competence and many are practising artists, designers and performers. Learners receive effective instruction and support in groups and individually. Tutors' demonstrations enable learners to acquire a good understanding of the importance of practical and creative skills in art, crafts and performance. These demonstrations set standards which learners can aim to reach. Working relationships between tutors and learners are good. New learners make significant progress, gaining and using skills and knowledge in art, music and dance. More experienced learners extend and develop skills and knowledge very well and progress to increasingly complex projects.

90. Learners have a well-developed knowledge and understanding of visual and performing arts subjects, and apply them in practical project work in areas including pottery, upholstery, dance and drama. Learners develop an extensive range of new skills such as woodcarving, sewing, upholstery, salsa dancing, singing in harmony and guitar playing. They benefit from effective integration of contemporary, cultural and historical information which sets the learning experience in context. Many learners are able to explain and demonstrate their learning experiences using professional and technical vocabulary. Effective development of reflective learning practices such as individual and group critique, learning journals, recording of performances and project sheets encourages self-evaluation and enables learners to progress and improve.

91. Learners are able to choose from a wide range of courses, particularly in visual arts and crafts. These are widely available in all districts of the county in the daytime and evening, and a small programme is available at weekends. A new programme of media arts courses using digital imaging technology is available in all districts and is well subscribed. Progression opportunities exist from non-accredited courses to accredited courses in most cases. Learners with learning difficulties work successfully in mainstream classes such as watercolour painting, woodcarving and belly-dancing.

92. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory and are generally suitable for their purpose. Some learning centres are new or have been recently refurbished. These provide classrooms and workshops that are particularly suitable for practical activities in art, craft, media and performance. However, some rooms are inappropriate for specialist activities. For example, one digital imaging class was held in a cookery room with unsafe seating arrangements. Some classrooms used for performing arts courses have inadequate heating and inappropriate flooring for dance. A good range of learning materials is used to support learners. Tutors use a range of visual, written and recorded information and examples of artwork and performance to enhance learning activities. Essential equipment is provided, such as sewing machines for dressmaking, soft furnishings and some craft classes, and laptop computers for digital imaging classes if needed.

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93. The service provides effective pre-course information and guidance with comprehensive course leaflets, as part of a county-wide publicity strategy. This strategy also uses flyers, brochures, radio advertising and open days. Reception staff in all full-time learning centres are trained to give information and advice and to make referrals to other providers where necessary. Subject-specific induction is sometimes inadequate. The use of initial assessment is inconsistent and the county-wide system is not appropriate to some subjects in the creative arts. Induction is not seen as important for returning learners and comprises only a checklist covering generic topics. Safe working practices are insufficiently reinforced in some classes.

94. Recording of learners' progress is inadequate. Tutors' practices in recording learners' progress are not consistent. Many tutors have designed detailed records to support the management of learning, and some use the overall county system. However, learners' progress is not recorded sufficiently in some classes and learners do not always know what they need to do to improve. The referral system for supporting learners with additional literacy, numeracy and language skills needs is incomplete.

Leadership and management

95. The curriculum has been managed well and the standard of teaching and learning is good. The service has identified that current measures to support the curriculum are less effective following the curriculum manager's secondment to another post. Initial attempts to recruit a replacement manager were unsuccessful. Not enough curriculum meetings have been held recently to communicate effectively with tutors, and no county-wide meetings for tutors have been held since May 2003. Tutors have not received sufficient support or training for the implementation of new systems and procedures. Good opportunities are available for professional development. They are managed centrally as well as by area managers. These focus mainly on aspects of teaching and learning. In a few centres management decisions are not always communicated clearly to tutors and learners. The future use of a specialist workshop is uncertain in one learning centre, and learners have enrolled elsewhere. The service plans to strengthen the management of the curriculum area in the summer of 2004.

96. The service's promotion of equality of opportunity is good. Promotional literature is available in Braille and large print and less-usual methods are used in some learning centres to share information, including informal discussion with targeted groups, cinema and radio advertising and editorials in local newspapers. All learners receive a learners' guide outlining expectations of learners, crèche arrangements, support for learning, an equal opportunities statement and compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Individual learning centres produce leaflets for learners that give more specific detail on health and safety, complaints procedures and important contacts. A copy of the equal opportunities policy document is available from the learning centre or the programme manager.

97. Some quality assurance procedures are inconsistently implemented. Observations of teaching and learning are established well and include clear action-planning and links to staff training and development. However, these are not always carried out by subject

specialists. All new staff are observed during their first six months in the post, and full-time staff are observed every two years. Internal verification of accredited courses is satisfactory. Course reviews are not always completed by tutors. Programme evaluation to identify actions for quality improvements takes place mid-term and at the end of the programme. Not all teaching staff are sufficiently involved in the self-assessment report. Some district programme managers are involved in preparing an evaluative report for the county. The self-assessment report's findings match most of the inspectors' findings. Observations of teaching and learning, were found to be of a better standard than identified in the self-assessment report.

English, languages & communications**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1800	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement of individual learning goals
- effective management of learning in small groups
- effective initiatives to attract new language learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate range of teaching methods used in large groups
- insufficient range of language courses

Achievement and standards

98. Achievement rates of individual language goals is good. Learners state clearly their reasons for learning a new language, such as personal interest or to use on holiday. Some learn to help their children with languages at school. Most learners use their foreign language confidently, demonstrate good levels of fluency and apply their skills well outside lessons. For example, many learners who visit Spain regularly use Spanish with increased confidence and are able to be more specific when ordering food and requesting payment. Creative writing learners develop good writing skills and produce work with good awareness of their audience. For example, they use appropriate language when writing children's stories and are able to reproduce the correct balance of repetition and tone.

99. Approximately 70 per cent of modern language learners on accredited courses gain their certificate. On courses that do not lead to qualifications, tutors and learners monitor progress through clear progress charts. Learners fully understand the importance of these charts and are able to demonstrate well how their skills have improved. Some learners use their skills to improve their career prospects and gain jobs. Homework is regularly set and marked and learners are provided with good, detailed feedback. Learners work well together and enjoy their courses.

Quality of education and training

100. Tutors effectively manage learning in small groups. Teaching was good or better in approximately half of the lessons observed. In these lessons, tutors effectively use small group and pair-work and organise learning well. For example, in one foreign language lesson, learners used dice as an aid to learning verb forms and vocabulary. Tutors use

very good teaching techniques in small groups. For example, learners use information gap exercises to check their comprehension of a video presentation about the country of their target language. In another post-GCSE German conversation class, learners practised grammar particularly well, working with their partners to solve imaginative language-based problems. In these lessons, tutors and learners used the taught language well and practised new skills effectively. In a number of English lessons, more-able learners supported less-able learners on comprehension exercises. Sign language learners know what is expected of them and develop good signing skills. In these lessons, all learners were well motivated to achieve and progress at an appropriate pace and build well on their existing skills.

101. Many effective initiatives are in place to attract new foreign language learners. Learner numbers have increased regularly over the past three years from 831 in 2001-02, to 1,123 in 2002-03. To date in 2003-04, 1,220 learners are enrolled. Parents and their children are able to work together and practise their language skills through a good variety of interactive activities and learning materials appropriate to their ages. Learners use the target language extensively during role-play activities, games, songs and other activities. A recent effective initiative that has attracted new learners is the introduction of learndirect lessons in French, German and Spanish. For example, existing learndirect learners who have completed ICT courses now use their ICT skills to study a foreign language. They use CD-ROMs to study at their own pace at a convenient community venue. Tutors support learners appropriately through e-mail. Course locations are regularly reviewed and new community venues are found if necessary.

102. Resources are satisfactory. Learning centres range from purpose-built accommodation to refurbished and school premises. Childcare and crèche facilities are good. Audio-visual equipment is readily available in some learning centres, but not in others. Many learners are not able to listen to recordings of native speakers of their target language, and instead have to listen to text read aloud by other learners. Access for people with restricted mobility is poor at some learning centres. For example, one ground-floor teaching room is inaccessible to wheelchair users. At another learning centre, lessons take place in an upstairs room when there is a room available on the ground floor. Most tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced. For example, creative writing tutors are published authors.

103. Assessment is satisfactory. Tutors use the assessment schemes of the awarding bodies and have extended this to courses that do not lead to qualifications. Learners can measure their own progress and identify their competence through review charts. This monitoring is not yet standardised across the whole provision.

104. Course information sheets are accurate. Learners sit in on classes before they enrol. Where specific individual learning needs are identified, additional support is provided. For example, in GCSE English, separate sessions are available to cover spelling and punctuation. Literacy, numeracy and language skills tutors keep in touch with learners who have progressed to GCSE courses.

105. Tutors use an inadequate range of teaching methods for larger groups. In these

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lessons, tutors dominate the learning process. For example, no group work took place in one English lesson, with the tutor leading the entire lesson. Handouts are relied on too much and tutors do not make good use of appropriate learning materials. Tutors often use the same handout with a number of groups of different ability levels. Tutors in some foreign language lessons do not use the target language enough, often using English for basic commands and to check learners' understanding. Learners are not given enough time to practise basic listening and speaking skills. Learners often state simple numbers or answer comprehension questions in English rather than using the target language. Learners express times of day and basic distance in English. In these sessions, learners are not provided with activities to use new words in context, pronunciation is not regularly corrected and inappropriate vocabulary is often allowed. Tutors in some sign language lessons do not meet individual learners' needs. In many cases tutors provide too much new information for learners to understand, develop and use, and use of pair and small group work is inadequate.

106. The range of foreign language courses available is insufficient. Only modern European languages are provided, of which Spanish is offered most frequently. It is the only language on offer in 19 of the learning centres, and is taught in a further 13. Greek is only provided in two learning centres, German in seven, Italian in 12 and French in 25 learning centres. The range of creative writing courses available is inadequate. For example, there are no courses relating to script writing or techniques for presenting manuscript for submission to publishers and agents.

Leadership and management

107. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent developments in the management of foreign languages and English have been implemented. Good practice is shared well. For example, following the annual tutors' conference, tutors exchange ideas for topics and assignments. They share techniques used to assess the skills of learners on courses not leading to qualifications. More tutors are now assessing the progress of learners on beginner and level 1 courses.

108. Teaching and learning are observed regularly. Guidelines and relevant paperwork are in place for observing language teaching. Tutors use these to improve lesson management and their teaching. Language classes are not always observed by trained linguists.

Foundation programmes**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1503	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of personal and learning skills
- good teaching and learning
- good use of ICT to support learning in main centres
- effective use of support from volunteers and learners
- effective measures to widen participation

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory accommodation and resources at some learning centres
- poorly organised learners' portfolios
- poor evaluation of learning activities

Achievement and standards

109. Learners' personal and learning skills are developed well in most lessons. In the better lessons, learners are able to clearly describe their learning outcomes and the progress they are making towards their goals. Learners develop good self-confidence and produce good standards of work. For example, one learner is now able to confidently fill in forms and sign cheques. Another learner has developed good writing skills. Learners work well together and many progress on to more advanced literacy or numeracy courses. Some learners go on to become trained volunteers or support assistants. In 2002-03, 75 per cent of retained learners achieved an external qualification.

Quality of education and training

110. Teaching and learning are good with 62 per cent of the 50 lessons observed graded as good or better. Learners' individual needs are taken into account when planning learning. Skills development is emphasised well and learners are given clear explanations to help them progress. Tutors develop good working relationships with learners and use a good variety of teaching methods to encourage their participation and maintain their interest. Learners are motivated well and work effectively to build on their existing skills and previous knowledge. For example, learners in one numeracy session developed good skills in fractions, percentages and ratios, building on previously learnt skills in using common denominators. Learners in one literacy session were encouraged to divide words into syllables in order to develop spelling skills.

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111. ICT is used well to support learning in the main learning centres. Tutors effectively plan the use of ICT, including the use of materials on the internet to support learning. Appropriate software is used for the development of literacy and numeracy skills and to provide appropriate extension activities. Learners develop good ICT skills and are able to use ICT to become more independent learners. The service uses learndirect well for life skills learners; they attend regularly and make satisfactory progress.

112. Volunteers and learning support staff are used effectively. Working relationships between tutors, volunteers and learning support workers are good, with good discussions on lesson planning and individual learners' needs. Appropriate support is provided to help learners progress at their own pace and consolidate their skills. For example, in one class a support worker took notes for a learner who had learning difficulties and a physical disability. The service provides good incentives to help recruit volunteers and support staff, including offering effective training to learning support workers. This is provided across all regions and support staff are paid to attend the meetings.

113. The service has formed effective working partnerships with external bodies to meet local and community needs. Classes are provided through 65 learning centres to ensure that learners can attend venues close to their homes. Effective partnerships with a number of other services, including Sure Start, the probation service, Connexions and the Derbyshire Hub have helped increase enrolments from 3,482 to 3,788 in the past two years. Areas of the county identified as being in need of foundation provision have been clearly targeted to increase participation. Substantial funding was sought in partnership with two local colleges and the Derbyshire LSC to create a local learning centre in South Derbyshire.

114. Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory, particularly in the outreach centres. Some outreach centres do not have adequate access for people with restricted mobility. Some classrooms do not have sufficient space for the number of learners, and some are poorly maintained. Although the main learning centres have good ICT facilities, facilities for ICT are poor in many of the outreach centres. Learners in these classes work mainly with paper-based resources. Not enough staff have sufficient expertise to teach and support all learners, particularly those who are dyslexic or who speak English as an additional language. Some outreach centres do not have enough learning support staff for the number of learners who attend.

115. Learners' portfolios are poorly organised. Many learners have been out of learning for a significant number of years and do not have appropriate organisational skills. Tutors do provide learners with appropriate help to develop the skills they need to structure their portfolios adequately. In one case, a learner working on converting fractions into decimals and percentages was unable to find any previous work on fractions already completed.

116. Evaluation of learning is inadequate in most sessions. Although activities are recorded, not enough monitoring of learners' progress takes place. The evaluation of individual learning goals is inadequate in most learning plans, and the amendments to

individual learning plans set inappropriate targets for some learners. Evaluation and co-ordination of learning is inadequate for some learners who attend multiple sessions. Tutors do not work together well enough to ensure that learning across several classes is adequately evaluated. Learners who attend for more than one session a week do not understand the connection between the sessions. In one learndirect session, a learner who also attends an ESOL class was using a computer to help improve English skills. The learner has two individual learning plans with different targets and there was insufficient co-ordination of the evaluation of learning. The learner did not understand how progress in the learndirect session related to improving their English skills in the ESOL class.

Leadership and management

117. The leadership and management of the area are good and this has contributed to good-quality teaching and learning. The service has a clear policy and strategy statement on literacy and numeracy provision, which is targeted at the deprived wards. Systems for communication with tutors operate well in each geographical area and throughout the county. Staff meet regularly at a local level to share good practice and to review learners' satisfaction surveys and courses.

118. The quality assurance arrangements include an effective lesson observation system and good course reviews and satisfaction surveys. The self-assessment process is thorough and identifies many of the weakness found by inspectors. Staff are not involved enough in the development of the self-assessment report. Internal verification procedures are satisfactory. Suitable assessment processes and monitoring arrangements are in place. Tutors attend meetings to standardise assessment and take formal minutes to record actions. Programme managers encourage tutors to attend external moderation sessions so they can receive direct feedback. Links with the awarding body are good, and a prompt response is made when points of action are identified.

119. Staff development is satisfactory and most staff have received training in skills for life, the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. The service and its staff are aware of the requirement for all practising tutors to gain a level 4 literacy and numeracy skills training qualification, and are waiting for training places to become available.

120. Data are unreliable. Most programme managers have developed their own system for collecting and using data. Target-setting is not systematic and the data that are produced are not used adequately.

121. The promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

Family learning**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	755	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good teaching and learning on most courses
- good resources
- good initiatives to widen participation

Weaknesses

- insufficient achievement targets for adult learners
- inadequate monitoring and assessment on non-accredited courses
- inadequate quality assurance

Achievement and standards

122. Learners make satisfactory progress in achieving group learning goals and personal objectives. Learners develop confidence in their ability to help their children and this in turn raises their self-confidence. Standards of learners' work in sessions are satisfactory. Adult learners on family literacy and numeracy courses are encouraged to take appropriate accreditation routes such as national tests or units of a qualification in working with children. However, in 2002-03, only 47 per cent of these learners achieved a qualification.

123. Retention rates are satisfactory. The current retention rate for 2003-04 is 76 per cent. Many sessions observed were taster sessions and retention has not been examined for this term. Many wider family learning courses are single taster sessions and workshops where retention rates are satisfactory. Tutors are not set retention rate targets for courses and do not know how retention is monitored.

Quality of education and training

124. Teaching and learning are good in those sessions where learners have an initial assessment and staff keep learner records up to date. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in courses to extend parents' and carers' skills in supporting their children's literacy and numeracy. In the best sessions, teaching is planned well with a good range of activities and children and adult learners participate well. Group learning objectives are met and activities are related to the children's work in schools. Parents are encouraged to work with their children on the accredited and non-accredited courses. Adult learners understand the purpose of the activities in relation to helping their children

learn, and produce games and resources to use with their children at home. Some sessions are planned and taught poorly.

125. Resources for teaching and learning are good. Resources for language programmes are very good and include games and activities to motivate learners. The Backpack project, a ROWA! project using art and craft activity for primary school children, provides a wide range of resources including stationery, audio equipment, games and books. Tutors at one learning centre have access to a good range of photocopiable materials. While tuition is free, learners on craft programmes are charged a small amount for craft materials. Literacy, numeracy and language skills tutors are appropriately qualified. Tutors on wider family learning courses are vocationally qualified, but not all have received specific training on family learning

126. The service's initiatives to widen participation are good. Two ROWA! buses provide good access to learning in communities where suitable accommodation is unavailable. The buses also provide a mobile crèche unit. The service has increased participation by men through the introduction of specific courses in topics such as computers for the family and building robots. The provision is promoted well through well-presented marketing materials and personal contact by staff with potential learners. Taster sessions are used well to recruit learners. Some family learning courses, including Spanish and woodwork, have waiting lists. Feedback from learners is used to develop courses. For example, the ROWA! Backpack project was reduced from 12 to six weeks in response to learners' feedback.

127. Access to guidance and support is satisfactory. Although tutors give additional learning support well, it is not always immediately available. Learners have good access to information, advice and guidance, and staff keep learners informed about progression routes.

128. Learners are set inadequate achievement targets. Learners are not always assessed to identify their literacy or numeracy needs. Of those learners enrolled in the autumn term of 2003-04, 48 per cent had qualifications at level 2 or above. This information was not recorded and the learners were not set sufficiently demanding achievement targets. Most parents enrol on courses to gain skills to help their children at school, and are not set individual targets for their learning. Learners on accredited courses are not set sufficiently demanding targets. Staff members do not consistently keep records of progress. The service does not collect data on progression of adult learners on these courses.

129. Monitoring and assessment are inadequate on non-accredited courses. No recorded initial assessment takes place on wider family learning programmes, and individual learning plans are not always produced for these learners. Tutors do not routinely keep records of progress. Learners on literacy and numeracy programmes receive an appropriate assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills and the results are recorded on their individual learning plans. The progress of learners on non-accredited courses is not adequately recorded. Learners complete mid- and end-of-course evaluations and schools provide feedback at the end of the course.

Leadership and management

130. The service has a clear strategic direction for the development of family learning. Enrolments in family learning have increased. A service agreement between the service and ROWA! has recently been signed. Targets for retention and achievement rates are set by Derbyshire LSC. However, tutors are not set appropriate targets. Plans are in place to standardise paperwork across the provision. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively in family learning programmes, with most programmes targeted at widening participation and attracting under-represented learners.

131. Staff support and development are good. Teaching staff have regular meetings with their line managers. Plans are in place to ensure that all tutors on wider family learning programmes receive specific training on family learning. Links between family literacy and numeracy, and wider family learning programmes, are good. A family learning co-ordinator has recently been appointed.

132. Arrangements for quality assurance are inadequate. Although lesson observations are in place, tutors are not always observed when teaching on the family learning programme. ROWA!'s teaching staff are routinely observed but not as part of the Derbyshire LEA's observation of teaching and learning scheme. The monitoring of family literacy and numeracy programmes is not consistent across the provision. Not enough monitoring of individual learning plans takes place. Internal verification of learners' work on accredited courses is satisfactory. Data on enrolment and achievement are not used sufficiently to monitor the provision.

Community development**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1062	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- very good attainment of personal and community development skills
- good teaching and learning
- very effective working partnerships to meet community needs

Weaknesses

- poor awareness by staff of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills development
- inadequate arrangements to self-assess programme effectiveness

Achievement and standards

133. Learners' attainment of personal and community development skills is very good. Those who have participated in setting up projects are able to identify the knowledge and skills that they have learnt. These skills include problem solving, employing people in the community centre or on community activities, managing budgets, identifying and managing the risks associated with having to refurbish a community centre and working with other agencies to set up community activities. Unemployed learners who attend vocational training programmes improve in self-confidence and are motivated to look for jobs. Some are now passing on their skills to others in their community. Through his involvement with the residents' association and a community education project, one learner has gained the confidence to speak at a conference in front of over 100 people. Another learner has become a county councillor following involvement with a community action group. A group representing three mining villages has enabled more effective bidding for funds and is fully involved in deciding which local projects receive funding.

134. Local residents in the Rother area of Chesterfield have developed an area of waste ground into a garden for the community. The land is close to a local adult education centre, a nursery and a primary school. With help from a community economic worker and support from Derbyshire County Council in making a bid for external funding, residents have developed the garden into a thriving enterprise run by a management committee of local residents which employs three people. Residents grow and sell flowers, vegetables, fruit and bedding plants from the garden. It also provides walking routes and sitting areas. Local children can use a safe walkway through the garden to school, and local schools use the garden for environmental education projects. The garden is also used to provide vocational training in horticulture.

Quality of education and training

135. Teaching and learning are good, with 60 per cent of sessions observed graded as good or better. Informal learning is promoted through the community development projects. Tutors use a good range of teaching styles to meet learners' needs and ensure that the learning environment promotes learners' development. Learners fully understand what they have learnt. For example, through a session on confidentiality, a group of learners developed skills in communicating with children. In one ICT class, learners' feedback stated that they had all had their individual learning needs met. Feedback from learners on creative studies courses and childcare courses is also very good. Courses are flexible and arranged around learners' other commitments, such as shift work or childcare.

136. The service has formed very effective working partnerships to meet community needs. Community economic development and community education staff work with a wide range of agencies, and are involved with effective innovative projects that aim to build capacity and develop employment in local communities. Learning needs are identified through a range of strategies, such as residents' skills audits conducted in collaboration with partners such as Sure Start and staff from social services. Another example is a project located in a housing estate with a high unemployment rate and other indicators of social disadvantage. The community education staff are working with the residents' association, the nursery school, the library, Sure Start and ROWA! and many other agencies on a project called 'From Smoke to Grass'. This project celebrates the history of the estate and involves residents in a range of relevant and innovative projects to improve the profile of the estate and the skills of those who live there.

137. Community economic development workers are involved with local community action groups in Chesterfield and Bolsover to help create six community centres. For example, one community worker has helped volunteers from a parish to access funding to refurbish a community centre. This is now used by various local groups for a range of activities, including sports activities for young people arranged by the police. In another project, community workers worked with a residents' association to develop their organisational and committee skills and run a music festival attended by 450 people. Another project for developing the vocational skills of the long-term unemployed has an effective working arrangement with a range of training organisations to provide vocational training.

138. Resources are satisfactory. The service uses a good range of venues to provide training close to where learners live. Where ICT is part of, or central to, the session, laptop computers are delivered to the local venue by taxi. Some accommodation is poor and is used only because its location is ideal in terms of transport and accessibility. In some of this poor accommodation, equipment used by the tutors presents a health and safety risk. Other accommodation is not adequate for the size of the groups using it. Most staff are appropriately qualified and experienced, with good skills in community development strategies. They have good working relationships with learners.

139. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Although progression routes have not been extensively researched or developed, leaflets are produced that identify possible progression. For example, a comprehensive folder of information and guidance is given to mobile and coalfields' learners. The service refers learners on this, and many other courses, to the local information, advice and guidance service. Learners on a flowercraft course were visited by the information and advice worker who gave advice and guidance on further education opportunities. Some learners are now planning to progress to further adult learning classes at the end of their course.

140. Staff have a poor awareness of learners' literacy, language and numeracy skills development. Generally, schemes of work, lesson plans and individual learning plans do not identify potential activities to develop learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills. Initial assessment is often an informal discussion about learners' prior experience. This is not recorded in detail or used to meet learners' needs. Many staff do not understand the role of initial assessment and individual learning plans in identifying individual learning needs and planning learning activities. Many lesson and learning plans identify only the topics to be covered in the session. Tutors do not make good use of their subjects to develop learners' literacy, language and numeracy skills. For example, a session on writing was not used to identify key words or explain their meaning to ensure learners' understanding.

Leadership and management

141. The leadership and management of individual projects are good. Projects are managed well by project managers and relevant administrative staff. Interim reports and evaluations of each project are systematically produced, as specified in the project submissions. Individual projects receive detailed reviews and evaluations. Not all adult education tutors are aware of the project aims to aid regeneration, build capacity and improve learners' employability. Many tutors see the sole purpose of the class as to learn the subject. Not all tutors consistently encourage their learners to consider exploring the possibility of joining other groups and extending their learning.

142. The service has not assessed the effectiveness of its community development activities against the criteria in the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Its self-assessment report does not critically evaluate the effect of community projects on either the council's agenda for regeneration or on adult learning in the county. Strengths and weaknesses are not identified to assist action-planning for continuous improvement. The two staff teams that provide the community development in Derbyshire do not adequately exchange good practice to aid development and improvement.