INSPECTION REPORT

Leicestershire LEA

16 June 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

Leicestershire LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Leicestershire Local Education Authority (LEA) provides adult and community learning provision as part of its youth and community education service (the service), alongside youth work and community use. Under the management of the youth and community education service manager, the adult learning service is led at a central county level by the lead officer for adult and community learning, supported by a small team of officers who manage county wide adult and community learning projects and administrative staff. The service manager reports to the senior education officer for lifelong learning who is responsible to the assistant director for school, college and community support.   Locally, adult learning is provided through 54 community designated schools, where management of the adult learning programme is the responsibility of the head teacher of each school. The larger range of programmes is provided by the 23 community colleges, each of which has at least one part-time adult programme manager funded and employed by the service, based at the school and managed by the head teacher. The 28 primary school centres and the three community high schools each have a much smaller staffing resource for community education and make a smaller contribution to the overall adult learning provided. The service also provides adult and community learning through three other centres and four evening centres, works in partnership with a number of voluntary organisations and subcontracts to one college of further education. The director of education has overall management responsibility for the whole of the education service in Leicestershire, including adult and community learning. The County Council is currently considering the way that adult and community learning is managed. A number of possible structures have been published and stakeholders are being consulted.

2. Just over 1,200 teaching staff work on the programmes, 10 as full-time employees and the remainder as sessional staff. Most staff are employed by the service directly but are managed by the relevant local community college or school. Some tutors are managed directly by central officers, largely working in the community development projects.

3. The area covered by the LEA's adult and community learning provision is largely rural. It includes some areas with relatively high levels of deprivation and also some more affluent areas. The average unemployment rate across the county as a whole in May 2004 was low, at 1.3 per cent, compared with the national average of 2.3 per cent. The rate does vary between districts, ranging from 1.6 per cent to less than 1 per cent.

4. Courses are offered across all of Leicestershire with exception of Leicester City, a separate local authority. Classes are offered in all nine market towns, seven of the nine urban areas of the fringes of Leicester City, and 50 of the county's villages. Information and communications technology (ICT) courses are run in pubs and village halls using laptop computers, and a range of programmes is offered to meet the needs of particular client groups such as the travelling community.

5. The service runs courses in all 14 areas of learning as well as in family learning and

community development. Only 10 of these areas had enough learners to be inspected.
The service offers almost 3,000 vocational and non-vocational learning programmes. At
the time of the inspection the service was running 1,322 classes, with 13,064 enrolled
learners.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Sciences & mathematics

6. At the time of inspection 504 learners were enrolled on 51 courses in science and
mathematics, representing 1.5 per cent of the LEA's total provision. Courses take place at
25 venues including community colleges and community centres. Courses in
mathematics range from pre-general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) to
advanced level (A-level). GCSE mathematics forms the largest part of the provision, with
290 learners on 23 courses at 16 venues. The service offers one GCSE course and eight
non-accredited courses in astronomy at five different venues, with classes such as
beginner level 'Stars in their Eyes' and 'Spring and Summer Skies'. Science and
mathematics courses range from six-week introductory courses, through 12-week courses
for beginners, to GCSE and A-level courses which run for the full academic year.
Provision is targeted at adults who are returning to learning and those who have an
interest in a particular branch of science, for example astronomy or biology.
Approximately 90 per cent of classes take place in the evening, and the remainder in the
daytime.

Land-based provision

7. A total of 431 learners enrolled on land-based courses in 2003-04, accounting for 1.8
per cent of the service's total provision. Courses are held in 15 centres across the county,
including community centres, church and village halls and community colleges. Sixteen
courses were running in 11 subjects during the inspection, with 170 learners attending.
Twelve of these courses were evening classes and four were daytime classes, with no
weekend provision offered. One course was accredited. Courses are traditional,
including subjects such as flower arranging, garden design, dog training, willow structures
for the garden and planting containers. Twenty-five part-time tutors teach for between
two and four hours each week. Classes are of two hours' duration and run for between
four and 22 weeks. In 2002-03, 533 learners attended 51 non-accredited courses and
four accredited courses.

Information & communications technology

8. ICT courses range from basic computer skills for beginners to courses that include word processing, spreadsheets, databases and other applications at elementary and intermediate levels. Courses in digital photography, using the internet, computing for the over-50s, using presentation software, and web page design are also offered. At the time of the inspection 1,688 learners were enrolled on 202 courses. So far during the 2003-04 academic year, 3,899 learners have enrolled on computer courses, compared with 5,696 for the previous academic year. The shortest course lasts for three weeks and the longest for 36 weeks. Eighty-six per cent of courses lead to a qualification. Courses are held in 40 learning venues throughout the county, including schools, community colleges and centres, libraries and public houses. The service has 132 laptop computers for use in learning centres which have no computing facilities.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

9. At the time of the inspection 2,990 learners were following 235 classes in this area of learning. The service reports that 264 courses are on offer but several have been withdrawn or cancelled. Yoga forms a very significant proportion of the curriculum offer. Other courses include keep fit, aerobics, swimming, tai chi, golf, food hygiene, cookery and sugarcraft. Ninety-one per cent of the provision is not accredited and over 90 per cent of courses are in sport and leisure. Hospitality, sport and leisure is the service's largest area of provision, with 26 per cent of the overall learner total. Most courses recruit termly and run for an average of 10 weeks. Just over 5,500 enrolments have been made so far in 2003-04, 75 per cent by women learners. Eleven learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds. No data is available on the number of learners who have a disability. Courses are offered at a range of venues including community colleges and centres and schools. The 173 part-time tutors are managed locally through the community college and centre structure. The area of learning has no curriculum leader.

Visual & performing arts & media

10. The service offers a range of courses in visual and performing arts and media that include drawing and painting, mixed crafts, three-dimensional design, textiles, pottery, music, dance and drama. It includes some unusual specialist areas such as book-binding, guitar making and silver smithing. Classes are delivered at 22 community colleges, community primary schools and a number of outreach centres that cover a wide geographical spread. Currently 2,086 part-time learners are enrolled on 196 classes in visual and performing arts and media programmes. A small proportion of these, 9.9 per cent, have the opportunity to gain qualifications that range from entry level to level 3. Classes are from one hour to six hours in duration, mostly in the evening but with some morning and afternoon provision. All music courses take place in the evening. Although 140 learners are enrolled on music courses, the number of separate classes being run was lower than the ALI's requirement and the area was not graded. The service offered 394 courses during 2003-04, running for six to 30 weeks. The curriculum is developed and managed by the vice principals of the colleges. All tutors are part-time staff employed on a fractional or sessional basis.

Humanities

11. Humanities courses are offered in 16 centres throughout Leicestershire, including community colleges, primary schools and various community venues. Subjects offered include archaeology, law, psychology, history, sociology, politics and classical civilisation. Fifty separate courses were offered during 2003-04 for 290 learners, making up 1.9 per cent of the total provision for Leicestershire LEA. At the time of the inspection, 229 learners were following 35 classes. Courses range in length from short courses of a few hours' duration, to year-long courses. Introductory courses are provided along with GCSEs, Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level and A2 courses, and access to higher education qualifications. Sixty-two per cent of current courses lead to recognised qualifications. Courses not leading to qualifications include genealogy, family history and local history.

English, languages & communications

12. At the time of the inspection, 2,538 learners were enrolled on 264 courses in English, languages and communications, with an average group size of just fewer than 10 learners. Most learners follow courses in Spanish or French. Other courses offered include British Sign Language (BSL), creative writing, English language and literature, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Punjabi and Russian. Many courses run at a variety of levels, particularly levels 1 to 3 for Open College Network (OCN) modern foreign languages. A-level, AS-level and GCSE courses are also offered in some subjects, including English and German. A few courses are not externally accredited. Courses are located evenly across the county in 34 venues, with many held in local community colleges and others in village halls, primary schools and community centres and an adult learning centre. Courses in this area of learning accounted for just less than 9 per cent of the LEA's adult and community learning provision in 2003-04. Most classes last for two hours and take place in the evening, with the remainder held in the daytime. Courses range in length from eight to 30 weeks.

Foundation programmes

13. The service offers foundation programmes for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities, and programmes in literacy, numeracy and language skills, including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). At the time of the inspection, 784 adult learners with learning difficulties were enrolled on 145 courses at 23 venues, and 466 adult learners were studying literacy, numeracy and ESOL, 112 as ESOL learners. Courses run at 41 venues in total, including a wide range of college and community locations.

14. Full-time courses for adults with learning difficulties are provided at three community colleges. The service offers a broad range of part-time vocationally linked programmes during the day and evening. Learners attend for between two and eight hours a week. Most of the courses are accredited by a national progression programme. The service makes arrangements to transport most learners to the centres. A foundation development worker has a county-wide brief to provide advice to all centres.

15. The service introduced its literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision in 2002. The literacy and numeracy courses are accredited, while the ESOL courses are college certificated. Courses are offered from pre-entry level to level 2, are part time and are offered for between two and four hours a week. The officer for skills for life, the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language, provides advice and guidance and has recently been assisted by a development worker for ESOL. Their key responsibilities are to promote the initiative across the county and identify and co-ordinate staff development activities.

Family learning

16. The service's family learning provision consists of courses in family literacy, language and numeracy (FLLN) and the wider family learning provision. At the time of the inspection 33 family learning classes were running.

17. In FLLN, at the time of the inspection 90 learners were following 13 targeted programmes consisting of longer and pilot courses. This work is managed directly by the family learning officer, and by a team of four half-time learning development workers who organise and teach most of the courses themselves. A total of 245 learners were following other shorter FLLN courses, such as keeping up with the children. These courses are managed by local community colleges in partnership with neighbouring primary schools.

18. Wider family learning provision consists of projects and targeted programmes. At the time of the inspection, around 509 families were following 23 projects. These projects are mostly managed by community colleges and selected for funding on the basis of bids against criteria. In addition, approximately 400 learners were taking part in 50 family learning targeted programmes. Targeted work is directly managed by the family learning officer, and is run with other agencies such as social services and health departments.

19. Enrolments onto courses in 2003-04 have increased by 17 per cent on the previous year, although data on some projects is not available. No data is available on what proportion of learners are men or from minority ethnic groups. The programmes range from one-off family learning day events, through to 25-week programmes focusing on the active role of the parent in developing a child's literacy, numeracy and language skills. Topics covered include support for early years, crafts, coping with children's challenging behaviour and health and diet.

Community development

20. The service directly supports a range of community learning opportunities. In 2003-04, 1,820 learners enrolled on 415 courses covering a range of subjects including complementary therapies, community life saving, anxiety management, art and ICT. Courses are free of charge to all learners, and most are managed directly by officers. In 2003-04, community development learners accounted for 10.8 per cent of the service's total provision. At the time of inspection 108 courses were available with a total of 898 learners. Most courses are non-accredited. Some courses are delivered in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies and others are aimed at specific groups such as travellers, minority ethnic groups or people with mental health conditions. Most courses operate during the day, with some weekend and evening classes, and include drop-in and workshop sessions. Courses range from single two-hour taster sessions, through programmes running for two hours a week for six weeks, up to 34 weekly two and a half hour sessions. Learning takes place in a range of establishments, from pubs and community colleges to church halls and mobile ICT facilities. Subject tutors are employed part time and are often supported in class by professional community workers, carers or specialists from support agencies. Staff in some drop-in centres are volunteers from the local community.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	36
Number of inspection days	216
Number of learner interviews	1263
Number of staff interviews	485
Number of subcontractor interviews	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	248
Number of partner/external agency interviews	30

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

21. The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, leadership and management are very weak, as are the arrangements for quality assurance, and the approach to equality of opportunity is unsatisfactory. Provision is outstanding in community development, and good in family learning and humanities. Science and mathematics, land-based courses, visual and performing arts, English and languages and foundation programmes are satisfactory. ICT programmes are unsatisfactory and provision in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel is very weak.

GRADES

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

Leadership and management	5
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	4
Quality assurance	5

Sciences & mathematics		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Mathematics		
⁻ Adult and community learning	504	3

Land-based provision		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Floristry		
⁻ Adult and community learning	170	3

Information & communications technology		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Using IT		
⁻ Adult and community learning	1688	4

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		5
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation		
⁻ Adult and community learning	2990	5

Visual & performing arts & media		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts		
⁻ Adult and community learning	1026	3
Crafts		
⁻ Adult and community learning	513	3
Dance		
⁻ Adult and community learning	407	3
Music		
⁻ Adult and community learning	140	None

Humanities		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
⁻ Adult and community learning	229	2

English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
English		
⁻ Adult and community learning	203	3
Languages		
⁻ Adult and community learning	2335	3

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL		
⁻ Adult and community learning	112	4
Literacy and numeracy		
⁻ Adult and community learning	354	3
Other contributory areas		
⁻ Adult and community learning	784	3

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	1244	2

Community development		1
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	898	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

22. **The standard of learners' work is high in science and mathematics, in humanities, and in foundation programmes. It is very good in visual and performing arts. ICT learners develop good basic computing skills** in word processing, spreadsheets, and digital imaging. **Floristry and garden design learners progress well** from using basic skills on to complex techniques.

23. **Achievement and retention are good in a number of curriculum areas.** In science and mathematics all learners who sat external examinations in 2003 were successful in gaining their expected qualifications. In humanities, most learners are successful in achieving externally recognised qualifications. Retention is good in visual and performing arts and on many courses in English and languages. Achievement is high in family learning, especially in terms of improving relationships between parents and children and enhancing children's learning at school.

24. **In many curriculum areas, learners are also making good progress in their personal development.** Many increase in confidence, improve communication and interpersonal skills and fulfil personal goals. In floristry and design, learners enjoy using their skills to the benefit of their families and local community. In English and languages, learners' achievement of personal goals is good, especially in increased self-confidence and motivation to continue learning. In visual and performing arts, some learners make good use of public performance to celebrate success in music and dance and others exhibit their art and craft work in public. In family learning and on community action programmes, learners display good development of personal and social skills, which substantially increase their quality of life and enable them to establish or maintain their links with the community.

Quality of education and training

25. Approximately 57 per cent of teaching observed during inspection was good or

better, which is lower than the average profile of 62 per cent seen in other ALI inspections of adult and community learning. Approximately 12 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory or poor, which is higher than the average profile of 10 per cent. In the best teaching and learning sessions, tutors are experts in their fields and plan and structure sessions well, using a variety of effective strategies and activities to stimulate and challenge learners. They are also sensitive to the needs of individual learners and provide them with good individual support.

26. **Examples of good teaching and learning were demonstrated in a number of curriculum areas, especially in floristry and garden design, humanities, family learning, literacy and numeracy and on community action programmes.** In floristry and garden design, tutors make good use of their own knowledge for practical demonstrations and encourage learners' creativity. In humanities, all learning sessions observed were good or better with some exceptionally challenging and innovative teaching. In family learning, tutors plan sessions well to meet individual needs in a stimulating and innovative manner.

27. Tutors in literacy and numeracy provide challenging activities which stimulate learners. On community action programmes, flexible teaching, responsive to individual needs, motivates learners to achieve well. Tutors in some modern foreign languages classes make good use of learning resources that have a strong cultural flavour. These include photographs, pictures, music and items of typical food.

28. **Too much teaching is unsatisfactory in a number of curriculum areas.** In science and mathematics, too much teaching is uninspiring with insufficient opportunities for active learning. In hospitality, sport and leisure, tutors do not adequately meet the needs of all learners, do not provide enough challenge in sessions and pay insufficient attention to health and safety. In a significant number of modern foreign language classes, tutors make excessive use of English and learners' exposure to the authentic use of the taught language is inhibited. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in 50 per cent of ESOL classes, with poor teaching strategies and ineffective use of resources and learning materials.

29. **Resources are good in floristry and garden design and in foundation programmes.** In floristry and garden design, learners benefit from spacious rooms for practical activities and good-quality learning materials. Most physical resources on foundation programmes are good, providing learners with a welcoming learning environment and effective learning materials.

30. **Some resources in visual and performing arts are unsatisfactory.** A number of rooms are too small to accommodate safely the number of learners using them. Other rooms are not clean and some equipment is not adequate.

31. **Initial and continuous assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are often inadequate in many curriculum areas.** Floristry and garden design learners receive insufficient identification of their initial starting points and insufficient formal recording of their progress. Initial assessment in ICT is poor and is not systematically carried out, with learners' current literacy, numeracy and language skills levels and support needs not

being highlighted. In this area also, monitoring of learners' progress and target-setting are inadequate.

32. In hospitality, sport and leisure, initial assessment and screening for physical activity readiness are inadequate and no formal structure exists for assessment and monitoring of progress. In visual and performing arts, initial assessment of vocational skills for some learners is insufficient and tutors have a poor understanding of the purpose of individual learning plans. In humanities, many tutors do not identify individual learning needs sufficiently. In English and languages, initial assessment is ineffective, relying too heavily on the thoroughness of individual tutors and on the learners' own assessment of their level of skills. In foundation programmes, individual target-setting and progress reviews are inadequate, with poor use of initial assessment and inadequate use of individual learning plans.

33. **In some curriculum areas the range of courses is good.** The range of learning opportunities for meeting individual, community and national needs on community action programmes is excellent and attracts a wide range of socially disadvantaged groups. ICT courses are available across a broad geographical area at a number of levels, from introductory to level 2, and many popular courses, such as 'computers for the terrified' are offered both in the daytime and evening. Good initiatives exist in visual and performing arts to engage new adult learners not traditionally involved in education. These include free taster sessions, exhibitions, advisory enrolment days in outreach centres, the use of a mobile toy library to promote learning opportunities to young parents and the use of past and current learners as learning champions in their local community.

34. **The range of courses in other areas is not adequate to meet the needs of learners and the community.** In floristry and garden design, the range and distribution of courses does not sufficiently meet the needs of the local community and opportunities for progression are not adequate. Most hospitality, sport and leisure courses are at level 1 and the range of courses in hospitality is too narrow. Many centres do not offer a sufficient variety of sport and leisure courses. The range of provision at foundation level is not wide enough to meet the learning needs of many communities, and centres do not always effectively identify local needs.

35. **Support for learners is good in a number of curriculum areas.** Tutors in visual and performing arts respond sensitively to learners' individual needs. Learners on foundation programmes receive strong individual support from tutors and support assistants, who have a good awareness of their personal and social needs. Tutors in family learning build up good preliminary relationships with groups of learners not traditionally involved in learning, and provide good support for individual learners' needs and pressures. Effective strategies are in place to attract groups not traditionally involved in learning on to literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses.

36. **Support is particularly good on community development programmes.** Tutors adopt a sympathetic team approach to meet the needs of individual learners, taking into account learners' cultural backgrounds. They make effective use of classroom assistants

and a range of external agencies to help learners overcome their individual barriers to learning.

37. Support for learners with literacy, numeracy and language skills development needs is variable across the service. Support is good and easy to access at some centres. However, provision at other centres is very limited, and learners are often unaware of it. Learners in community development and family learning programmes are supported well.

Leadership and management

38. **The LEA has established a good range of effective external partnerships in the community.** Partners include voluntary organisations, external providers, community colleges, a learning partnership group and collaborative groups focusing on topics such as adult and community learning, languages strategy, family learning, and literacy, numeracy and language skills. For example, through the languages strategy group, the LEA has made a good response to the government's National Languages Strategy to promote the learning of foreign languages, which has already resulted in successful bids for funding of e-learning and staff training. Links with schools, colleges, careers services, charities and other community groups are used to widen participation in learning.

39. The LEA has been through a period of upheaval since 1997 and **its management of change has been poor.** The process is still continuing, decisions have not been taken and barriers to change remain in place. Long periods of time have passed without decisive action, and many key staff are employed on temporary contracts. The management of curriculum areas is not coherent and staff are uncertain of the future direction of the service.

40. **Strategic and curriculum management are very poor.** Planned strategies for the review and development of the curriculum have not been implemented. Some management of health and safety is poor, and centres receive insufficient financial and performance monitoring. Target-setting is inadequate and some staff have very little understanding of the service's overall strategic plan. Central officers are not responsible for the direct management of most of the provision for which they have accountability. Learners experience classes and programmes which vary from outstanding to very poor, depending only on the quality of teaching and support they get from individual tutors. Some local managers are insufficiently aware of this. In particular, the service does not ensure that the provision learners experience across all areas of learning and venues is at least satisfactory.

41. **Management is poor in many curriculum areas.** Most curriculum areas have no managers with overall responsibility for their co-ordination. In floristry and garden design, poor curriculum management is characterised by the absence of a specialist curriculum co-ordinator and a forum for curriculum innovation, inadequate monitoring of tutors' performance and confusion regarding the availability of financial resources. In ICT, arrangements for strategically managing and developing the curriculum on a county-wide basis are very poor and evaluation of teaching, learning and attainment is poor.

42. Curriculum leadership in hospitality, sport and leisure is poor. It is typified by an absence of overall co-ordination of the curriculum area, an inadequate overview of the curriculum, insufficient communication and no use of data to set and monitor targets. The enforcement of safe working practices is inadequate in this area.

43. Curriculum management is ineffective in visual and performing arts. Co-ordination is insufficient and managers do not make enough use of quality assurance measures for improvement. The provision of humanities courses is not co-ordinated, with clashes occurring in the timetabling and location of courses. On foundation programmes, communication and collaboration between the officers and centres where the courses take place is not always effective, and the service does not have a sufficiently developed strategy for skills for life, the government's initiative for training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. In wider family learning, co-ordination is poor and responsibilities for courses unclear.

44. **Exceptionally, on community action programmes, strategic management is highly effective,** focusing successfully on the needs of learners and on widening adult participation in learning. **However, operational planning is not sufficient to ensure that growth in the number of learners can be sustained.**

45. **Communication across the service is generally ineffective.** The current structure of the service inhibits the flow of effective communication between staff in central services and those in the centres where courses take place. Very little sharing of specialist support and good practice takes place. Visits to the centres by staff from central services are infrequent.

46. **The service does not make effective use of management information data to monitor performance.** Reliable data is not systematically collected across the service for the purpose of planning, setting and monitoring targets. Managers do not always make use of data to support decision-making, and managers in many curriculum areas do not make effective use of data to monitor and improve performance at course level. Many staff do not understand the importance of accurate data or how to use it effectively to bring about improvement. The analysis of financial and commercial data is inadequate.

47. Literacy, numeracy and language skills support is managed by individual centres. In some centres it is managed well, with learners able to easily access the support they need. However, in other centres support is poorly managed, limited in scope and not sufficiently promoted to learners. The service has no overall processes for managing literacy, numeracy and language support across the areas of learning.

48. **Quality assurance arrangements are not adequately implemented or monitored across the service.** Although extensive written procedures are in place centrally to support the process, these are not widely followed and their use is not monitored. The service's self-assessment report is often insufficiently evaluative and does not focus enough on improvement. Course reviews and learners' progress reviews are not always adequate for the purposes of course self-assessment. Learning session observations have

been implemented across the county, but these are not always carried out by subject specialists and feedback is not always effective.

49. In ICT, quality assurance arrangements are not co-ordinated and do not have a positive effect. Target-setting in ICT is weak and self-assessment is insufficiently critical. Managers in science and mathematics do not make effective use of self-assessment to critically evaluate performance, and action-planning is not specific enough. In hospitality, sport and leisure, the process of learning session observation is not thorough enough to bring about improvement. Specialists are not sufficiently used to observe sessions in visual and performing arts, and actions resulting from these observations are inappropriate. In English and languages, course reviews and learners' reviews are not fully completed, session observations do not have sufficient specialist input and many schemes of work are unsatisfactory. County-wide quality assurance systems have not been fully implemented for foundation programmes. In wider family learning, responsibilities for quality assurance are not clear and self-assessment and data are not used effectively to monitor performance.

50. **Staff training and development is inadequate.** Much of the staff training and development is co-ordinated centrally and offered to all staff, but take-up is quite low as training is on a voluntary basis and the communication of training to all part-time staff is ineffective. No formal mechanism exists to identify staff training and development needs. Staff appraisal is insufficient. Although appraisal processes are in place they are not systematic or consistent.   Appraisals are not always followed up or monitored.

51. **The LEA employs a highly effective range of measures to widen community participation.** A number of equality and diversity theme groups cover a range of socially inclusive projects, such as family learning, mental health projects and skills for life.

52. **The promotion of equality of opportunity to staff and learners is inadequate throughout the service.** Staff training on equality and diversity is insufficiently co-ordinated across the service and attendance is optional. Although staff induction packs include comprehensive information on equality of opportunity, insufficient monitoring takes place of whether the guidelines are followed. The service has no system to evaluate and analyse the overall level of complaints received.

53. Data is not used sufficiently to monitor the effectiveness of equality of opportunity measures. Information is not broken down by curriculum areas and managers cannot use it to measure performance in these areas. The LEA makes too little use of data to target under-represented groups in specific curriculum areas and this has been identified as a particular weakness in hospitality, sport and leisure, and humanities.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good range of effective external partnerships
- highly effective range of measures to widen participation

Weaknesses

- poor management of change
- very poor strategic and curriculum management
- ineffective communication
- ineffective use of management information
- inadequate staff training and development
- inadequate promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity to staff and learners
- insufficient use of data to monitor the effectiveness of equality of opportunity
- inadequate implementation and monitoring of quality assurance arrangements

Sciences & mathematics

Mathematics

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- good development of learning and personal skills

Weaknesses

- some uninspiring teaching
- ineffective use of self-assessment
- inadequate collection and use of data to monitor equality of opportunity

Land-based provision

Floristry

Strengths

- good development of learners' skills
- good teaching and learning
- good resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate assessment and monitoring of learners' progress
- insufficient range of courses
- insufficient pre-course information
- poor curriculum management
- insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity

Information & communications technology

Using IT

Strengths

- good development of basic computing skills
- very effective range of courses and venues

Weaknesses

- poor initial assessment
- inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- very poor strategic curriculum management
- ineffective quality assurance

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on accredited courses

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory teaching and learning
- poor assessment and monitoring practices
- insufficient progression arrangements
- very poor curriculum leadership and management
- inadequate enforcement of safe working practices
- poor quality assurance arrangements
- insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity

Visual & performing arts & media

Arts

Strengths

- very good standard of learners' work
- significant personal gains for learners
- good initiatives to engage new learners
- good response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory resources in some venues
- inadequate formal assessment
- ineffective curriculum management

Crafts

Strengths

- very good standard of learners' work
- significant personal gains for learners
- good initiatives to engage new learners
- good response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory resources in some venues
- inadequate formal assessment
- ineffective curriculum management

Dance

Strengths

- very good standard of learners' work
- significant personal gain for learners
- good initiatives to engage new learners
- good response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory resources in some venues
- inadequate formal assessment
- ineffective curriculum management

Music

Strengths

- very good standard of learners' work
- significant personal gains for learners
- good initiatives to engage new learners
- good response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory resources in some venues
- inadequate formal assessment
- ineffective curriculum management

Humanities

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- high standards of learners' work
- good teaching
- very effective assessment feedback to learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient initial assessment of individual learning needs
- poor curriculum management
- insufficient targeting of minority ethnic groups

English, languages & communications

English

Strengths

- good retention on many courses
- good achievement of personal goals

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of initial assessment
- inadequate implementation of quality assurance arrangements at course level
- insufficient use of data to monitor performance at course level

Languages

Strengths

- good retention on many courses
- good achievement of personal goals
- very good use of learning resources in some modern foreign language classes
- good planning in response to the National Language Strategy

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data to monitor performance at course level
- ineffective initial assessment
- inadequate implementation of quality assurance arrangements at course level
- insufficient use of data to monitor performance at course level

Foundation programmes

ESOL

Strengths

- good standard of learners' work
- effective strategies to engage hard-to-reach groups in literacy, numeracy and ESOL classes
- good individual support for learners
- good physical resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate individual target-setting and progress reviews
- unsatisfactory teaching and learning in ESOL classes
- inadequate range of provision
- ineffective curriculum management

Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- good standard of learners' work
- good teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy
- effective strategies to engage hard-to-reach groups in literacy, numeracy and ESOL classes
- good individual support for learners
- good physical resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate individual target-setting and progress reviews
- inadequate range of provision
- underdeveloped skills for life strategy
- ineffective curriculum management

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good standard of learners' work
- good individual support for learners
- good physical resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate target-setting and progress reviews
- inadequate range of provision
- underdeveloped skills for life strategy
- ineffective curriculum management

Family learning

Strengths

- high achievement of planned learning outcomes
- good teaching and learning
- good personal support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient progression opportunities
- insufficiently developed curriculum management

Community development

Strengths

- good personal development and social interaction
- good attainment of practical skills
- motivational teaching to allow learners to identify and meet their potential
- particularly effective teaching and integration of literacy and numeracy skills
- very effective identification and use of resources
- excellent range of learning opportunities to meet individual, community and national needs
- very effective range of assessment methods to meet individual and group needs
- particularly good support for staff and learners
- very effective strategic management to ensure successful widening participation and social inclusion

Weaknesses

- insufficient operational planning for growth

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT LEICESTERSHIRE LEA:

- working with other adults
- courses in local venues
- friendly and supportive tutors - 'good tutors who understand why I don't learn very fast'
- the empathetic tutors - 'the tutors come from my community'
- gaining in confidence
- the skills they develop - 'I'm surprised at the progress that I've made'
- the ability to apply the learning in everyday lives

WHAT LEARNERS THINK LEICESTERSHIRE LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the accommodation for sports courses - it could be better and cleaner
- the provision of courses that run all year
- the quality of pre-course information
- the number of daytime classes
- the heating in winter and ventilation in summer
- the amount and quality of technical support in ICT classes

KEY CHALLENGES FOR LEICESTERSHIRE LEA:

- develop and implement an effective management structure across all parts of the provision
- fully implement a comprehensive quality assurance system
- ensure that curriculum leadership and management are effective in all areas of learning
- develop and make better use of management information systems
- develop effective communication mechanisms
- promote equality of opportunity more effectively to staff and learners
- improve the sharing and use of good practice
- implement more thorough initial and continuous assessment and monitoring of learners' progress
- implement a thorough health and safety regime in each area of learning
- ensure staff training and development, including professional development, is appropriate and designed to improve the provision

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 5

Strengths
- good range of effective external partnerships
- highly effective range of measures to widen participation

Weaknesses
- poor management of change
- very poor strategic and curriculum management
- ineffective communication
- ineffective use of management information
- inadequate staff training and development
- inadequate promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity to staff and learners
- insufficient use of data to monitor the effectiveness of equality of opportunity
- inadequate implementation and monitoring of quality assurance arrangements

54. The service has good partnerships with a wide network of external providers, community groups, voluntary associations and other departments of the county council. It uses these partnerships well to initiate new projects including national initiatives for community and family learning and to bid successfully for additional funding. The service is a key partner in an effective learning partnership group and its subgroups, targeting specific areas such as the National Languages Strategy, adult and community learning, family learning and skills for life. These subgroups have organised several initiatives. Some good links with schools, community colleges, information, advice and guidance, charities and community groups are used to help widen participation. Officers of the service sit on the board of several local and national organisations. Managers and staff at all levels across the service use their local contacts to meet the needs of their learners.

55. Management of change has been poor. The service has experienced considerable upheaval since late 1997. While trying to improve the way that adult and community learning is delivered the County Council has come up against a number of barriers and resistance to this change. The process is still continuing and is unresolved. The planned outcomes of the review have not been implemented and the review is currently on hold. Activities on the review were halted in November 2003. Some key staff in the community colleges feel they have not been consulted on the changes, although the County Council has carried out consultation over a number of years. Many key staff in the service have been in temporary posts for some time, and long-term planning is

difficult. The areas of learning have not been managed in a coherent way. Staff are unaware of the future and the direction of the overall service. The service has carried out very little monitoring of community colleges for the past 14 months, while this process of change has been continuing.

56. Strategic and curriculum planning are very poor. The LEA's most recent adult learning plan identifies a number of key strategic objectives. The overall strategic plan is satisfactory, but some staff and partners have very little understanding of it. There is evidence of some progress, for example in widening participation. Most curriculum areas have no overall strategy and planning. The LEA gives insufficient direction, with little information filtering down to part-time staff. The planning and co-ordination of courses across locations is very poor. Monitoring of retention, achievement and finance in the community colleges is inadequate. Management in eight out of 10 areas of learning is poor. The areas of learning managed directly by the officers are satisfactory or better. Areas of learning do not plan and review their programmes coherently. Key roles in health and safety are rarely identified and poorly managed.   Very little understanding exists of the value and use of performance indicators in curriculum planning and development. The experience that learners have is too dependent on individual tutors or support staff, most of whom are part-time and many of whom work in isolation.

57. Communication between the officers, community colleges and other key adult and community learning staff is ineffective. The management structure is complex and effective communication is difficult. The officers have a variety of ways of communicating with community colleges, but they are frequently ineffective in reaching and influencing all staff. Insufficient communication or sharing of good practice takes place across areas of learning. Very little specialist support is provided across the service. Some effective groups have been formed, with some sharing of effective practice and discussions on areas such as financial capability and citizenship. Regular meetings for managers are held, at which information is presented. However, this information is not always shared with relevant staff such as adult tutors and admin staff. The service has a database of current staff to help communication, but it is not always up to date. The officers have very little time to visit community colleges to talk about adult and community learning or monitor the quality of provision. Staff are very uncertain about the direction of adult and community learning.

58. Collection of data across the service is inconsistent. Data is collected at community college level, but the data received is often unreliable. Many staff in some of the community colleges enter information onto the database, and the member of staff in charge of management information collates the information onto a spreadsheet. Data is collected for contractual requirements. Little effective use is made of management information to set and monitor targets to improve the provision. Data is not collected and brought together from the different areas of learning across the county. Data on retention rates and target achievement of action plans is not always collected or used to improve quality. Systems for central monitoring of individual budgets are inadequate. Currently, no effective service level agreements are in place with the community schools or colleges. The community colleges use a range of budget management systems which produce varied reports. Many staff do not recognise the importance of keeping accurate

data, or how this data may be used to monitor performance. Data is not always used in making decisions at management level. Little analysis has taken place to identify trends in the provision and bring about improvements.

59. Staff receive insufficient appraisal. A staff appraisal policy exists for full- and part-time staff, but it is not systematically adhered to or monitored in community colleges and centres. Many staff do not receive formal feedback on their performance and how they might improve it. No formal mechanism exists to identify staff training and development needs, and some staff identify training needs themselves. Many training and development opportunities exist, but staff are not always aware or made aware of what training is available. Training in areas such as equality of opportunity is not mandatory, and most staff training is voluntary. Little analysis of staff development needs or development plans takes place. Part-time tutors receive little professional development. New tutors are generally encouraged rather than required to achieve stage 1 teacher training qualifications from a national awarding body. Community colleges allocate budgets for staff development, but the amount allocated by some colleges is very small. Staff are not set targets for development.

Equality of opportunity   Contributory grade 4

60. Leicestershire LEA implements a highly effective range of measures to widen participation in local communities, a strength it recognises in its self-assessment report. A number of equality and diversity theme groups have been set up covering a range of socially inclusive projects. Current successful working groups include a network for adults with learning difficulties or disabilities, a literacy, numeracy and language skills strategy group, a family learning network, a mental health network and a 'learning in the community' group. A number of specific projects operate including a highly successful project to support learning in the travelling community. Other successes include encouragement of families to better support their children, managing behaviour, 'dads and lads' activities and mobile ICT projects including Care On Line, a service to provide ICT training to adults who are housebound through illness or disability. Good use is made of national indices of deprivation to ensure these projects are correctly targeted. The service places much emphasis on support for learners, and runs projects to promote learning in rural areas. Daytime crèche facilities are available in a number of colleges across the county and some learners receive fee remissions.

61. The service has a comprehensive equal opportunities policy which applies to its learners. Community colleges have their own equal opportunities policies, extended to include adult and community learning. The LEA holds copies of these policies but does not monitor their effectiveness directly. Although the collective policies make little reference to recent legislation, the service has made satisfactory progress towards meeting the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. Audits of premises have been carried out and funding obtained to make a range of improvements to premises. These include the installation of hearing loops, building of access ramps, use of automatic doors and the purchase of large computer display screens and keyboards. Access to premises is satisfactory.

62. The service does not promote equality of opportunity adequately to staff and learners. It recognises this in its self-assessment report. Staff training events include training on equality and diversity, but teaching staff do not have to attend. Training is insufficiently co-ordinated between geographical areas and some teaching staff are not aware that this training is available. Officers in the local authority have a good understanding of equality and have made key staff appointments to assist in its promotion, although resources to achieve this are insufficient. For example, only 20 per cent of tutors have received training in how to approach literacy, numeracy and language when developing course materials. Staff induction packs include comprehensive information on the role of equality of opportunity in the development and promotion of course programmes and the production and use of course material. Although all teaching staff receive these guidelines, little monitoring takes place of whether they are followed. For example, although some promotional and learning materials are available in a variety of languages, the content does not always break down stereotypical views or attract applicants from under-represented groups. Learners' awareness of equality of opportunity is often restricted to an understanding of direct discrimination on the grounds of sex, race or ethnicity. A complaints procedure is in place, although it is managed locally. The LEA has no overall system to evaluate and analyse the level of complaints.

63. Insufficient use is made of locally collected data to monitor the effectiveness of equality of opportunity. Data collected by community colleges records participation by gender and ethnicity. Data is also available to show the percentage of members of the local population who come from minority ethnic groups. However, insufficient use is made of this data to target under-represented groups in the areas of learning. Data is not broken down by area of learning and cannot be used to identify rates of achievement or to measure progress in curriculum areas. This weakness is recognised in the self-assessment report.

Quality assurance   Contributory grade 5

64. The service's implementation and monitoring of quality assurance arrangements are inadequate. Officers have produced a wide range of quality assurance procedures including detailed guidance handbooks for centre staff. However, these procedures have not been adapted to meet the specific needs of the curriculum areas. A part-time staff induction pack is available but is not always used throughout the areas of learning, and other systems and guidelines to quality assure the provision have not been fully adopted by all centres. Programme managers discuss quality assurance procedures at their meetings, held up to three times each term. However, programme managers do not all implement the service's quality assurance procedures and in many cases continue to use the system and procedures of the individual centre. Insufficient monitoring of the implementation of the quality assurance procedures takes place. Some centres have not received quality monitoring visits for at least 18 months.

65. Arrangements for observing learning sessions are weak. Tutors are currently observed at least once every three years, although this requirement is not met in all areas

of learning. Trained staff carry out these observations and record findings on standard documents, although the amount and usefulness of written feedback varies. Observations are not always carried out by subject specialists. Where the programme manager identifies development needs, a more experienced tutor may act as a mentor, but sharing of good practice is not common. Tutors working in the same area of learning seldom meet together and do not have access to specialist guidance unless a curriculum co-ordinator has been appointed.

66. Programme managers have difficulty in monitoring learners' performance as few have adequate systems in place. Most centres use their own paper-based systems, and the service acknowledges that little reliable information on retention and achievement is available.

67. The learners' reviews and course reviews are not used consistently to gain feedback from learners and tutors. The course tutor uses learners' reviews to prepare a course review. This course review is then discussed with the programme manager and assists with the preparation of the self-assessment report. However, learners and tutors do not always complete the reviews. The discussion of the course review document and subsequent action-planning does not always take place. Some centres distribute additional questionnaires to collect learners' feedback.

68. The service produced its first self-assessment report in March 2002 and its second in November 2002. The report for 2002-03 was produced in January 2004. A separate report was later produced for family learning. Centrally produced guidelines are in place for writing the self-assessment report. Each programme manager is required to use the course reviews and learners' reviews to compile the self-assessment report for their individual centre. The individual reports are then collated centrally to produce the service's report. Many of these reports for individual areas are too descriptive and do not follow the guidelines. The self-assessment report is not sufficiently self-critical and many inspectors identified many additional weaknesses. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the need to improve the quality of the provision. Learners experience classes and programmes which vary from outstanding to very poor, depending only on the quality of teaching and support they get from individual tutors. Some local managers have little awareness of this. In particular, the service does not ensure that learners experience at least satisfactory provision across all areas of learning and venues.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Sciences & mathematics

Sciences & mathematics		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Mathematics - Adult and community learning	504	3

Mathematics

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- good development of learning and personal skills

Weaknesses

- some uninspiring teaching
- ineffective use of self-assessment
- inadequate collection and use of data to monitor equality of opportunity

Achievement and standards

69. Retention and achievement rates are good. Eighty-two per cent of learners completed their courses in 2002-03, and all of these learners achieved their qualification. The standard of learners' work is good. Learners take pride in their work, and achieve the good standards that are expected of them. Learners invest time and effort in their work, which is apparent in their class work, homework, coursework and assignments. The work is appropriately researched, factually accurate and well presented. Learners are set challenging targets. Most learners are clear about their learning goals and are steadily working towards them.

Quality of education and training

70. Development of learning and personal skills is good in science and mathematics. Tutors concentrate well on helping learners to develop good learning skills and self-confidence. Learners preparing for examinations are provided with well-designed revision sheets and practice examination questions. Tutors guide them through correct answers, skilfully highlighting points to ensure that learners can gain maximum marks. Learners are given a clear awareness of the importance of precision, reliability and the correct use of terminology. Tutors generally pay good attention to the needs of individual learners. Learners are respected as equals in the learning process. In good classes, learners are encouraged to share their ideas and develop their interpersonal skills

through peer support. These good classes have clearly identified objectives which learners understand and, in most cases, meet. For example, learners in a biology class were able to describe systolic and diastolic pressure and were able to calculate tidal volumes. All learners are engaged in these classes and the mix of theory and practical work is good. The more effective classes also include regular and appropriately frequent learning checks, and most have a good balance of formality and informality.

71. Some teaching is uninspiring. The tutor talks for too long and activities are insufficiently varied. The learners are not involved, are forced to be passive and show overt signs of boredom. In these learning sessions tutors do not make sufficient checks on how well the learners have understood what has been taught. The quality of session plans and schemes of work varies widely, from good to poor. The good plans and schemes of work contain clearly identified learning outcomes, appropriately detailed teaching and learning activities and regular planned learning checks. The poor examples are no more than lists of topics with no information about what is to be learnt, or how it will be learnt. The more effective tutors use thoughtfully designed and well-presented materials such as handouts, worksheets and transparencies. Some tutors use handouts which are old and poorly photocopied.

72. Resources are sufficient to meet learners' needs. Learners are provided with copies of set textbooks and receive paper, calculators and other stationery. Staff are well qualified and demonstrate up-to-date, expert knowledge in their area of learning. Most have at least a first degree in a relevant subject and some also have a higher degree. Most tutors have a teaching qualification or are working towards one. Accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms are large, well lit and well ventilated. Learners benefit from tutors' use of whiteboards, flipcharts and overhead projectors. The furniture is suitable for adult learners. Most premises have an area where learners can meet informally.

73. Learners' progress is assessed and monitored satisfactorily. Homework is set every week and returned the following week with useful feedback. Learners understand what needs to be done to improve their work. The initial assessment of learners' needs is usually informal, often involving a discussion with the learner about their previous subject experience and their aims. Some tutors make satisfactory use of individual learning plans to chart learners' progress. In these instances learners are involved in the target-setting and encouraged to identify what steps they will take to improve. This effective practice is not shared between tutors.

74. Many courses are offered in response to the interest expressed by current and potential learners. A pre-GCSE course is offered to help learners prepare for progression to GCSE mathematics. Learners on GCSE mathematics include some who already hold a degree as well as many who have few or no formal qualifications. Astronomy courses are offered for beginners. Learners can influence the course offer through discussions with tutors. For example, the AS-level biology course was introduced in response to a request from learners who had successfully completed GCSE biology. However, local needs in science and mathematics are not systematically analysed. Staff do not have a shared understanding of the mechanism for curriculum planning or the criteria for course development.

75. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support. Most learners are interviewed before they enrol and are given appropriate advice and guidance. If a learner's appropriate starting point is not clear, they can sample a few classes at the level they are comfortable with and then decide if they wish to remain there or transfer. The pre-GCSE and GCSE courses are run on the same evening to make it easier for learners to transfer between them. Learners with identified literacy and numeracy skills support needs are referred to basic skills tutors for additional support. Many learners hear about courses by word of mouth. tutors are involved in drawing up course leaflets, which are freely available and well displayed at the centres. They give useful information about the level, content, dates and duration of the courses as well as starting points and progression opportunities. Learners acknowledge the usefulness of having a named contact tutor and a telephone number for course enquiries. Learners are able to access the information, advice and guidance partnership.

Leadership and management

76. Science and mathematics tutors have a clear commitment to provide learning opportunities for adults. Staff understand and support the values of the service. Professional development is satisfactory, although tutors have few opportunities to share good practice. Tutors benefit from accredited training, short courses and various conferences, which part-time staff are paid to attend. Participants are encouraged to evaluate the development events and identify the benefits to them. A satisfactory learning session observation scheme is in place in many centres and observations are recorded. Systems to involve learners in course reviews are being developed. Tutors evaluate their courses using a standard course report procedure. This practice is not yet fully established across all courses, a weakness that the service identifies in its self-assessment report.

77. Self-assessment is not used effectively. The overall grade given to this area of learning in the self-assessment report matches that given by inspectors. However, the self-assessment report does not clearly identify key strengths and weaknesses. It describes many of the concerns highlighted at inspection, but does not adequately evaluate what works, what does not work and why. Action points do not cover all the problems that need to be resolved, or include success criteria, monitoring and evaluation information, milestones and deadlines. The person responsible for completion of actions is not identified. Staff do not have enough opportunities to share effective practice. The good practice observed in some classes is not shared with other staff.

78. Collection and use of data to monitor equality of opportunity are inadequate. Insufficient information exists on the representation of minority ethnic group members among the learner intake. Where data does exist it is not used to determine actions to rectify the under-representation of specific groups. Some learners with hearing impairments are supported by signers and interpreters.

Land-based provision

Land-based provision		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Floristry - Adult and community learning	170	3

Floristry

Strengths

- good development of learners' skills
- good teaching and learning
- good resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate assessment and monitoring of learners' progress
- insufficient range of courses
- insufficient pre-course information
- poor curriculum management
- insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity

Achievement and standards

79. Learners with no previous experience make good progress, quickly moving on to more complex techniques. Learners talk enthusiastically of the progress they have made and are motivated by their acquisition of new skills. They benefit from enhanced confidence and self-esteem. Accreditation is only available on one course in this area, and achievement is rarely recorded in any formal way. Flexible reviews of individual learning are used on non-accredited courses, but are not formally recorded. However, some learners are encouraged to take photographs of their work, which shows progress and innovation. More confident learners make good use of their new skills for the benefit of their family, friends and in the community. For example, a group of new floristry learners have gained sufficient confidence in their abilities to create decorations for their local church. One of the group has also made all the table decorations for her daughter's wedding. Day trips are organised to famous gardens, where the learners acquire knowledge of plants and design layouts.

Quality of education and training

80. Teaching in land-based provision is sensitive and creates a safe environment for learners taking their first steps back into education. Learning session plans are well prepared and sessions are well managed. Learners are challenged to reach their full potential, and learn to examine and develop their own personal perceptions of their subject. They are encouraged to share their work and ideas collaboratively with their peers. Learners have a good working relationship with their tutors, and are supported and encouraged in their learning. No learners have been identified as having additional learning support needs.

81. Tutors use a wide variety of methods appropriate to learners' needs, and encourage design, creativity, colour, texture and seasonal awareness. Tutors perform demonstrations which set a high standard to which learners can aim. They make use of well-prepared handouts, reference books and samples of their own work. All staff provide some individual tuition.

82. Accommodation is good, with suitable facilities for the practical nature of the classes, spacious working surfaces and good lighting. Some classrooms have illustrations on the walls of the various processes the learners will be taught in the class. Centres are situated over a wide area of the county, and have good parking facilities for learners carrying bulky equipment and materials. The outreach centres in the villages are very popular, most being situated within walking distance for the learners. Access for learners with restricted mobility is particularly good, with ramps and wide doorways. Equipment in the container planting class was successfully adapted for one learner with restricted mobility. Staff have satisfactory qualifications.

83. Assessment and monitoring practices are inadequate. Each centre uses a different assessment system. Initial assessment does not always take place, and learners' starting points and previous experience in the subject are not recorded. Continuous assessment in most classes is not formally recorded, although the tutor gives learners informal feedback at each session. In some classes, learning outcomes are recorded on a tick box form that merely records that the learner has completed agreed tasks. Some classes use no formal paperwork at all.

84. The provision of pre-course information and guidance is poor. Course information sheets are not detailed enough. Learners receive information on the course after they have enrolled, identifying some of the equipment required. One course had five new starters withdraw after enrolling, as they did not want to follow an accredited course. Learners are not given an estimate of the material and equipment costs for their course. Some guidance is given by telephone or to learners who visit the centre.

Leadership and management

85. The range and timing of the courses offered is narrow, with 12 of the 16 classes running at the time of inspection being in flower arranging and only four of the classes being held in the daytime. One class always has a waiting list. No opportunities for progression to more advanced courses are on offer. In most classes the ability levels of the learners range from beginner to more experienced. Courses run at a relatively small number of centres, with little evidence that the other centres have considered offering courses in this area of learning.

86. Curriculum management is poor. This area of learning does not have a specialist subject curriculum co-ordinator. No forum exists to discuss subject topics such as curriculum innovation, integration of ICT and the introduction of new techniques or the relevance of accreditation. New course suggestions are generally based on the expertise and availability of tutors, ideas from staff and feedback from learners. Some staff are not aware of available budgets, and staff who purchase essential equipment are not always reimbursed. Tutors visit the wholesale markets in the early morning to buy flowers at wholesale prices, and then pass the saving on to the learners. Land-based provision teaching staff do not have enough opportunities to share good practice across the county.

87. No contingency plans are in place if a tutor is unable to take a class. Any staff appraisal carried out is not performed by a subject specialist. Observation of teaching records is not sufficiently evaluative and relies too much on an audit of classroom tasks and activities. Staff development differs greatly across the county. Tutors in some locations can request to attend specialist courses in their field, but staff in other areas have no knowledge of development opportunities.

88. Knowledge of equality of opportunity is not sufficiently promoted. The service's approach to equality of opportunity is not well established in this area of learning. Learners are not aware of their rights and responsibilities or the procedure for making complaints. Centres do not have any promotional material to encourage learners from under-represented groups to enrol. The numbers of learners from minority ethnic groups are not analysed and no action plans exist to target under-represented groups. The self-assessment report for this area of learning identifies that this programme area is not developing.

Information & communications technology

Information & communications technology		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Using IT - Adult and community learning	1688	4

Using IT

Strengths

- good development of basic computing skills
- very effective range of courses and venues

Weaknesses

- poor initial assessment
- inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- very poor strategic curriculum management
- ineffective quality assurance

Achievement and standards

89. Learners develop a good range of basic computing skills in word processing, spreadsheets, databases and digital imaging. They also become familiar with the use of presentation software and with using the internet. A minority of learners obtain employment as a result of their newly acquired skills. One learner, for instance, has been employed as treasurer of a local charitable trust after becoming a competent user of spreadsheets. Learners in most centres are given the opportunity to prepare for assessments that lead to nationally recognised awards. Many learners overcome their fear of computers and become confident and competent computer users. Small class sizes and individual support from tutors contribute to learners' progress. Tutors are sensitive to learners' needs and give them as much individual support as possible. Learners value their tutors' guidance and patient assistance. Good tutor-devised materials break down complex tasks into short, easy steps. This helps learners to make progress and to master various applications, such as adding frames to pictures in digital photography, in a relatively short time. However, insufficient attention is given to learners' keyboarding skills, which are mostly poorly developed.

Quality of education and training

90. The range and distribution of courses is very effective. Learners have very good opportunities to enrol on introductory, level 1 and level 2 courses, as acknowledged in the self-assessment report. A very broad geographical spread of learning venues offers ICT training, from the northeast to the southwest of the county. Many popular courses, such as 'computers for the terrified' and 'computing for leisure', are available as day and evening courses. Many learners progress from short, non-accredited introductory programmes to accredited courses. Most one-year courses offer learners good opportunities to study for ICT qualifications, including an introductory computer literacy course, a computer literacy and business technology course, and an examination-based qualification in information technology (IT). Laptop computers are taken to a range of venues, such as the premises of a national charity for the elderly, village halls, public houses and libraries, to make ICT training available wherever a need is identified. Requests for more specialised provision, such as computer maintenance, digital photography and desktop publishing, are quickly responded to. Internet facilities are available in many venues. Most accommodation in community colleges is very welcoming. Several centres have notice boards containing up-to-date examples of learners' work, photographs, information on local events and a range of publicity materials. Some centres offer crèche facilities.

91. Initial assessment is poor. It is superficial, insufficiently thorough and given inadequate consideration by tutors and learners. Learners' existing computing skills are insufficiently checked when they begin a course. The self-assessment questionnaire, through which learners appraise their own skill levels, is not revised as their skills improve. Initial assessment is not consistently carried out in all centres and learners on one course completed different self-assessment questions. Learners' literacy and numeracy skills are inadequately assessed and tutors are poorly informed about learners' levels of literacy and reading competences. Learners' support needs are not adequately highlighted. Some learners have been placed on unsuitable courses and at inappropriate levels. In those centres where learners' progress records are used as individual learning plans, they are not used to set, monitor or record individual targets. Plans in some classes contained identical entries for all learners. The purpose of individual learning plans and the need for clear targets are not made sufficiently clear in many centres. Individual learning plans are being developed in isolation by tutors in a few centres. One centre makes very good use of them but this practice is not shared with other centres. Induction is very brief and many learners receive too little information. For instance, information about equality of opportunity is insufficient and strategies for eliminating harassment and bullying are inadequately covered.

92. Learners' progress is ineffectively monitored and recorded. Inadequate use is made of short-term targets to drive learning and to measure progress. Very limited use is made of clear, well-maintained records for the continuous monitoring of learners' progress. Some learners' work is inadequately marked. Learners are not well informed about their progress and are unsure about what they have achieved and what they still have to complete, and the timescale for doing so. Learning is insufficiently differentiated in many

classes, with tutors not monitoring progress adequately. Recording and follow-up of poor attendance are inconsistent. Course reviews are incomplete and ineffective, and do not lead to identifiable and continuous improvements. Some learners' learning reviews are inappropriate and many tutors are not using them.

93. Overall, accommodation is satisfactory. In most cases ICT equipment and software are also satisfactory, although in a few venues computers are unreliable, software is out of date and CD-ROM facilities are not available. Many centres have colour printers, video projection facilities, scanners and digital cameras. Technical support in community colleges is satisfactory and in a few cases it is good. Some good paper-based learning resources are available, including a large number of appropriate textbooks in some centres. Health and safety are not adequately assessed or reinforced in many centres. For example, drinks are allowed in computer rooms, there are trailing wires and dirty screens, rooms are overheated and seating and posture receive too little attention. Too many centres have non-adjustable and plastic chairs, high desks and cramped workspaces. Some tutors are unaware of the availability of adaptive technology and how to obtain it. Most tutors have appropriate technical qualifications and are working towards, or already have, a teaching qualification.

Leadership and management

94. Arrangements for strategically managing and developing the curriculum across the county are very poor. No-one has overall responsibility for co-ordinating the curriculum throughout the county or determining strategic direction and operational priorities. Staff appraisal is weak. Staff are not set clearly defined timebound objectives. Most part-time tutors are not appraised. No targets are set for enrolment, retention, achievement or participation by identified groups of learners across the county or for individual centres. The service does not have a co-ordinated approach to market research. Some training is provided to ensure that staff are conversant with course specifications, but take up of wider staff development is inadequate, for example in equality of opportunity or to acquaint staff with literacy, numeracy and language skills topics. Effort is often duplicated and very little sharing of good practice takes place. For example, tutors in different centres prepare similar materials and handouts for introductory courses but these are not shared. Learners' attendance is often not well monitored and follow-up systems vary considerably in their effectiveness. In a minority of cases attendance at sessions is not recorded. The management information system is inadequate. The data produced by the system is unreliable and unsuitable for decision-making purposes. Management of the mobile ICT provision is satisfactory. Staff training for managing diverse client groups is inadequate. Tutors have a poor understanding and awareness of equality of opportunity. Some provision is not cost effective. Many classes are very small, with an average attendance of 73 per cent during the week of inspection.

95. The quality assurance framework is ineffective, and the service does not co-ordinate the quality assurance of the ICT provision. Target-setting is weak and improvement of the provision is not adequately emphasised. Many tutors do not thoroughly evaluate their sessions and are poorly informed about quality assurance. The self-assessment report is inaccurate and insufficiently self-critical. Teaching and learning are not observed

frequently enough. Some observations are carried out by non-specialists and the quality of some provision is graded too generously. For example, in 2002-03 the proportion of provision judged as good or better was 67 per cent, but only 56 per cent was graded good or better at inspection. Huge differences exist in the quality of schemes of work, learning session plans and learners' records, with many being unsatisfactory. Sharing of good practice is inadequate and insufficient. Although a small proportion of teaching is very good and imaginative, much of it is dull and uninspiring.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		5
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation - Adult and community learning	2990	5

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on accredited courses

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory teaching and learning
- poor assessment and monitoring practices
- insufficient progression arrangements
- very poor curriculum leadership and management
- inadequate enforcement of safe working practices
- poor quality assurance arrangements
- insufficient promotion of equality of opportunity

Achievement and standards

96. Retention and achievement rates on accredited courses are good. In 2002-03, 96 per cent of learners remained on their programmes and 92 per cent achieved their qualifications on short courses leading to nationally accredited qualifications such as national pool lifeguard, assistant swimming tutor and basic food hygiene certificates, and community sports leadership awards. However, the proportion of accredited courses only represents 9 per cent of the overall provision. Attendance rates are satisfactory. The standard of work across the curriculum is generally satisfactory for the level of the courses, and is high in sugarcraft, but many repeat learners do not effectively develop higher-level skills. Learners' satisfaction levels are good. Sport and leisure learners maintain and improve their health and fitness levels in such areas as mobility, flexibility, co-ordination, balance, posture and mental alertness, as well as in their overall sense of well-being. Many gain relief from medical conditions and report reduced stress levels after applying their learning in their everyday lives.

Quality of education and training

97. Resources are generally satisfactory. Tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced in their subject areas. However, not all hold recognised teaching qualifications and many have not extended their training to enable them to work effectively with the large proportion of elderly learners that many classes contain. The variety of equipment used to support learning is adequate overall, but often insufficient in some areas, with much equipment being provided by individual tutors or learners. Some facilities in hospitality and sport are good and most are fit for purpose, but in some notable exceptions facilities are not conducive to effective teaching and learning. Some rooms are too small for the size of the groups that use them, and others are dirty or poorly ventilated. In several observed classes, learners were disturbed by people passing through the room or by external noise. Multi-purpose rooms are often cluttered with equipment from other activities.

98. Too much teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Twenty-two per cent of learning sessions observed were unsatisfactory, and only 38 per cent were good or better. Many sessions are uninspiring, and planning for individual learning is poor. Teaching methods and session activities are not sufficiently varied, and the more able learners are not sufficiently challenged. Learners do not receive enough instruction, assistance, support or correction to meet their needs and improve their individual performance. Some practices were unsafe in some observed classes, including swimming, aerobics, yoga, badminton and keep fit. In the poorer sessions, learners are taught as a whole group, and many tutors remain at the front of the class throughout. Learners who have been attending the same class for many years repeat activities and do not progress sufficiently in their skills and performance. Learners in one mixed-ability sugarcraft course expressed a desire for separate beginners' and advanced classes, so appropriate levels of support could be given. Most tutors are caring, however, and develop a good working relationship with their learners. In the better sport and leisure classes, learners develop good knowledge, skills and understanding of the principles of exercise and of how to work safely and effectively within their own limitations. This is particularly noticeable in classes with a large proportion of elderly learners.

99. Assessment and monitoring practices are poor. Initial assessment of learners' prior experience, skills and ability levels is inadequate and does not provide an accurate basis for individual programme planning or measurement of progress. The service has insufficient arrangements to diagnose and support individual learning needs. Learners are asked to state any additional literacy, numeracy and language skills support needs on their enrolment forms, but few do so. The service has implemented self-assessment procedures at the beginning and end of non-accredited courses, for measuring and recording learners' progress and achievement. However, individual target-setting and monitoring are poor. Tutors identify generic planned learning outcomes before learners enrol, and do not subsequently negotiate them with individual learners. Learners often find it difficult to relate these objectives to their individual aims and view it as unnecessary and time-consuming. Learners' progress towards their learning outcomes is not adequately reviewed, and recording of continuous, informal observed assessment is

poor. End-of-course assessment is carried out mainly by learners themselves, with insufficient involvement by tutors and insufficient feedback provided on how learners might develop further. Continuing learners are not set new individual targets, but are expected to assess themselves against the same learning outcomes at the beginning of the new course.

100. Progression opportunities are insufficient. Ninety-two per cent of classes are at level 1 and most classes include mixed levels of abilities. Although course information is widely available through leaflets, press and radio advertisements, college prospectuses and community newsletters, the service makes insufficient arrangements to provide advice and guidance on the suitability of programmes for individual learners. Classes that are advertised at different levels have the same teaching content and pace. However, the objectives of many elderly learners are to maintain fitness and prevent age-related deterioration rather than to progress to higher levels. The range of hospitality courses is too narrow, and many centres do not offer a sufficient variety of sport and leisure courses. Insufficient weekend and daytime provision is offered. Classes do not run during the long summer break, and learners lose the fitness gains they have made during term time. The geographical distribution of courses offered is satisfactory. At a local level, some centres use an appropriate variety of methods to identify community needs. These include the appointment of outreach workers, working in partnership with local parish councils, consulting voluntary groups, associations and medical practitioners, knocking on doors, taster sessions and using learning ambassadors. However, these activities are not co-ordinated across the area of learning.

Leadership and management

101. Curriculum leadership and management are very poor. The service has an inadequate overview of the area of learning, and there is no curriculum leader. The provision has insufficient cohesion and co-ordination. Local management is effective in some centres but poor in others. Although data is collected from all centres, insufficient analysis and evaluation are carried out to set and monitor targets effectively. Managers have insufficient specialist knowledge and curriculum development is impeded, particularly in the implementation of planned learning outcomes and learners' progress reviews. For example, in one centre, yoga and aerobics classes share planned learning outcomes and the need for these very diverse activities to have different outcomes is not recognised. Not enough effective communication takes place across the provision, and tutors do not receive enough support. Arrangements for ensuring staff have up-to-date industry knowledge are inadequate, and not enough sharing of good practice takes place. Procedures to check the fitness of some facilities for their purpose are insufficient, and tutors' complaints about accommodation are not resolved effectively. The management of course waiting lists is poor.

102. The enforcement of safe working practices is inadequate. Learners do not receive a systematic health screening of their initial and ongoing readiness for exercise. Some tutors have devised their own questionnaire or use those prepared by their professional organisations, but managers do not check these. Some tutors do check if any learners have health problems at the start of each session and adjust activities according to

individual needs. Although appropriate risk assessments of facilities are carried out, no formal risk assessments take place for specific activities or groups of learners. In some classes, attention to health and safety is inadequate and management of equipment is poor. Some tutors are not sufficiently aware of emergency procedures, and the service provides little guidance on these. Security is poor in some learning environments, and some swimming classes are not supervised adequately. Many learners are unaware that wearing jewellery is a potential hazard in exercise classes, and tutors do not always deal with this.

103. Quality assurance arrangements in this area of learning are poor. The service's generic procedures do not adequately cover specific required procedures for hospitality, sport and leisure, such as those for assessing learners' readiness for exercise. Implemented procedures do not deal effectively with curriculum-wide inconsistencies in practices such as initial assessment and the quality of recording and documents. Too much reliance is placed on local quality assurance practices. The self-assessment report is insufficiently evaluative and does not identify many of the weaknesses found during inspection. The learning session observation system is ineffective. It is not thorough enough, includes insufficient moderation and standardisation, and does not always ensure effective monitoring of action points. Observations are not carried out by subject specialists, and key concerns and poor practice are often not identified or dealt with. The results of observations are not used adequately to improve teaching and learning. One tutor who has worked for the LEA since 1987 has not yet been observed. The service's own observation grades are significantly higher than those given during inspection. Staff have significant resistance to the implementation of quality assurance procedures in this curriculum area, which the service recognises. Tutors' course review reports, planned learning outcomes and learners' progress reviews are used in only 62 per cent of courses on average, with a particularly low use on swimming programmes. Insufficient checking takes place of staff members' industry updating, or the currency of their qualifications.

104. Promotion of equality of opportunity is insufficient. The gender and ethnicity distribution in classes is significantly imbalanced and does not reflect local demographics. The widening participation and social inclusion potential for this area of learning is only rarely exploited. The service's targeting of specific groups to widen participation is inadequate. For example, only 4 per cent of courses are targeted at 'aged' groups. The use of data is ineffective. Few targets are set and monitoring is poor. Staff do not receive enough training in equality of opportunity. Access to some premises is unsatisfactory for learners with restricted mobility. Pre-course information is uninspiring and does not adequately promote courses to minority ethnic groups.

Visual & performing arts & media

Visual & performing arts & media		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts - Adult and community learning	1026	3
Crafts - Adult and community learning	513	3
Dance - Adult and community learning	407	3
Music - Adult and community learning	140	None

Arts

Strengths

- very good standard of learners' work
- significant personal gains for learners
- good initiatives to engage new learners
- good response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory resources in some venues
- inadequate formal assessment
- ineffective curriculum management

Crafts

Strengths

- very good standard of learners' work
- significant personal gains for learners
- good initiatives to engage new learners
- good response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory resources in some venues
- inadequate formal assessment
- ineffective curriculum management

Dance

Strengths

- very good standard of learners' work
- significant personal gain for learners
- good initiatives to engage new learners
- good response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory resources in some venues
- inadequate formal assessment
- ineffective curriculum management

Music

Strengths

- very good standard of learners' work
- significant personal gains for learners
- good initiatives to engage new learners
- good response to individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory resources in some venues
- inadequate formal assessment
- ineffective curriculum management

Achievement and standards

105. Many learners produce a very high standard of innovative creative work, and most learners are aware of the good skills they develop. Learners identify specific improvements in their abilities, for example in drawing to scale, painting to create the effect of distance and depth and increased technical dance skills. Learners in some classes produce particularly high standards of work in relation to their starting points. Beginners in lace making, guitar playing and tap dancing make good progress quickly. Experienced learners achieve a professional standard of work, particularly in guitar making. Professional musicians play the guitars in concerts that are held concurrently with exhibitions of learners' artwork. In art and lace making, learners sometimes sell their work. In higher levels of creative embroidery, learners gain good qualifications at levels 2 and 3.

106. Many learners fulfil personal goals of improving their confidence and social skills.

Learners confidently participate in performances for family and friends and public performance in dance and music is used well to celebrate success. Learners develop good interpersonal skills. Some learners gain the confidence and self-esteem to exhibit their work or become involved in public performance. This is confirmed in the constructive critique of work held in some learning groups. Many learners fulfil personal goals to improve social skills and access health benefits. For example, one learner's long-term back problem has improved after attending belly dancing classes.

107. Many learners successfully achieve their qualifications. For example, three learners have recently received good marks in GCSE photography. However, insufficient data is available to make an overall judgement on achievement. Data is not collated to compare the number of learners who entered for qualifications with those who successfully achieved their qualifications. Attendance is good at 88 per cent. Retention is good, with tutors accounting for all learners' destinations.

Quality of education and training

108. Good initiatives increase awareness of learning opportunities in visual and performing arts and media and engage new learners. Courses are well promoted and focus on local communities. Publicity material is accessible, simple, clear and effectively designed, and is distributed well through local community centres, deliveries to households and local press. Courses are promoted successfully through free taster sessions, local exhibitions of learners' work and useful advice given during enrolment days. Learners not traditionally involved in education are specifically targeted through community tutors and learning ambassadors. Past and current learners who become learning champions make innovative and voluntary contributions to promote learning in their local villages. In one location a mobile toy library is used to make contact with young parents. Courses are offered in a broad range of subjects and across a wide geographical area. Specialist courses include bookbinding and guitar making, although too few daytime courses in music are offered.

109. Many learners are working at a higher level than courses suggest. Classes are offered at beginners' and improvers' levels, but most are listed as being for beginners. Some learners attend beginners' courses for a long period and, although building on their skills, have insufficient routes for progression to higher levels. This is particularly evident in music, where the range of courses is very narrow and learners' opportunities for progression are restricted. Insufficient learning venues are used in the north of the county.

110. Individual learners' needs are responded to well. Tutors are sensitive to the differing abilities of their learners. Extremely effective differentiation is used for elderly learners, particularly for those with hearing impairments. Other specific learning needs are supported discreetly and effectively. Tutors are flexible and responsive, changing and adapting methods and materials to adapt to individual learners' needs. Sensitive teaching

methods are used in mixed-ability belly dancing and salsa classes for learners with back and hip problems. Learners value the health benefits of the physical movements involved in dance. The intellectual stimulation and therapeutic effect of pottery is valued by other learners. In some singing and guitar playing classes, tutors subdivided the groups into appropriate ability levels to maximise learning opportunities.

111. Most teaching is satisfactory or better, with 85 per cent of observed learning sessions being graded as such. The quality of teaching in music ranges from poor to outstanding. Teaching in one session was highly inspiring, but a small proportion of teaching is unsatisfactory and dull, with learners' ability not being challenged. Some sessions are supported by adequate plans, but others are poorly planned or not planned at all. Some schemes of work are good, others are unsatisfactory. A number of tutors do not record schemes of work. Tutors give learners very good support and have a friendly, constructive relationship with them. Learners are usually satisfied with the teaching they receive, but one learner said they would like to make their own artistic decisions. Learners in some sessions are insufficiently challenged. Most planned learning outcomes are too general. Learners in some observational drawing and dance classes are given insufficient opportunities for independent creative learning. Some tutors negotiate with learners very effectively to plan their learning, particularly in painting and embroidery. Tutors give learners clear guidance on how they can improve, particularly in painting techniques and belly dancing. There is some good development and variation of learning activities by tutors.

112. Resources are unsatisfactory in some locations and occasionally give concern about learners' health and safety. The LEA does not set out any resource requirements, and learners and their tutors rely on resources at the venues. Resources vary between venues. For example, one venue's piano is from Bechstein whereas another's requires tuning and its parts stabilising. Some teaching rooms are hot, with dirty floors, and are too small for the number of learners who use them. Insufficient attention is given to health and safety in some classes. Twenty-six learners have enrolled in a dance studio that can safely accommodate 15 dancers. Dance venues vary from high-quality studios to community college refectories with chairs and tables pushed to one side. Resources are inadequate in guitar making and in mixed crafts, where a learner and a tutor have to bring their own sewing machines. A tutor and learners use valuable class time setting up a room before one class. Teaching rooms in some primary schools have inappropriate seating and work areas. One painting class with very good facilities is constantly interrupted by people walking through the room. Many tutors are appropriately qualified and have good practical experience. Some tutors have not experienced significant development of their teaching skills.

113. Formal assessment is inadequate. Initial assessment of vocational skills is insufficient for some learners, and is inadequately recorded. Most tutors have a poor understanding of the purpose of individual learning plans. Plans do not include enough detail to give an accurate record of learners' needs, progress or achievement. Many tutors complete learning reviews without specific targets for quality or timescales. Summative assessment in most classes is inadequate and uses a variety of informal methods. Formal recognition of attainment at the end of a course is poor. Much

recording of group and individual progress is inadequate, although some learners' records are extremely thorough. Formative assessment is verbal and effective. Dance learners effectively use feedback to improve their skills. In one art class the tutor kept excellent cumulative records of individual learners' progress towards targets.

Leadership and management

114. Curriculum leadership in this area of learning is ineffective. Curriculum co-ordination and support is insufficient in some centres. Staff training for curriculum changes, development and planning are not consistently satisfactory. Part-time staff are not appraised, although they can request the development they need. Some tutors receive training in good practice to develop approaches to assessment, progress recording and quality assurance. However, this is not consistent across the curriculum area. The amount of funding to support courses varies between centres and tutors are often uncertain of the procedures to request purchases. Communication between tutors and centre staff is frequent. Support for new tutors is prioritised. Regular meetings are held between vice principals and staff to develop ideas and good practice, but these are not sufficiently shared across the curriculum area.

115. Insufficient use is made of quality assurance measures to improve programmes. Weaknesses in practice are not identified by the three-yearly cycle of teaching observation. Good practice is not shared sufficiently across the curriculum area. In many cases specialists are not used to observe learning and teaching, and action points developed from observations are inappropriate. Data is not used systematically to set priorities or targets for improvement. Not enough sampling and auditing of documents takes place. The quality of key learning activities receives some analysis the end of each programme, and the results are used during the self-assessment process. This information is analysed and fed into the self-assessment report.

116. A culture of equality is inherent in the practice of learning and teaching in this area. Staff and learners, however, have a superficial awareness of equality of opportunity. Learners' recall of induction experiences is poor. Development and training is arranged for staff, but is rarely taken up. Learners are not aware of the formal complaints procedure or their rights and responsibilities on the programme, but were confident in making their complaints known. No formal strategy is in place to deal with the problems of low minority ethnic representation and gender or disability imbalances. A few projects have achieved their aim of widening participation of priority groups. Learners have insufficient opportunity to reinforce their awareness of equality of opportunity through learning materials or further training.

117. Literacy, numeracy and language support is available for learners who request it, but learners' skills are not routinely assessed and few learners request this support.

Humanities

Humanities		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	229	2

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- high standards of learners' work
- good teaching
- very effective assessment feedback to learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient initial assessment of individual learning needs
- poor curriculum management
- insufficient targeting of minority ethnic groups

Achievement and standards

118. The standard of learners' work is very high. Learners answer questions confidently and appropriately and contribute positively to discussions and group activities. They demonstrate good subject knowledge, use specialist vocabulary confidently and correctly and are able to explore and criticise ideas covered in classes. Learners are able to articulate complex arguments, critically assess research and contribute to discussions with others in the group and their tutors. Coursework, homework and the results of written tests are of an equally high standard, showing development in knowledge and in presentation of ideas. Learners express very high levels of satisfaction with the accredited and non-accredited courses. Learners from most groups describe how their learning is having a direct effect on their lives and that they are learning and achieving more than they had expected to at the start of their course. Many learners describe their surprise and satisfaction at the additional benefits they have gained from their new knowledge and in its relevance to their daily lives, for example in working with their children, contributing more at work and in their dealings with professionals such as solicitors.

Quality of education and training

119. All humanities learning sessions observed were graded as good or better, with some exceptional teaching seen. Key factors in the quality of teaching include careful planning and good subject knowledge, combined with confident and appropriate use of a wide range of teaching methods. Tutors are powerful advocates for their subjects.

They have developed some excellent learning materials, which are accessible, imaginative and designed to meet the different needs of individual learners. Some tutors use challenging and innovative activities to expand learners' knowledge and develop their presentation and communication skills. Learners are referred to a range of internet resources. Most tutors use computers to produce their own handouts and other material, and some use computers as part of their classes.

120. Many learners said their tutors were a principal reason for them liking their courses, stating that tutors were constantly introducing new ideas and that they made learning easy. Learners feel fully involved in sessions and able to contribute through questions and discussion.

121. Assessment feedback to learners is very good. Regular, formal assessment is provided on all accredited courses. On non-accredited courses, some good use is made of personal learning objectives and individually negotiated assessment activities to help learners review their progress and measure their learning. The quality of assessment of coursework for GCSE, AS and A2 qualifications is good, with accurate and helpful feedback provided by the tutors. Moderation of work by awarding bodies has confirmed the quality of the assessment procedures and grades awarded by tutors. Learners appreciate this feedback and comment on its usefulness.

122. Not enough assessment of individual learners' needs is carried out. Tutors use planned learning objectives to review courses as part of the quality assurance procedures. However, very few tutors provide initial assessments of learners' needs or produce individual learning plans which reflect those needs. Significant numbers of learners leave accredited programmes in the first four weeks of the course, some transferring to lower-level courses. Some courses provide systematic pre-course guidance, however, and have good retention at typically 85 per cent or more, with few learners leaving early. Tutors working on the access to higher education programme have developed a system for providing pre-course guidance.

123. Learners are aware of the support services available outside the classroom, especially those advertised in course leaflets. A number of learners say they have used the services and received help from the staff.

124. Staff are appropriately qualified for the courses taught, with most holding or working towards appropriate teaching qualifications. Buildings and learning resources are adequate, with some very good accommodation being provided in schools. Tutors can access computers and audiovisual aids without difficulty, and learners are given good printed materials. A number of courses rely on learning materials and books supplied by tutors.

Leadership and management

125. Curriculum management in humanities is poor. Classes are small, and planning and co-ordination of course provision are poor. Data is not adequately managed to support evaluation and strategic planning, and it was not possible to verify data for retention and

achievement in this area. While there is some co-ordination among area groupings of community colleges, some conflicts in provision exist, with tutors running small classes in the same subject on the same evening but not being aware of each other. In smaller classes, learners do not work in different groups to benefit from the wider experiences and knowledge that larger numbers of other learners can bring to courses.

126. The service has insufficient strategic direction in humanities, and no vision of the level of provision and range of subjects that would best suit the needs of learners and the community. The information produced by quality assurance reviews and learning session observations is not used effectively outside individual centres. Much good, and some exceptional, teaching is insufficiently recognised and promoted to improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the service.

127. The service's mechanisms to approve and market courses are not always consistent, and marketing is not always effective. Staff are not able to explain why learners' numbers fluctuate from year to year and are not always equipped to market courses to the rapidly changing populations in the different parts of the county.

128. Many examples of good practice exist, such as an introductory psychology handbook containing a model charter for learners. However, the service does not yet have a system in place to disseminate such good practice. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support staff collaboration and improve co-ordination. Individual centres have a number of initiatives to meet particular needs. Examples include running introductory and accredited courses concurrently in the same centre so learners can assess their level of need and receive guidance before making a final choice of which course to follow. Such initiatives are not being co-ordinated and reviewed for their use elsewhere.

129. Insufficient targeting of minority ethnic groups takes place. The proportion of learners who are from minority ethnic communities does not reflect their representation in local communities. Learners from Asian backgrounds make up only 2 per cent and 12 per cent respectively of the humanities intake at two colleges, although these colleges are in an area where 20 per cent of the population is from an Asian background. While the LEA has policies to widen participation, it has not fully considered this area in its strategic planning and decision-making. Current learners at one community college are to be employed to promote courses to parents bringing children to primary schools. However, insufficient attention is paid overall to demographic changes affecting minority ethnic communities and how they are to be approached to increase their participation in humanities programmes.

English, languages & communications

English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
English		
⁻ Adult and community learning	203	3
Languages		
⁻ Adult and community learning	2335	3

English
Strengths

- good retention on many courses
- good achievement of personal goals

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of initial assessment
- inadequate implementation of quality assurance arrangements at course level
- insufficient use of data to monitor performance at course level

Languages
Strengths

- good retention on many courses
- good achievement of personal goals
- very good use of learning resources in some modern foreign language classes
- good planning in response to the National Language Strategy

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data to monitor performance at course level
- ineffective initial assessment
- inadequate implementation of quality assurance arrangements at course level
- insufficient use of data to monitor performance at course level

Achievement and standards

130. Retention on many of the courses across the curriculum area is good. For example, in 2002-03 the proportion of learners remaining on programmes for their duration was around 90 per cent on most A-level courses, over 90 per cent in Greek and Japanese and

86 per cent on BSL courses. Over 75 per cent of learners remained on programme on most beginners' modern foreign language courses.

131. Learners' achievement of their personal goals is good. Most learners consider that they have gained from their courses exactly what they anticipated, and some feel that they have gained more. For example, learners have developed new skills or have improved upon their existing ones. Most have become more self-confident and more motivated to continue with their learning in the future. Many feel that learning has enhanced their personal development and enriched their lives. Some unanticipated outcomes have resulted from courses in this area, such as a change of career into teaching languages for one learner and leading guided walks abroad for another. Other examples include a first trip abroad for a learner with disabilities and a reawakened interest in foreign literature for a mature learner.

132. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory overall. Learners have competent oral and signing skills and can communicate effectively during classes. Most learners on English and modern foreign languages courses can also write at an appropriate level.

Quality of education and training

133. A significant number of modern foreign languages tutors make very good use of learning resources to enhance their teaching. These resources, which generally have a strong cultural flavour, consist of pictures, photographs, videos, internet weather reports and items of typical food. Other resources include music, prompt cards, survey forms and flash cards.

134. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Most learners are well motivated, participate well in class activities and work well together. Most tutors structure learning sessions well and use a variety of activities to promote learning. Teaching materials, such as reference handouts and worksheets are generally adequate. Learners in most classes have the opportunity to acquire new concepts and vocabulary and develop a range of skills. Tutors in some modern foreign languages classes have developed effective strategies to improve pronunciation and intonation. BSL tutors often make effective use of humour, gesture and facial expression to enhance learners' development of signing skills. English tutors make good reference to interesting texts to demonstrate figures of speech such as metaphor and simile. However, in many classes insufficient attention is paid to meeting some learners' needs, and some learners do not achieve as well as expected. Teaching in a few classes does not inspire or challenge learners to achieve their best. In a few other cases, tutors dominate the session and learners do not have sufficient opportunity to make extended responses.

135. In a significant number of modern foreign language classes, including some potentially good sessions, tutors make too much use of English and not enough use of the taught language. In these circumstances, the taught language is used infrequently and at times out of context, with little reference to real-life experiences. Learners' exposure to authentic use of the foreign language is inhibited and their development of

oral, listening and comprehension skills is delayed.

136. Accommodation and resources are adequate. Many tutors are experts in their fields. Most modern foreign languages tutors are native speakers of, or very fluent in, the taught languages and BSL tutors have excellent signing skills. Tutors who speak languages fluently are often excellent linguistic role models for their learners. Most classrooms are of a suitable standard and are equipped with whiteboards and cassette recorders. Video recorders and overhead projectors are available in most locations and ICT resources are available in larger centres. Crèche facilities are available for learners in some centres.

137. The subjects, locations and timings of the courses offered generally meet the needs of the learners. Curriculum planning is based in individual centres to reflect the needs of the local community. Some groups of centres collaborate well to plan a wide range of courses. Centres take into account courses run by other providers, such as in community languages, when planning their own language provision. Learners can often progress to higher-level courses in the same locality.

138. Support for learners is satisfactory. Tutors are supportive and encouraging, and respond well to learners' individual sensitivities. In BSL, additional classes, run jointly by a group of centres, are available during the year to support examination preparation. Learners value highly the support they receive from tutors and support each other well in classes. Enrichment activities are good in some centres, with examples including weekly foreign language films and visits abroad. However, the initial guidance and advice given is not effective at some centres and the quality of course information leaflets is not consistent. Individual learning plans are not systematically used to support learners.

139. Initial assessment often focuses too strongly on learners' own assessment of their skill levels, and not enough evaluation is carried out by subject specialists. Assessment and recording of learners' progress are generally satisfactory and, where appropriate, meet the requirements of examination boards. External moderation reports of courses are positive in nature and some praise good assessment practices. However, initial assessment of learners' prior learning and individual needs is ineffective overall. While assessment in some centres is effective, in many cases the format and thoroughness of the assessment depend too heavily on the discretion of individual tutors.

Leadership and management

140. The service has responded well to the National Languages Strategy. It has collaborated with local partners for long-term strategic planning, focusing on reaching learners who have not traditionally participated in language courses. For example, there are plans for more flexible ways of running courses, and for providing additional resources and staff training. The service has already planned and made two successful bids to fund e-learning and carried out some staff training.

141. The day-to-day management of courses is satisfactory overall, although it varies considerably between centres. In some centres it is good. For example, the modern

foreign languages co-ordinator in one centre is piloting the use of a European languages portfolio to record learners' achievement, and has developed innovative approaches to distance learning. Some tutors throughout the curriculum area receive effective support from managers and all are entitled to training opportunities. Some sharing of resources and good practice takes place in and between centres. Learners' feedback demonstrates that most are happy with the way their courses are run. Moderation reports from examination boards are mostly positive in their evaluation of course management.

142. The implementation of quality assurance arrangements at course level is inadequate. Not all course reviews and learners' progress reviews are fully completed, and insufficient action-planning takes place at course level. In many instances, learning session observations are not thorough enough and include insufficient evaluation by subject specialists. Staff are not systematically appraised. Schemes of work vary in quality and are often weak. Learning outcomes are often mentioned but frequently misunderstood.

143. Managers do not make enough use of data to monitor and improve performance at course level. Curriculum specialists are not sufficiently involved in reviewing and analysing data. The data available is not always accurate and reliable. While targets are set for the curriculum area as a whole, they are not set at course level.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL - Adult and community learning	112	4
Literacy and numeracy - Adult and community learning	354	3
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	784	3

ESOL

Strengths

- good standard of learners' work
- effective strategies to engage hard-to-reach groups in literacy, numeracy and ESOL classes
- good individual support for learners
- good physical resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate individual target-setting and progress reviews
- unsatisfactory teaching and learning in ESOL classes
- inadequate range of provision
- ineffective curriculum management

Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- good standard of learners' work
- good teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy
- effective strategies to engage hard-to-reach groups in literacy, numeracy and ESOL classes
- good individual support for learners
- good physical resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate individual target-setting and progress reviews
- inadequate range of provision
- underdeveloped skills for life strategy
- ineffective curriculum management

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good standard of learners' work
- good individual support for learners
- good physical resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate target-setting and progress reviews
- inadequate range of provision
- underdeveloped skills for life strategy
- ineffective curriculum management

Achievement and standards

144. Learners' work is of a good standard. Portfolios being prepared for external assessment contain a wide variety of evidence which often surpasses the required standard. Learners take pride in their work and, in most classes, take care with presentation. Some folders of work in ESOL classes are disorganised and do not serve as effective records of classwork.

145. Standards are very good in creative and performing arts courses for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. In one drama class for adult learners with severe learning difficulties and disabilities, learners used masks to cover facial expressions while sensitively portraying emotions to music in front of their peers. The learners

demonstrated good development of self-confidence as well as an understanding of moods and feelings. Learners in one art class who were painting using sponges made imaginative use of colour and tone.

146. Learners' attainment in literacy classes is good. Learners in one class had visited Stratford to watch a live performance of Romeo and Juliet and then watched a film version of the same play. They were able to observe the differences in the productions and to make sound critical judgements regarding the strengths and weaknesses of each.

147. Learners in all classes grow in self-confidence and in the ability to act on their own initiative. In a numeracy class, a learner who previously had no numeracy skills has learned enough basic arithmetic to enable her to check her change when shopping. She now feels more confident when in the supermarket and no longer fears having insufficient money when reaching the checkout. In a literacy class where IT is used to support the development of writing skills, an older learner with no previous experience of working with computers has not only achieved basic word processing competence but has taken the initiative to access the internet. He feels included in his grandchildren's life experiences.

148. Some learners make good progress to enrol on courses at higher levels of work or in developing other skills. One learner who began at entry level on a literacy programme is now studying on a GCSE programme. However, some adults with learning difficulties or disabilities have attended similar courses for many years with little or no measurable progression.

149. Many adult learners from other countries have good vocational and educational achievements. They aim to find employment or progress to mainstream further or higher education. Their prior achievements are not always taken into account to set them challenging goals. They do not make sufficient progress in their writing skills or extension activities

150. Retention is satisfactory. In 2002-03, 88 per cent of learners remained on their courses for their full duration. However, retention was poor for ESOL provision, with 49 per cent of learners remaining on the four ESOL courses. Data on learners' achievement is not reliable enough for judgements to be made on it. Over 40 per cent of courses are externally accredited. The service places a strong emphasis on celebrating learners' achievements, for example through award ceremonies. Attendance in the classes observed was satisfactory.

Quality of education and training

151. Teaching and learning are good in literacy and numeracy. Eighty-two per cent of the learning sessions observed were good or better, which is significantly above the national average for other foundation provision inspected by the ALI. Nine per cent of sessions were unsatisfactory. Sessions are generally well structured. Schemes of work are comprehensive, and classes are effectively planned with a variety of appropriate

tasks. Tutors provide challenging activities which engage the learners, and effectively differentiate teaching to meet the individual needs of the learners. Tutors and support workers effectively support learners with additional learning needs, but are not sufficiently co-ordinated regarding individual planning of work for learners. The role of support workers is not included on learning session plans. Teaching is energetic and focuses on the learning throughout. Positive interaction between the staff and the learners, and between the learners themselves, promotes learning. Tutors regularly give homework to learners, posting it or dropping it off at learners' houses if they are absent from the class. Extension work is set as homework in most classes. The unsatisfactory classes featured late arrivals, insufficient recording of assessment, no correction of literacy errors, no individual learning plans and irregular progress reviews, copies of which were not given to the learners. Teaching and learning for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities are satisfactory.

152. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in many ESOL classes. In these classes teaching methods are insufficiently differentiated and language teaching is poor. Tutors in some classes do not recognise the language skills that learners already have, or their long-term goals. Tutors' checking of learning is weak, and too much reliance is placed on paper-led activities. Audio-cassettes are not used effectively. Some tutors use inappropriate learning resources, such as generic children's books, to support the teaching of literacy to adults. In some sessions, two tutors are delivering courses at different levels in the same classroom. Learners are distracted and disorientated by the experience. These concerns had already been identified by the county ESOL development worker and reported to the local manager. In the best classes, however, tutors make effective use of the learners' own languages. Learning materials are translated to enable learners to understand instructions more easily. Bilingual tutors effectively communicate more complex language and concepts to increase learners' understanding and maintain the pace of classes. Tutors encourage learners who share languages to use their own languages to support each other, significantly developing their bilingual skills.

153. Physical resources are good at most centres. Accommodation is good, with comfortable modern furniture and sufficient space. Centres are welcoming, attractive and well decorated, often with displays of learners' work, and provide an environment conducive to learning. Some teaching rooms have tea and coffee-making facilities. ICT resources are good, with sufficient personal computers, laptop computers and printers in classrooms. Some classrooms have interactive whiteboards. Specialist accommodation with sufficient teaching and storage space is available for drama and art and design classes. However, at one centre, pottery, languages and computing are all taught in the same classroom. Teaching resources are satisfactory, with up-to-date materials, books and worksheets that are relevant to the learners' needs. Staffing resources are satisfactory, with most members of teaching staff being well qualified and experienced.

154. Individual target-setting and progress reviews are inadequate. Tutors do not sufficiently recognise learners' prior experience. The thoroughness of assessment of individuals' needs varies between, and sometimes within, centres. Some centres use nationally recognised tools to carry out comprehensive initial assessment and subsequent

diagnosis of learners' needs. Other centres do not diagnose learners' individual needs, however, and some carry out no initial assessment. Some learners, adults with learning difficulties and disabilities, are not on programmes which match their capabilities. Some learners have comprehensive individual learning plans which include specific, realistic, measurable and timebound targets. However, other learners have inadequate individual plans, and some do not have a plan at all. Insufficient monitoring of learners' progress takes place. Formal reviews for some learners are infrequent, happening only once a term.

155. The service has effective strategies to engage those not traditionally involved in learning in ESOL, literacy and numeracy. It has established partnership projects with schools and local community organisations. Many of these organisations target vulnerable learners, including elderly members of the Asian communities and learners with significant personal problems and little self-confidence. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision has grown significantly since its introduction in 2002. One example of an innovative approach is a partnership project to identify and meet the literacy and numeracy skills needs of adults in rural areas, to help them gain employment, improve their quality of life and reduce isolation.

156. The range of provision is too narrow to meet the learning needs of many communities. Some of the community colleges do not effectively identify local needs. For example, little responsive provision currently exists in the northwest of Leicestershire to meet significant and recognised literacy, numeracy and learning difficulty and disability needs. No vocationally linked programmes exist at appropriate levels for learners with high aims. The well-established provision for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities has poor representation from non-white communities across the county. For example, the proportion of learners on these courses who are from south Asian communities is less than half their representation in the local population.

157. Individual support for learners is good. Staff are aware of learners' individual needs and provide effective personal support on a wide range of topics, such as healthcare and family relationships. Staff have good relationships with local agencies such as social and mental health services and Jobcentre Plus. Staff frequently act as helpful advocates and intermediaries, and learners feel safe and secure when attending classes. Free childcare facilities are available at the main centres. Learners are supported to access other sources of funding for childcare where on-site facilities are not available. They receive satisfactory initial advice and guidance. Some centres offer effective two-session taster courses which learners find helpful.

Leadership and management

158. Curriculum management is ineffective. The local community colleges manage the provision in literacy, numeracy and ESOL and for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. The vice principals and programme managers are responsible for ensuring responsive provision in their area and the recruitment of learners and staff. Local areas work independently and the county-wide strategy and quality assurance systems have not been fully implemented. Some of the managers have insufficient expertise in the skills for

life agenda. Although some targets are set centrally, the service has difficulty in collecting and analysing relevant data to guide future planning. Insufficient sharing of good practice takes place. The use of resources is unsatisfactory. For example, an ESOL group with three learners and two staff members meets at a college centre, although a nearby further education college offers similar provision. Some of the managers have insufficient time to manage the provision effectively. All areas of the county are represented at the basic skills strategy group meetings which are led by the skills for life officer. This group has accurately identified many of the weaknesses in the provision. A good range of staff training is offered to improve quality, but this training is optional and many tutors and college managers do not recognise its purpose or its benefits for learners. Management and training in equality of opportunity are weak. Many staff and learners are unaware of topics related to equality of opportunity, and no formal training has been offered.

159. The service's skills for life strategy is not sufficiently developed. It is insufficiently linked to community learning, family learning and provision for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. Insufficient strategic planning takes place to meet staff members' training needs. The central officers and development workers arrange training for centre staff but this training does not take into account the relevant development needs of staff obtained from their appraisals. Links between teaching and learning observations, appraisals and individual development needs are poor and do not meet the county's mission to continuously improve its processes. The skills for life strategy papers produced by the officer do not include the well-established provision for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. The strategy does not specify clear requirements of the colleges to increase and widen participation across the county. It does not manage equality of opportunity and quality assurance systems adequately in line with national agendas.

Family learning

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	1244	2

Strengths

- high achievement of planned learning outcomes
- good teaching and learning
- good personal support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient progression opportunities
- insufficiently developed curriculum management

Achievement and standards

160. Learners' achievement of planned outcomes is high, particularly improving their confidence and supporting their children's learning. The OCN currently provides accreditation for learners' work on three courses, and learners can take national tests on three other courses. Retention and achievement data is available only for some of the longer courses. Overall achievement data is not currently collated, but some work is being done to record group and individual goals.

161. School staff report that family learning courses are very valuable in improving relationships with parents and children, and benefit children's learning. The positive effect on children's learning is also monitored independently. Learners report gains in confidence as a result of attending courses and have taken additional initiatives, such as forming support groups and planning for their own further learning. Learners are also able to talk about gains in their skills and understanding which they have applied at home, in supporting their children's learning or coping with challenging behaviour. Several learners can now reflect on their own learning and behaviour problems. They have developed the trust, confidence and insight to discuss these problems and the ways in which they are now modifying their behaviour and agreeing further learning goals.

Quality of education and training

162. Teaching and learning are good. All observed teaching was satisfactory or better, with 82 per cent of sessions graded as good or as very good. Planning of sessions is good and is responsive to learners' needs. Some courses are provided and modified in direct response to learners' requests. Learners are enthusiastic and are active

participants. Relationships between tutors, adult learners and children are good, and most learners report satisfaction with their courses. Most sessions are well structured with a pace which suits the learners. Much teaching is stimulating, and innovative in adapting courses and materials. Some courses have a good mix of practical activities. Many of the courses help learners produce or adapt their own games and learning resources for use at home, or in volunteer sessions in school, to enhance their children's learning. Learners report that the ideas and resources they gain are effective and that their children are proud of their parents' participation and achievements.

163. Videos and learning aids are used appropriately, and learners state their effectiveness and ease of use. Staff members are highly motivated, and good use is made of team teaching and other support for tutors. Tutors take advantage of readily available in-house training, and are well prepared and supported in establishing work towards the adult core curriculum. Crèche facilities and other childcare arrangements to support family learning are readily available. Resources and premises are satisfactory for adult learners.

164. Some effective initial assessment takes place on longer courses in family literacy, language and numeracy provision. Insufficient assessment takes place on shorter and first-step courses, and assessment results are not collated or analysed to aid monitoring of learners' progress. Some courses use learning diaries or 'learning passports' to help learners record their own progress. Some courses have individual learning plans to help learners set specific targets. Learners on one course commented that their levels of prior experience and attainment had not been sufficiently assessed before they started the course, which accordingly did not meet their aims.

165. Learners have insufficient opportunities to progress to other courses. Many courses are first-step activities. Longer courses are targeted at the most deprived areas of the county. The provision does not have the capacity to meet all the demands on it for progression courses. Little information is available on the progression of first-step learners onto further courses, even with the same provider. The service does not routinely record or collate this information. Planning of progression is not sufficiently developed.

166. Work is currently in hand to bring in OCN accreditation, and to offer national testing to learners at outreach locations. Accreditation still covers a very small part of the provision, however, and the mapping of possible routes for progression is not yet developed. Learners receive progression advice, information and guidance, but not routinely and depending on local provision and local knowledge. The absence of data about this inhibits review of the effectiveness of provision.

167. Learners receive good personal support from tutors and community workers. Many of the courses are targeted at disadvantaged groups that have needs for additional support. Tutors recognise learners' individual needs and pressures, and offer support for them, including supportive contact or home visits when learners miss sessions. Learners on a course which requires the use of a family support centre are provided with transport so that they can collect their children from school and bring them to a suitable venue where they feel comfortable. Childcare is readily available and is arranged so as to

reduce pressures on learners. Learners have time to discuss problems during sessions, in a trusted and confidential environment, and afterwards with tutors and community workers. The service has been successful in engaging those not traditionally involved in learning, and has carried out good preliminary work in establishing relationships with learners. One headteacher commented on the success of family learning in bringing in to the school parents with whom they had had no previous contact. These parents are now confident in contributing to their children's learning and in playing a larger role in the school community. Some literacy, numeracy and language skills training has been effectively integrated with the programme. Course outcomes are linked to the adult core curriculum for literacy, numeracy and language. The service has drawn up plans for staff to take level 4 qualifications in teaching literacy, numeracy and language.

Leadership and management

168. Curriculum management of wider family learning is insufficiently developed. The FLLN strand is delivered by a team of trained staff working in targeted schools. Some wider family learning is provided as a result of bidding by community colleges or primary schools. Although the bidding process includes peer review of initial proposals, the responsibility for monitoring and for ensuring quality is unclear. Data is not collated from much of the provision. The service has a management information system that can collate achievement and performance data but it does not yet use it fully. Little target-setting or measuring progress against targets takes place. Good practice is shared at annual family learning conferences and in wider partnership groups. Incomplete use is made of the self-assessment processes. Much of the structure and provision is new, and inconsistent record-keeping inhibits the review of progress over time. A self-assessment report was produced for family learning, but the status of the report is unclear, and it is not used to review effectiveness or set achievable targets for improvements.

169. Although examples of effective collaboration with social services, health agencies and community groups exist, collaborations with schools and colleges are not set out as formal agreements. A great deal of informal networking takes place, as does some effective sharing of information inside the family learning team. However, responsibility for quality, monitoring, data collection and evaluation for wider family learning is unclear. Tutors report a great deal of autonomy and management that is very supportive, but say that channels of accountability are unclear for courses and programmes.

170. Some initial assessments and progress reviews are effective, but information on these is not collated. Although the effect of courses on children's learning is reported on externally, no established pattern of observations of teaching and learning is yet in place on family learning provision. Initial assessments are not routinely made on shorter courses and general family learning, and formats used on other courses are not standard, making collation and comparison difficult. Little collation and analysis of data is carried

out, and achievement, retention and attainment on programmes could not be determined during the inspection. Insufficient use is made of data to evaluate the service or to plan provision.

Community development

Community development		1
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	898	1

Strengths

- good personal development and social interaction
- good attainment of practical skills
- motivational teaching to allow learners to identify and meet their potential
- particularly effective teaching and integration of literacy and numeracy skills
- very effective identification and use of resources
- excellent range of learning opportunities to meet individual, community and national needs
- very effective range of assessment methods to meet individual and group needs
- particularly good support for staff and learners
- very effective strategic management to ensure successful widening participation and social inclusion

Weaknesses

- insufficient operational planning for growth

Achievement and standards

171. Learners demonstrate good development of new skills which often substantially increases the quality of their lives. All learners are from groups that are most disadvantaged in learning and income. Some learners have had little or no formal education and, for many, their lives are constantly disrupted by problems such as homelessness or mental illness. All learners make good progress, according to their abilities, and many discover potential of which they were previously unaware. The standard of learners' practical work is good in all classes. Learners are proud of what they achieve and their levels of confidence and self-esteem gradually increase as they attend classes. They learn how to interact appropriately and build social relationships with fellow learners. Some learners have become involved in the wider local community through projects such as exhibiting work at local exhibitions, helping the community to identify and archive local historical knowledge or attending community colleges. Learners improve their literacy and numeracy. Some learners can now read or write their family names, and others can complete forms and deal with bureaucracy, enabling them to access services such as healthcare. Attendance at classes is closely monitored. In classes which require attendance on set days at specific times, attendance varies between 66 and 100 per cent. Non-attendance is followed up, with tutors checking

learners' reasons for not attending and encouraging them to return.

Quality of education and training

172. Learning sessions are particularly good. Tutors motivate, support and enable learners to develop personal skills. Learners are often recruited to the courses by tutors through face-to-fact contact. This enables the tutor to build a relationship, which encourages participation in learning. Many learners said they would not engage in learning unless they, their families or their communities did not 'trust' the tutor. Tutors identify flexible and effective teaching and training methods, most of which suit the learners' needs. Low self-esteem, lack of confidence and poor literacy, numeracy or language skills are common among learners. Tutors incorporate learning for these skills into the sessions. Some groups of learners are extremely vulnerable. Tutors demonstrate a particularly high level of understanding and flexibility to enable these learners to reach their goals. Following the sudden death of a member, the tutor of one vulnerable group helped them come to terms with their loss by encouraging them to write poems and act them out and continue learning. Basic literacy, numeracy and language skills are incorporated into sessions well, in ways which do not alienate the learners. All tutors are qualified to provide literacy, numeracy and language skills support. Creative projects stimulate learners' interests and tutors are responsive when learners want to progress to more complex tasks. New staff are well supported, but not all are aware of the resources which may be available to them when planning sessions.

173. Resources are effectively used to promote wider participation in learning. All tutors have teaching qualifications and an in-depth knowledge of their subject. Additionally they are recruited because they have a particular empathy with the client group they are teaching. For example, tutors who work with specific minority ethnic groups are themselves members of that community. Adult and learning development workers ensure that learning takes place in a safe and non-threatening environment. Classes are regularly based in pubs, church halls and other locally based facilities which learners can access easily. Access for those with physical disabilities is good. Learners' health and safety are highly regarded. Some very well-equipped specialist craft rooms in local community colleges provide particularly good learning environments. Mobile facilities take ICT training to local communities. A mobile classroom is used to bring learning to travellers on their sites. The classroom contains a wide range of learning material, a library, a computer and printer and the equipment needed for a crèche worker to occupy the children while the adults are learning.

174. Initial assessment is appropriate and effective. A wide range of courses and subjects are offered to meet the particularly complex and diverse needs of the learners, and community development workers and tutors have developed a range of assessment methods. The methods successfully ensure that each learner is following a course of learning which meets their needs and aims. Information from a range of external professionals is used to provide particularly vulnerable learners with an in-depth pre-entry assessment. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out where appropriate. Monitoring is also tailored to the individual and the type of learning they are engaged in.

Each learner has an appropriate individual plan of how they will achieve their potential. Progress is regularly monitored and appropriately documented.

175. The wide range of courses and learning opportunities available successfully attracts learners from a wide range of socially disadvantaged groups. Adult development workers work closely with partners in statutory and voluntary agencies to identify local disadvantaged groups identified in the council's strategic plan to widen participation. Progression is always planned at the start of a course. Some courses are designed as a progression route to further learning in the council's adult and community provision, others to allow progression to courses offered by colleges of further education and other providers. All courses are free. Many provide childcare on site, or offer help towards childcare costs. Help towards transport costs for learners who are particularly isolated is sometimes available. Courses are carefully constructed. Wide consultation takes place with the council's partners to discuss how courses fit in with local and regional priorities. For example, courses for learners with mental health problems are set up after wide consultation with health authority representatives, social workers, voluntary agencies, the local authority and mainstream education.

176. The support given to individuals and groups of learners is particularly good. A multi-agency approach ensures that support is specifically focused on overcoming the particular barriers to learning most relevant to the socio-economic background of the learner. Support is well planned. Learners are often supported in classrooms, sometimes by professional helpers. Personal support is sensitive to equality of opportunity to learn and takes full account of the learners' culture. A wide range of staff development contributes to the good support. Tutors are trained to meet the needs of the specific groups of learners they work with, such as those with mental health problems. Tutors can access advice and support through internal and external networks, and receive professional updating in areas such as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Leadership and management

177. Management is effectively focused on successfully widening adult participation in learning. A strategy is in place, which identifies local priorities, and an extensive range of local, regional and national partnerships work effectively to promote and support participation. Managers focus clearly on the needs of learners and have a very clear understanding of how their role is helping the organisation to achieve its strategic aims and objectives. Officers are very supportive of new initiatives suggested by development workers, and use their knowledge and authority to help staff resource and deliver high-quality learning. Communication between all levels of management is effectively focused on the learners. Good practice is shared. Learners can follow a maximum of three 10-week courses. Before courses start, staff make a priority of ensuring that learners can continue their progress after they complete their programmes. Examples of this include arranging for other providers to establish new courses in similar subjects that learners can transfer to. All tutors are regularly observed and feedback given is formally recorded. Development workers frequently join classes to maintain personal contact with tutors and learners. Development workers value the very high commitment to community learning shown by officers, and are able to motivate and inspire staff to the benefit of

learners.

178. Insufficient planning takes place to ensure that the number and range of learning opportunities which staff want to make available to the community are sustainable. An increasing number of requests for more provision has followed the success of community action in attracting disadvantaged learners and forming highly effective working partnerships. Officers have plans for the development of these areas which are linked to the overall strategic plan. However, no overall detailed plan is in place to help prioritise, defer or reject new courses or the expansion of existing provision.