

INSPECTION REPORT

Leicester LEA

11 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

Leicester LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Leicester local education authority (LEA) provides its adult learning service (the service) which is part of the lifelong learning and community development division of its education department. The division is also responsible for provision in early years, play, youth work, and community development. Adult learning is delivered in seven areas, or 'clusters', by a local adult education college and through other citywide provision. Cluster teams are managed by community learning managers who are supported by development workers, youth and community tutors, and facility managers. The structure of the service is currently under review. The service is led by the head of adult learning. The adult education college is led by a principal and has its own governing body. Forty per cent of learning programmes are offered at the adult education college. Additional provision takes place at 10 secondary community colleges, four primary community centres, seven neighbourhood centres, and through 10 independent projects. The service receives funding from Leicestershire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). This includes a small element of discretionary funding for specific projects. Approximately half of the provision is accredited.

2. The service's aim is to work with partners promoting equality and inclusion, to enrich the lives of people in Leicester enabling them to be effective learners, healthy and confident individuals, and empowered citizens. The city of Leicester has a population of over 275,000, according to the 2001 census. Approximately 200,000 of these are adults over the age of 19. Thirty-six per cent of the population, including children, are from minority ethnic communities and over 47 languages are spoken in Leicester. The city council (the council) has recently been awarded Beacon Status by the government for its good practice in community cohesion. The city has accommodated many waves of migrants and asylum seekers, most recently from Somalia, Central and Southern Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. The unemployment rate in Leicester in May 2004 was 4.9 per cent, more than twice the national rate average of 2.3 per cent, and more than three times the rate for Leicestershire as a whole of 1.3 per cent. In some wards the unemployment rate is as high as 15 per cent. The city has a generally low-skilled workforce and below average literacy and numeracy skills, and standards of educational achievement, particularly at key stages 1 and 2, and at general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) level. Leicester is ranked as the 35th most deprived local authority nationally, according to the government's index of multiple deprivation.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Information & communications technology

3. At the time of the inspection 2,419 learners were following the 365 information and communications technology (ICT) courses offered throughout the city. A total of 3,928 enrolments were made in 2003-04. Around 80 per cent of the courses lead to an accredited qualification and most of these are in computer literacy at basic and

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intermediate levels. Courses run for between 10 and 30 weeks but many are divided into separate 10-week sessions. The higher-level courses cover more complex word processing, databases and spreadsheets as well as topics such as desktop publishing and digital photography. The non-accredited courses include short introductory sessions and longer courses for beginners on subjects such as word processing and the internet. Introductory courses normally run between three hours and 10 weeks, but their length can be agreed to suit the learner. Most courses are held in 21 centres, spread throughout the seven geographical areas of the city. Around 20 per cent of the courses are held at the local adult education college in the centre of the city. Of the 98 ICT tutors 64 per cent are female, and 35 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Nearly all tutors are employed on a part-time basis. Provision is overseen by an ICT curriculum co-ordinator in the adult learning service and a programme manager at the college.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

4. The service provides a variety of hospitality, sport and leisure courses. These include cake decoration, food hygiene, keep fit, yoga, aerobics, tai chi, and awards for community sports leaders and in day and coastal sailing. Some courses are targeted at specific groups, such as women and those aged over 50. Hospitality courses and some yoga courses are offered at beginners and intermediate levels. Learners enrol on courses for health improvement, personal development and social benefits. Courses are one to two hours in duration and run for one day, 10-week and one-year periods. Courses take place during the day and evenings, with some provision at weekends, in a range of venues including schools, colleges and community centres.

5. At the time of inspection 2,283 learners were enrolled on courses, with 1,480 of these following sports courses and 803 following courses in cookery. Of these learners, 84.5 per cent are women, 20 per cent are aged over 60 and 28 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Eighty-two per cent of the provision at the time of inspection was in sports and leisure. Ninety-four per cent of the sports provision does not lead to a qualification. The service employs 50 tutors on a part-time basis, most of whom are contracted to work for between two and five hours a week.

Health, social care & public services

6. The service offers a wide range of learning opportunities from entry level to level 3, delivered from the local adult education college and in 16 community settings across the city. Most courses are offered at level 1. The college, by far the largest provider, offers an extensive first aid programme. This is delivered and assessed by the Leicestershire branch of a voluntary ambulance service. The provision includes a course in first aid at work and an associated refresher course approved by the health and safety executive as well as a shorter course in first aid for the appointed persons, a certificate in paediatric first aid and a manual handling award. A wide range of complementary health courses is also available, including Indian head massage, the Alexandra Technique, reflexology and a range of courses aimed at developing self-confidence. In addition, the services offers qualifications at levels 1 to 3 in early years childcare and education in a wide range of community settings. These include an introduction, certificate and diploma in pre-school practice, national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in early years care and education at levels 2 and 3 and a diploma in playwork. In 2003-04, 2,517 learners enrolled on courses in this area of learning. Of these 2,070 are on first aid programmes, 235 are on early years courses and 212 follow related courses in complementary therapy and personal development.

Visual & performing arts & media

7. Visual and performing arts, one of the largest programme areas within the adult learning curriculum, is offered in all seven cluster areas. The wide range of courses includes patchwork and quilting, embroidery, jewellery, pottery, dressmaking, decoupage, calligraphy, drawing and painting, guitar, singing and dance. In 2003-04, 2,433 learners made 4,031 enrolments on the 328 courses offered in 19 local community learning centres. Approximately 8.5 per cent of the courses are accredited. Minority ethnic learners make up 18.4 per cent of the total number of learners, which is well below their representation in the adult population in the city. Part-time courses are offered in the day, at twilight and in the evening. A few courses are offered at the weekend.

English, languages & communications

8. In 2003-04, 1,905 learners made 2,660 enrolments on 78 courses in English, creative writing and languages in 16 settings across the city. Of these, 1,550 attended languages courses and 355 attended English and creative writing courses. The adult education college runs 60 per cent of the courses, including a specialist creative writing school taught by practising writers. In 2003-04, 69 per cent of the learners were enrolled at the college and 31 per cent were in community settings. Sixty-eight per cent of learners in the college and 22 per cent of learners in community settings are on accredited courses. Overall, 54 per cent of learners are on accredited courses. At the time of inspection approximately 80 per cent of college courses and over half of courses in the community were in modern foreign languages. In addition, provision included four creative writing classes and one pre-GCSE English class at the college, seven GCSE English classes at the college and in community settings, and four community language classes in community settings. Accredited modern foreign language courses include GCSEs in French, Italian and Spanish and advanced supplementary (AS) and A2 levels in French, Spanish, Italian and Punjabi. Courses which do not lead to a qualification are held in Russian, Urdu, and Japanese in community settings. Turkish, German, Greek, Portuguese, Japanese and Swedish are offered at the college, either as provision accredited by the Open College Network (OCN), or as non-accredited provision. Nine British Sign Language (BSL) courses run in the community and five run at the college. At the time of the inspection there were 26 teachers of modern foreign languages, seven teachers of English, four teachers of creative writing, four BSL teachers and three teachers of community languages. Fifty-three per cent of the college's provision and 64 per cent of community provision runs in the evenings. Overall, 58 per cent of provision runs in the evenings.

Foundation programmes

9. Over 2,000 learners attend foundation programmes. Of these courses approximately 55 per cent attend courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), 22 per cent attend literacy courses, 6 per cent attend numeracy courses and 17 per cent attend programmes aimed at meeting the needs of people with mental health problems. Seventy-six per cent of the literacy and numeracy classes take place at the college on five days and four evenings a week. The college also runs a small outreach programme. Nine community learning centres offer classes in literacy and numeracy. In 2002-03, 1,123 enrolments were made on literacy and numeracy classes. At the time of inspection, 578 literacy learners and 141 numeracy learners were following the 163 courses on offer. Sixty per cent of the learners are women. About 60 per cent of learners are white, 20 per cent are of Asian heritage and 9 per cent are African-Caribbean. Learners are encouraged to work towards accreditation through literacy and numeracy tests and OCN qualifications. Courses range from pre-entry level to GCSE English and mathematics. The college employs two full-time basic skills co-ordinators. Courses in the community are supervised by the community learning managers, who work closely with the development officer responsible for widening participation.

10. ESOL courses are offered at the college and at a range of community learning centres. The college ran 203 ESOL courses for 611 learners in 2003-04 both at the main college centre and in community learning centres. The service offers a further 80 courses in local community centres in 2003-04, which 409 learners attended. Seventy-seven per cent of 2003-04 learners are women. All courses are part time and students can choose to study for two to 12 hours a week. Courses are run for a term at a time, although learners can study for all three terms during the academic year. In 2003-04 68 per cent of learners studied on accredited courses. Courses levels range from pre-entry to level 2. Additional courses with an ESOL component are offered in other subjects including sewing, creativity, soft furnishing, computing, office skills, driving theory and courses for women only.

11. The 'Remit' project provides courses for adults with mental health problems. The 'REACH' project offers learning opportunities for people who are sleeping rough or in temporary accommodation. Remit has between 250 and 300 learners at any point throughout the year. It has received 220 new referrals to date in 2003-04, and received 250 in 2002-03. REACH has worked with 212 learners in the period from September 2003 until the end of March 2004. At the time of the inspection, 358 learners were following 53 courses in the Remit programme and 31 in REACH. Remit runs accredited courses in computing, from beginners' computing to level 2, as well as in creative art, ceramics and poetry. Non-accredited courses include an introduction to philosophy, acoustic guitars, women's gentle exercise and the environment. Courses offered to REACH learners include computing, art and craft and playing drums. Most courses at Remit extend over 38 weeks and run for two hours each week. Some run for 12 weeks, and the service offers a summer programme of taster sessions. Many learners attend three different courses each week. Learners can join courses at any stage of the programme. The length of REACH programmes depends on funding being available. Most courses run during the daytime. Most Remit courses are delivered at the main city

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centre site for Remit. The project has outreach provision in a range of settings across Leicester. REACH courses run in hostels for the homeless. Sixty-three per cent of learners at Remit are men, 89 per cent are white British, and 90 per cent are aged 19 to 59. Thirty per cent have a disability and all have mental health problems. Most learners are referred to Remit by health professionals, with a few self-referrals. Most learners live in Leicester but the project provides for some learners from outside the city. Learners attending REACH classes choose a course having observed the class in previous weeks or because they have received information from hostel staff. Few courses are run in the community specifically for learners with learning difficulties. In some areas, especially in literacy and numeracy, classes include learners with learning difficulties.

Family learning

12. The service offers a wide range of family learning provision, with family literacy and numeracy programmes running as 45- or 72-hour courses and half-day workshops. Shorter courses include 'keeping up with the children' and Early Start for the parents of pre-school children. Wider family learning includes the 'Share' programme, multi-cultural story sacks, as well as tasters and short courses including ICT, Spanish, cookery and music. Two courses are specifically directed at families to improve their communications with deaf and hearing-impaired relatives. Most sessions are held during the daytime, with two courses on Saturdays and other one-off events at weekends. Courses are held at 14 schools and 15 other community settings. A crèche is provided in every venue, if needed.

13. In 2003-04 to date, 2,281 adult learners have enrolled on family learning programmes. Six per cent of learners are men, 4 per cent are over the age of 60, and 26 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, although this increased to 56 per cent for courses running at the time of inspection.

14. Family learning is staffed by a city-wide family learning co-ordinator and an Early Start co-ordinator, with some family literacy, language and numeracy provision delivered through the local college of further education. The service employs 20 part-time tutors for working with adults, with weekly hours ranging from two to 13, and provides funding for tutors and play leaders to work with children. In specific projects, tutors are provided by the further education college.

Community development

15. Community development is a key priority of the service and the council. Four community development initiatives are targeted at under-represented groups and communities identified according to levels of multiple deprivation. Three projects are located in specific geographical areas. Other development project workers link with different groups and individuals from across the whole city. Community development activity is funded through the LSC and a range of external funding sources, such as the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), the NHS and the European Social Fund (ESF). The Community Link into Learning project works mainly with partners from the local voluntary sector. The Learning Development project operates in West Humberstone, Eyres Monsell, New Parks and the St. Matthews areas of the city. One development worker is based in each of these areas. A fifth development worker is interdepartmental and works with other council departments, such as housing and social services, to reach excluded learners. The Linwood Centre project is located in the centre of the Saffron housing estate. The centre's educational approach is the basis of all of the courses and activities run at the centre. The local adult education college works in partnership with health and social daycare services to provide opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. In 2002-03, 2,221 learners participated in learning as a result of specific community development projects. Other local learning centres also carry out their own community development activities and work with new learners and groups. The service does not have figures for the numbers of learners recruited in this way.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	29
Number of inspection days	246
Number of learner interviews	1127
Number of staff interviews	371
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	192
Number of partner/external agency interviews	94

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

16. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the service's leadership and management and its approach to equality of opportunity are satisfactory. Its arrangements for quality assurance are unsatisfactory. Health and social care, and family learning programmes are good. Provision is satisfactory in ICT, visual and performing arts, English, languages and communications and community development. Hospitality, sport and leisure and foundation programmes are unsatisfactory.

GRADES

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

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

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Using IT</i> - Adult and community learning	2419	3

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hospitality and catering</i> - Adult and community learning	803	4
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i> - Adult and community learning	1480	4

Health, social care & public services		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Early years</i> - Adult and community learning	235	2
<i>Complementary health services</i> - Adult and community learning	212	2
<i>Other contributory areas</i> - Adult and community learning	2070	2

Visual & performing arts & media		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Arts</i> - Adult and community learning	2433	3

English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>English</i> - Adult and community learning	355	3
<i>Languages</i> - Adult and community learning	1550	3
Foundation programmes		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Literacy</i> - Adult and community learning	719	3
<i>ESOL</i> - Adult and community learning	1020	4
<i>Community learning</i> - Adult and community learning	358	2
Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	2281	2
Community development		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	2221	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

17. **Retention rates are good on ICT programmes**, routinely exceeding 90 per cent on long and short courses.

18. **Pass rates are very good on first aid courses, in health and social care.** Nearly 2,500 learners take short first aid courses each year and almost all of them successfully achieve. The quality of these courses, which are subcontracted to a first aid training company, is well monitored by the adult education college. Learners achieve good personal and academic outcomes. **Learners on early years courses progress well from entry level up to level 3 and voluntary or paid work.**

19. **Learners' attainment is good in creative writing and modern foreign languages.**

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Modern foreign languages learners demonstrate fluency and engage in discussion. Learners in the writing school produce good-quality writing and give constructive feedback on each other's work.

20. **Achievement of accredited qualifications in English and modern foreign languages is unsatisfactory.** The overall achievement rate for 2002-03 is 43 per cent.

21. **Achievement on food hygiene courses at the college is poor.** Achievement rates have been consistently low over the past three years.

22. **Retention is good on visual and performing arts and media courses.** Only 9 per cent of learners left courses early in 2003-04. **Most learners' work is of a high standard and some is good enough to be sold commercially.** Learners develop good technical skills in arts and crafts.

23. Achievement rates are poor on accredited foundation courses. **In particular, only 20 per cent of ESOL learners successfully achieve a qualification.** The service has been slow to introduce accredited courses in literacy and numeracy, and very few learners take up the option of a qualification.

24. **Many community development learners and groups have been very successful in achieving their personal and academic learning goals.** Many learners are supported to engage in learning and progress, and gain in confidence and feel able to take on responsibilities in their communities.

25. **Attainment in family learning is good.** Parents attending family learning programmes are very successful. They grow in confidence, are much more able to help their children at school, and many produce work of a high standard. Many improve their literacy and numeracy skills considerably, and some progress to further learning.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Information & communications technology	0	5	26	23	1	0	0	55
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	2	11	9	3	1	0	26
Health, social care & public services	0	7	6	7	1	0	0	21
Visual & performing arts & media	0	14	8	7	3	1	0	33
English, languages & communications	1	7	12	9	4	0	0	33
Foundation programmes	1	7	22	22	4	1	0	57
Family learning	3	7	7	3	0	1	0	21
Community development	0	1	1	3	1	0	0	6
Total	5	50	93	83	17	4	0	252

26. **ICT learners develop their information technology (IT) skills and knowledge very quickly.** An unusually large proportion of learners have no previous experience of using computers. Learners make good progress towards their individual learning goals, and improve their personal confidence and other skills through their learning.

27. **The ICT curriculum is developed well.** New courses and training materials have been introduced to meet the needs of learners. Teaching practice is improving and learning materials and methods are shared more. Local partnerships introduce learning in encouraging ways that help them move on to increasingly complex courses.

28. **ICT resources are inadequate in some centres,** with rooms that are poorly laid out and poorly ventilated. Some computer networks are unstable and some tutors have to bring their own equipment to classes to ensure an effective learning experience for learners. Technical support is poor in some centres.

29. **Tutors do not carry out routine assessment of ICT learners' additional needs.** The process for obtaining additional support for learners is unwieldy and protracted.

30. **Data is used ineffectively at nearly all levels in ICT.** Curriculum co-ordinators have insufficient data, in a reliable form, to aid their monitoring and planning. Data held by the adult education college is more reliable and detailed, but it is not used sufficiently to plan changes and improvements.

31. **Much of the teaching in health and social care is very good,** particularly on longer, higher level courses. Learning sessions are well planned, and are taught by enthusiastic and knowledgeable teachers who inspire learners to succeed. **The health and social care programmes are responsive to community needs.** Courses are delivered flexibly and supported by very good childcare and crèche facilities. Innovative programmes introduce learners from minority ethnic groups to possible careers in the police and

health services.

32. **Resources for the delivery of accredited early years courses are inadequate.** Tutors go to great lengths to supply their own teaching and learning materials, but there are very few centres with libraries, stocks of appropriate texts or resources for practical learning sessions. **Sharing of good practice in health and social care is inadequate,** and tutors have few opportunities to share ideas. There are few opportunities for tutors to share ideas. Some tutors and learners are unaware of progression opportunities available in their own area or across the city. Data is unreliable and inaccurate. The data available is not used to support planning.

33. **Teaching and learning in English and modern foreign languages courses delivered at the college are good.** Lessons are well planned and provide a range of activities which engage the learners fully. In most modern foreign languages classes, teachers deliver the learning in the target language. **The modern foreign languages curriculum is particularly broad.** Languages offered include French, Italian, Spanish, Punjabi, Gujarati, Thai, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, Urdu, Japanese, Turkish, German, Greek, Portuguese and Swedish. Few English courses are run, with only GCSE and one pre-GCSE course provided at the adult education college. **Learning goals are inadequately identified in English and languages.**

34. Insufficient use is made in English and modern foreign languages of initial assessment to develop individual learning plans. **The planning of progression routes is ineffective** and no clear opportunities exist for progression from creative writing classes offered as literacy, numeracy and language skills classes in community settings to the writing school classes at the college.

35. **Learners in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel apply their learning well to wider life,** and yoga learners develop good skills. However, **accommodation and resources are often unsatisfactory** and do not support learning. Assessment is inconsistent; **learners' progress is often not recorded and is insufficiently monitored.** **Co-ordination of learning programmes is inadequate,** with no formal target-setting and limited sharing of good practice.

36. **Teaching of visual and performing arts and media in the adult education college is very good,** with strong individual support and constructive feedback given to learners in practical classes. **Resources are also good,** with much purpose-built specialist accommodation. **Course content in visual and performing arts and media does not adequately reflect the cultural diversity of the community.** Not enough reference is made to the varied art traditions and cultures of Leicester. Opportunities for language development are not taken advantage of and learners from minority ethnic groups are unrepresented. **Insufficient sharing of good practice takes place, and ineffective use of management information is not used effectively.**

37. **Teaching and learning is good in foundation programmes,** in particular in literacy and numeracy and for learners with learning difficulties and mental health problems. **The programme is responsive to the needs of learners** and is offered extensively throughout

the community. There are well-designed programmes for homeless adults, for those in temporary accommodation and for those with mental health problems. **Learners on foundation courses get good personal support**, with the extensive use of volunteers and personal support assistants and a support guidance organiser at the college.

38. **Insufficient initial and diagnostic assessment and recording of learners' progress takes place in mental health programmes and ESOL.** Initial assessment is not always used to support target-setting and learners' progress reviews are not carried out systematically. Quality assurance is not sufficiently thorough. There is no specialist guidance on or co-ordination of the curriculum in ESOL and literacy. Data is neither well recorded nor used for planning.

39. **External funding is used very well to enhance community development provision.** Very effective local partnerships enable the service to meet the diverse needs of individuals and communities. Diverse cultural and faith groups are represented well on management groups and community associations who are working with Leicester adult services. Courses are run in easily accessible venues for local residents. **However, arrangements to secure resources for specialist learning support are ineffective in some centres**, and specialist support is delayed. Twenty-five per cent of centres visited were unable to provide specialist literacy, numeracy or language skills support. Succession planning for community development projects is poor. **Arrangements to record and share good practice developed by individuals are inadequate.** Progression routes for learners on first-step learning activities are not fully developed in all areas and are often insufficiently clear to learners.

40. **Teaching is very good in family learning** and learners are enthused by lively and varied learning activities. **A diverse and responsive range of programmes is offered** in numerous locations and some provision is targeted at specific disadvantaged groups. **The support for the diverse needs of learners in family learning programmes is good.** Crèches are readily available, as are interpreters and communicators. Programme management and development are good. The service gives family learning a high priority and regularly reviews its progress. Induction training opportunities and support for staff are good. Partnerships and links with schools, the voluntary sector, the college, and a centre for deaf people are particularly productive. Links with other council services, such as libraries, are good and the promotion of learning opportunities for disadvantaged groups is particularly effective.

Leadership and management

41. **The service is enhanced by effective partnerships throughout the city.** Adult and community learning work is well supported through the service's work with the local learning partnership. Good networks of local partners enable the service to reach new learners.

42. **Tutors at the adult education college and family learning tutors receive good professional support** with clear curriculum leadership. Tutors also benefit from subject-related staff development training.

43. **Poor use is made of the management information system** to contribute to planning and improve the service. Data is often inaccurate and the system cannot be used to monitor targets or learners' progression. Equality of opportunity data is not well monitored or analysed to bring about actions for improvement.

44. **No strategy exists across the service or in the college for the development of support for learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills.** Arrangements to identify learners' support needs are inadequate. Not all learners identified as having support needs received diagnostic assessment, and the planning and monitoring of support are not specific enough.

45. **Curriculum planning is a weakness in some parts of the provision.** Learners do not have a clear picture of the possibilities for progression across the various clusters, and managers do not have a clear overview of areas of duplication and overlap and the specific gaps in the curriculum. Insufficient curriculum planning takes place across the service's provision and the college's provision.

46. Clearly expressed policies and procedures are in place for the implementation and monitoring of equality of opportunity, including a race equality policy and a disability statement in response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. Insufficient regular monitoring takes place of how effectively policies and procedures are implemented. Training has been offered to all staff on legislative changes but these events have been poorly attended. Access to centres for learners with restricted mobility is satisfactory.

47. **Pastoral support for learners is good,** and effective systems are in place for identifying and meeting learners' pastoral needs during enrolment and initial assessment. Learners say they particularly value the financial support, the help with tuition and exam fees and childcare support. The procedure for claiming funding directly from the LEA takes too long to complete. The new learners' handbook has not been distributed widely enough and is not translated into any of the community languages.

48. **The service takes effective measures to attract learners not traditionally involved in learning,** which build on the excellent links between the service and local communities and neighbourhoods. Work in family learning, in hostels for the homeless and through community development has been particularly successfully in attracting new learners who previously did not have the confidence to attend classes for adults. The service's strategies to engage new arrivals, refugees and asylum seekers have contributed to its responsiveness to changing community needs.

49. **Teaching materials do not adequately reflect equality of opportunity and diversity.** Too much of the learning material used in performing arts and ESOL is based on European traditions and cultures. Not enough use is made of positive images to reflect the city's diverse social groups, such as gay and lesbian members of the community and people with restricted mobility. The family learning programmers have produced multicultural story sacks which have been celebrated nationally.

50. **Learners from minority ethnic communities and men are under-represented at the college in many areas of learning.** The gender balance in many areas of learning across the service is typical of adult and community learning, with most learners being women.

51. The service has developed coherent frameworks for quality assurance covering all key aspects of programme delivery. Clear policies are in place for the continuous improvement of the provision. The college has implemented thorough systems, and a number of these are having a positive effect on learning. **Good use is made of feedback from learners to improve the quality of provision.** The adult education college uses effective measures for collecting the views of learners and early leavers. The LEA responds positively to feedback from learners and this has resulted in several improvements to the service. The Remit project runs a well-managed learner consultation week for people attending its programmes.

52. **Quality assurance arrangements are insufficiently established in community provision.** Tutors do not fully understand these arrangements, and inadequate use is made of individual learning plans, target-setting and the recording of learners' progress in some curriculum areas. Staff do not share good practice enough. A team of 'good practice' tutors has been appointed to resolve these weaknesses and improve the thoroughness of learning session observation. The self-assessment report has in most cases identified the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. Monitoring of the development plan is well managed and effective. Internal verification arrangements are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- effective strategic and local partnerships
- good professional support for college and family learning tutors
- good strategies to attract hard-to-reach learners
- good pastoral support for learners
- effective use of learners' feedback in college and mental health projects

Weaknesses

- some weak curriculum co-ordination
- poor use of management information
- insufficiently developed additional support for literacy, numeracy and language
- insufficient use of learning materials which reflect diversity
- under-representation of minority ethnic learners in the adult education college
- insufficiently established quality arrangements in community settings

Information & communications technology

Using IT

Strengths

- high retention rates
- good skills development
- good development of the curriculum

Weaknesses

- some inadequate resources
- inadequate identification of additional learning needs
- ineffective use of data

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality and catering

Strengths

- good application of learning to wider life

Weaknesses

- inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- low achievement on basic food hygiene programmes at adult education college
- inadequate programme co-ordination

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good development of skills on yoga courses
- good application of learning to wider life

Weaknesses

- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- some unsatisfactory resources
- inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- inadequate programme co-ordination

Health, social care & public services

Early years

Strengths

- good personal and academic achievement
- good progression to higher level courses and employment
- much very good teaching
- responsive programme meeting learners' and community needs
- good monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- inadequate resources for accredited early years courses
- insufficient sharing of good practice
- unreliable and inaccurate management data information

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Complementary health services

Strengths

- much very good teaching
- good personal and academic achievement
- responsive programme meeting learners' and community needs

Weaknesses

- insufficient sharing of good practice

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- very good pass rates on first aid courses
- much very good teaching
- good monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- unreliable and inaccurate management information

Visual & performing arts & media

Arts

Strengths

- good standard of work for most learners
- good retention
- very good teaching in the adult education college
- good resources

Weaknesses

- insufficient reflection of cultural diversity of community in course content
- insufficient sharing of good practice
- ineffective use of management information

English, languages & communications

English

Strengths

- good attainment in creative writing
- good teaching and learning in the adult education college

Weaknesses

- insufficient planning of progression opportunities
- poor achievement rates

Languages

Strengths

- good attainment in most languages
- good teaching and learning in the adult education college
- particularly broad curriculum in modern foreign languages

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates
- inadequate identification of learning goals
- insufficient planning of progression opportunities

Foundation programmes

Literacy

Strengths

- some good teaching and learning
- high level of support for learners

Weaknesses

- incomplete recording of learners' progress
- insufficiently thorough implementation of quality assurance

ESOL

Strengths

- good development of language skills
- good support and encouragement for learners
- responsive provision to local community needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory attendance on adult education college course
- poor achievement rates on accredited courses
- insufficient focus on individual learning needs
- narrow range of teaching and learning activities
- ineffective use of initial and diagnostic assessment
- insufficient recording of learners' progress
- insufficient curriculum co-ordination
- inadequate quality assurance

Community learning

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- very effective support for learners with mental health problems
- well-designed provision for homeless adults and those in temporary accommodation
- good provision for adults with mental health problems

Weaknesses

- insufficient resources
- insufficient formal assessment of literacy, numeracy and language support needs

Family learning

Strengths

- good attainment
- very effective teaching and learning
- good range of programmes
- good support for diverse needs of learners
- good programme management and development

Weaknesses

- insufficient recording of individual learners' progress

Community development

Strengths

- good attainment for many individuals and groups
- good use of external funding to enhance provision
- very effective local partnerships

Weaknesses

- ineffective resourcing of specialist learning support in some centres
- inadequate measures to capture and disseminate good practice in projects

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT LEICESTER LEA:

- the crèche and childcare arrangements
- the pace of the course and small group sizes, with individual support
- the courses - 'they have built up my confidence and ability to communicate'
- the learning process - 'when you find something out it's like a pot of gold'
- the community settings - 'the centre's been a lifeline for me, it's improved my reading and writing skills'
- accessible, local venues and stimulating and interesting course content
- the opportunities to interact with other communities and learn about heritage, culture and tradition
- the quality time together learning with my child

WHAT LEARNERS THINK LEICESTER LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the length of the courses - 'classes are too short and they could go on over the summer'
- the amount of help and support for dyslexic learners in the locality
- the number of crèche places at the adult education college
- the length of waiting lists, the access and enrolment to courses and the number of intensive higher-level courses
- the resources - computers are old and don't work, and some classrooms and furniture are poor quality
- information on the future of provision - there is uncertainty as to whether the service will continue

KEY CHALLENGES FOR LEICESTER LEA:

- improve planning and curriculum co-ordination across the city
- develop effective procedures for the initial and diagnostic assessment of language, literacy and numeracy needs
- share good practice more widely across the service
- implement fully the skills for life agenda
- improve assessment practice and the recording of learners' progress
- provide clearer and better progression opportunities across the service
- more effectively implement quality assurance in local centres
- improve the unsatisfactory provision in ESOL and hospitality and sports
- monitor equality of opportunity more effectively in community settings

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 3

Strengths

- effective strategic and local partnerships
- good professional support for college and family learning tutors
- good strategies to attract hard-to-reach learners
- good pastoral support for learners
- effective use of learners' feedback in college and mental health projects

Weaknesses

- some weak curriculum co-ordination
- poor use of management information
- insufficiently developed additional support for literacy, numeracy and language
- insufficient use of learning materials which reflect diversity
- under-representation of minority ethnic learners in the adult education college
- insufficiently established quality arrangements in community settings

53. The adult learning service, including the adult education college, has effective strategic and local partnerships. As a key member of the local learning partnership the service leads the adult and community learning work of the partnership and also supports the skills for life agenda. The college enjoys productive relationships with many partners, which adds further to the curriculum available to learners. For example, a drama course is run in partnership with a local theatre and an interpreting course is run in partnership with a refugee association. The college is responsive and supportive to voluntary sector groups, helping them in their capacity building and improving the quality of the delivery of its courses. Clusters and settings in the community have good networks with local partners, enabling them to be much more effective in reaching new learners. Growth targets in the past year have generally been exceeded. The service makes good use of the locally available funding in partnership with other organisations to pilot and support new work. Good use is made of SRB and ESF funding to improve learning facilities and to support individual learners.

54. Tutors at the college receive good professional support through clear curriculum leadership in all areas of learning. New staff are inducted into the college through their programme co-ordinator. All full-time and substantive part-time tutors are appraised annually and the results are used well to plan individual training priorities. The college has clearly identified staff training priorities to ensure it fulfils learners' rights to have competent, caring and qualified teachers. The college prioritises curriculum-specific training, customer service training for front-line staff, personal development and an annual core programme for all staff. The annual programme gives priority to the

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development of managers' competences in managing dispersed and diverse part-time staff, and improving the planning of teaching and learning.

55. Appraisal and staff development processes for staff who work centrally are satisfactory. Appraisals are carried out annually for all full-time and fractional staff. Action plans and staff development needs are identified. Appraisal procedures are currently formally suspended as a result of the divisional review. Central staff have satisfactory access to staff training, and on average have attended six staff development events. The annual training schedule includes priorities for the ongoing development of tutors. In the current year 66 events have resulted in 700 attendances. However, no courses are identified as compulsory and the service is currently unable to monitor individual attendances.

56. Resources are generally satisfactory. ICT, sports and leisure, health and social care and community development have some poor physical resources. Visual and performing arts have good resources. Staff are generally appropriately qualified. Currently, 86 per cent of the service's tutors have a teacher training qualification at stage 1 at least. Others are working towards qualifications.

57. The strategic direction of the service is satisfactory. The LEA has agreed a three-year adult learning plan with the LSC. The plan makes good reference to the local demographic context, and to the LSC's priorities, and has broad targets for growth in the number and range of courses. However, the responsibility for implementing and monitoring some aspects of the plan is not clearly expressed. Each cluster has its own adult learning plan, and strategies for its implementation. However, cluster plans do not always adequately reflect the priorities in the service's overall plan. Cluster plans are monitored by the central team and the implementation group. The college's role in the LEA's future strategy is still to be determined, and this restricts longer-term planning in the college.

58. Communication across the service is satisfactory. Regular meetings are held at all levels of the organisation. Senior managers and the strategy group meet monthly. The implementation group, which includes the adult central team, community learning managers who have a lead for adult learning, and representatives from the college, meets monthly and the development group is open for attendance by all staff. A newsletter is produced regularly but some staff do not regard it as a very effective communication tool. Some staff are unclear about the future direction of the service. A buddy system has been introduced to improve communications between teachers and managers but it is too early to judge its effectiveness. In the college communication between managers and staff is good, and weekly team meetings are used to promote professional development and to share good practice. Staff are kept well informed through a newsletter and through notices and e-mails.

59. Financial management is satisfactory. The service has survived and grown in some areas despite a significant shift in funding from community services to schools. Grant-aid to voluntary organisations has been subject to considerable cuts. Organisations affected by this are being supported in finding alternative funding. However, the service's current

financial systems cannot be used to identify the comparative cost of learning in different settings. The service adds value to existing funding by supplementing it where possible from additional sources, such as SRB, ESF and housing department monies.

60. Health and safety practices are satisfactory. A new specific health and safety policy has been written for adult learning. New guidelines and forms have been produced to enable tutors to carry out learning risk assessments. All centres have had a full health and safety check and report.

61. Governance is satisfactory. The adult learning plan is approved by the council's cabinet before submission to the LSC, and the self-assessment report and action plan are submitted to the scrutiny committee. The head of the adult learning service is the corporate director's representative on the governing body of the adult college. The council has a good understanding of adult education. The leader of the council and other councillors have a good knowledge of adult provision in community settings. Two cabinet members have an education brief.

62. Poor use is made of the management information system for planning and improving the service. The management information system is provided by the college on behalf of the service. The system is capable of producing a wealth of reports on accredited courses, and regular data returns are made to the LSC for these learners on behalf of the whole service. However, the system is not easily accessible to many managers and is slow to provide reliable data on learners who are not working towards a qualification. It has only recently been able to produce data by area of learning. Practice in data inputting varies across the settings and data is often inaccurate, with more than half the areas of learning identifying this as a significant weakness. Reports are produced routinely for the senior management team but not for community learning managers or community tutors. The current system cannot be used easily to enable managers to monitor targets or follow learners' progress. If learners progress to another setting they receive a new learner identity on the management information system. Equality of opportunity is poorly monitored. Although data is collected on the different patterns of retention and achievement rates by minority ethnic learners, this information is not used to guide planning even where significant differences in learners' success are clearly evident.

63. The strategy for the development of literacy, numeracy and language skills is contained within the skills for life partnership, which the service and the city's other major providers, have signed up to. Arrangements to identify learners' literacy, numeracy or language support needs are insufficiently developed. Learners with support needs do not all receive a diagnostic assessment and the planning and monitoring of support is insufficiently specific. Some staff and learners do not understand the procedures for obtaining support. Specialist support in workshops for dyslexic students in the adult college is good.

64. Aspects of curriculum planning are weak in some curriculum areas including English and languages, sport and leisure, community development and parts of foundation programmes. Insufficient mapping of the curriculum on offer has taken place. Managers

do not have a clear overview of areas of duplication and the specific gaps in the curriculum. Curriculum planning is not sufficiently co-ordinated between the college and the rest of the service. Specialist curriculum support for tutors is weak in some areas, although leadership is clear in ICT, languages and family learning. New guidelines to improve the quality of curriculum planning have recently been produced, but it is too early to judge their effectiveness.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

65. Clear policies and procedures are in place for the implementation and monitoring of equality of opportunity. A comprehensive equal opportunities policy, a race equality policy in response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and a disability statement in response to the Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001 include long-term actions required to further develop the service. The adult learning service and the college comply with departmental and divisional equal opportunities policies. The monitoring of how effectively policies and procedures are implemented is not regular enough. A regular programme of training on the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and current disability legislation is offered to all staff, but attendance is not mandatory and events have been poorly attended. Access to centres for learners with restricted mobility is satisfactory. Eighteen per cent of the centres meet fully the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which is satisfactory.

66. Pastoral support for learners is good. The service has good systems for identifying and meeting learners' pastoral needs during enrolment and initial assessment. The community settings have clear criteria for ensuring learners' needs are prioritised according to personal circumstances, and financial support is provided for tuition and exam fees and childcare support. Learners value their centre managers' immediate response to requests for the financial support, which enables them to remain on programmes and to succeed. However, the procedure for claiming funding directly from the LEA takes too long to complete. Once the support is agreed the funding is allocated to the centres. Learners' take-up of support is not systematically analysed to influence future planning. The new learners' handbook has not been distributed widely enough. It is not translated into any of the community languages and no supporting materials are available for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

67. The strategies and measures used to attract not traditionally involved learners are very effective. Building on trust established with partners, the service has developed excellent links with communities and neighbourhoods. The family learning programmes have had a significant effect on increasing the participation of parents who previously were not engaged in learning, such as women in hostels for the homeless. The structured programmes provide the first step to learning for learners who are sleeping rough or homeless. Much work with community development programmes has engaged new learners from voluntary sectors and has widened the curriculum. Strategies are in place to engage new arrivals, refugees and asylum seekers and responsive programmes have been developed in the community. The staff at the college have effectively supported 32 ESOL learners into employment and 35 into training.

68. Teaching materials do not adequately reflect equality of opportunity and diversity. Much of the course content in visual and performing arts and ESOL is too centred on European arts traditions. In the community settings, learning resources for ESOL and modern foreign and community languages do not include enough positive examples to reflect the city's diverse social groups such as gay and lesbian members of the community and people with restricted mobility. The family learning programmes have produced widely celebrated multicultural story sacks. The teaching and learning observation process does not record specific equality concerns. For example, insufficient attention is paid to planning for individual learning needs, providing specialist resources and learning materials, and developing strategies to promote equality of opportunity through teaching.

69. Learners from minority ethnic communities and men are under-represented in the college. Seventy-three per cent of minority ethnic learners are on ESOL courses. The proportion of learners who are white British is 97 per cent in textiles, 89 per cent in modern foreign languages, 82 per cent in complementary therapy and 89 per cent in arts and craft. The gender balance in many areas of learning across the service is typical of adult and community learning, with most learners being women.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

70. Coherent frameworks for quality assurance have been developed covering all key aspects of programme delivery. Clear policies are in place for the continuous improvement of the provision. The college has implemented thorough systems, and a number of these are having a positive effect on learning.

71. The college has effective measures for collecting the views of learners and early leavers, through the use of paper-based surveys and focus groups. The LEA has responded positively to feedback from learners in deciding to increase the range and levels of provision and improving timetabling and accommodation. Telephone surveys of early leavers identify the reasons for their leaving and the factors that the college is in a position to influence. The Remit project runs a well-managed learner consultation week for those attending its programmes. Facilitators are successful in encouraging learners to air views about their current learning programmes and about wider concerns affecting their learning experience. Recent changes have included longer sessions for learners and specific staff development opportunities for tutors.

72. Quality assurance arrangements are insufficiently established in community provision. Understanding of the arrangements among part-time tutors is poor. The use of individual learning plans, target-setting and the recording of learners' progress in some curriculum areas are weak. Some community-based tutors do not use course files effectively. Sharing of good practice between staff is inadequate. A team of 'good practice' tutors and a programme of core training have recently been introduced but they have not yet been in place for long enough to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The LEA has extended the volume of learning session observations in community provision but it is too early to assess the effect of this on its quality. Some observers are not appropriately qualified or are not subject specialists in the areas they

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observe. The grades awarded are by the provider for learning session observations were too high over a year ago, but during the last year they are more in line with current average grades awarded by the ALI. Local managers do not consistently apply the policy for observation. The sampling policy of observing tutors at least once every three years is insufficient to have a strong effect on good classroom practice. Some community learning managers are not able to initiate follow-up actions arising from class observations. In the college, observation of teaching and learning is more thorough and is having a positive effect on the learners' experience. In community settings, managers do not sufficiently encourage tutors to attend core training. Managers do not sufficiently analyse the effect of training on teaching and learning.

73. The self-assessment report has, in most cases, identified the strengths and weaknesses recognised by inspectors. Monitoring of the development plan is well managed and effective. Internal verification arrangements are satisfactory.

74. The overall quality of teaching and learning observed by inspectors is satisfactory. The grades awarded to observed sessions are similar to the average grades for all teaching and learning observations carried out by the ALI in the inspections of adult and community learning.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Using IT</i> - Adult and community learning	2419	3

Using IT

Strengths

- high retention rates
- good skills development
- good development of the curriculum

Weaknesses

- some inadequate resources
- inadequate identification of additional learning needs
- ineffective use of data

Achievement and standards

75. Retention rates are high on most programmes. Apart from a small decline to 88 per cent in 2002-03, following a significant increase in enrolment, retention rates for the past three years have been greater than 90 per cent. In 2003-04 to date, retention rates exceed 95 per cent. Retention rates for learners from minority ethnic backgrounds do not differ significantly. Retention rates are lower on accredited programmes on higher level courses, at 67 per cent on level 3 programmes in 2002-03.

76. The data that individual centres hold on learners shows a pattern of satisfactory attainment. Data held centrally is unreliable and suggests achievement rates of 28 per cent. The standard of work learners produce is of an appropriate standard for the programme on which they are enrolled. Given that many learners start with very little prior knowledge or familiarity with ICT, many make rapid progress.

Quality of education and training

77. Learners quickly acquire basic ICT skills and become very adept at using them. Many have not had experience of using a computer before. Learners arriving from different countries often have poor English language skills. These learners overcome their initial uncertainty about computers and are soon able to perform a range of socially

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useful tasks, including letter writing, digital imaging and using the internet. They talk with pride of e-mailing relatives overseas, and an 82 year old learner who looked up her holiday destination on the internet was highly motivated by this sense of achievement. Learners on a personal computer building and maintenance course are able to repair and install different and multiple operating systems. Most learners say the development of their computing skills builds their confidence and sense of self-worth. These positive learning experiences encourage many learners to progress to other courses and some have moved from beginners level qualifications to a computer literacy and business terminology course in 15 months. Many take up learning in the hope that these skills will improve their employment prospects.

78. The programme has been well developed and is very responsive to community needs. The ICT co-ordinator has strengthened the management of the programme and extended the range of courses offered. Recent initiatives include the introduction of extended progression routes through a bridging qualification between levels 1 and 2 in response to a need identified through feedback from learners and tutors. Centres working in partnership with community and voluntary organisations have increased the number of beginners and taster courses available to learners. Centres located in cross-city locations, and courses provided in outreach centres such as libraries, minority ethnic communities and hostels, are removing geographic barriers and widening participation of specific groups. Programmes are socially inclusive and have been very successful in promoting equality of opportunity to learners from culturally diverse backgrounds. Thirty-nine per cent of learners enrolling on ICT courses in 2003-04 come from minority ethnic groups, 9 per cent higher than the overall representation of minority ethnic groups in the city's population. Courses meet the needs of learners seeking to gain introductory and further ICT skills to re-enter the job market. Courses are developing the skills and confidence of learners and some progress from non-accredited to accredited courses.

79. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some teaching is very good with tutors adapting learning materials to reflect the cultural diversity among learners and selecting topics which are relevant to the local area. Some tutors are multilingual and can speak to learners in their own language if the learners' command of English is poor. One tutor encouraged learners to develop websites based on their own interests, such as bird watching, as a method of developing skills to a higher level than required by the examination. Tutors are knowledgeable and respond quickly, but don't always sufficiently check learners' knowledge and understanding. Only one of the 55 learning sessions observed was unsatisfactory. Most classes are delivered as workshops, enabling learners to achieve learning outcomes at their own pace. Some classes use too narrow a range of teaching methods, with little or no group discussion or peer learning. Little inspirational teaching, or use of information learning technology (ILT) resources, takes place. Course outlines and learning session plans for some classes have insufficient detail of the aims and objectives and teaching methods to be used. Learners work through printed course material and ask for help when required.

80. Learners' work is assessed and monitored satisfactorily. Most tutors keep records on learners' attainment and many use the achievement of individual learning outcomes as a way of recording learners' progress. An initial assessment of learners' previous ICT skills

is carried out either formally or informally. Individual modules are accredited where appropriate.

81. Initial advice and guidance are satisfactory. Learners receive appropriate advice and guidance on courses available to them before enrolment. Centre learning managers and administrators provide appropriate first-level advice and guidance to learners. Some administrators receive training in guidance. Tutors have a good knowledge of the progression opportunities available. The service has effective procedures for identifying the additional learning support needs of some learners, particularly for those with physical disabilities.

82. Resources are inadequate in some centres. The technical support available to sustain the volume and dispersed resources across the city is poor. Some computer networks are unstable and cause tutors and clients difficulties through the unreliable performance of personal computers, access to the internet and printers. The quality of rooms varies in the college and in local learning centres across the city. Seating is poor in some centres, where learners are using plastic stacking chairs. Some rooms are not adequately ventilated. Some tutors have to buy their own resources to ensure that learners can be provided for and one tutor brings a printer to the class because equipment is unreliable at the centre. Some learning resources for specific courses at levels 1 and 2 are held centrally and this is helping to standardise course materials and teaching approaches. However, these are not used by all tutors. Some centres have very good resources and up-to-date equipment including interactive whiteboards, flat-screen monitors, appropriate, comfortable seating and air conditioning. In some centres, these extremes of standards can be seen in the same building. Some staff have not been trained to use equipment such as interactive whiteboards. Most centres have an appropriate range of specialist equipment and staff are knowledgeable of the welfare support budgets available to learners. In a few centres learning sessions are held in first-floor rooms which are inaccessible to learners with restricted mobility. Health and safety risk assessments of accommodation and equipment are not consistently applied across all centres.

83. Learners' additional needs are not routinely assessed. Too much reliance is placed on learners identifying their own support needs. Some staff find the process for obtaining additional support for learners too unwieldy and protracted. The process is more successful at the college, where 11 learners are currently receiving additional learning support. However, learners receive no systematic initial assessment of their literacy, numeracy and language support needs. Multilingual tutors use their additional language skills to support learners, but there is no overall management strategy to guarantee this and some of the learners do not receive support. Some dyslexia support needs are not being met quickly enough. Tutors are beginning to use the newly developed tutor support packs, particularly for initial assessment and progress reviews. These resources are photocopied and are of poor quality. Learners who register for a beginners course without an initial assessment can be moved to the class at the next level if they demonstrate greater skill and knowledge.

Leadership and management

84. Management of multi-site ICT courses is good. Local managers have strong, delegated authority. The service has introduced curriculum development meetings and staff training events and the use and quality of learning resources on ICT courses is beginning to be standardised and improved. Centres work well together across clusters to develop progression opportunities for learners. All staff have access to training and development, although many find it difficult to find the time to attend. Tutors throughout the service have had no recent appraisal. Staff employed for less than nine hours a week are not appraised. Communication systems are satisfactory.

85. Each local centre carries out its own self-assessment and findings are fed into the overall self-assessment report. Attempts have been made to involve part-time tutors in the self-assessment process, but some staff have insufficient knowledge of the process. End-of-course reviews include the views of learners, and contribute to continuous improvement. Successful outcomes from these include the appointment of a Somali interpreter who provides support to learners across one cluster. The report is sufficiently thorough and accurately reflects the provision.

86. Systems are in place to observe teaching but action plans resulting from observations are not detailed enough. Observations are not always carried out by subject specialists. Grades awarded to sessions are too generous, especially for higher grades. Systems to assure the quality of accredited work are satisfactory and meet awarding body requirements. Assessment practice satisfactorily meets the requirements of external bodies.

87. The LEA recently introduced a standardised learners' handbook which is now issued to all learners. Before this, learners received information produced by local learning centres. Some learners have insufficient understanding of the complaints procedures.

88. Clusters and centres are set targets to widen participation but these are not separated by area of learning. Staff are not set targets for learners' retention and achievement rates. The LEA centrally monitors retention and achievement in ICT by ethnicity, age and gender but this is not analysed at local centre level.

89. Insufficient data on provision in the community are available to help curriculum managers make informed decisions about learners' retention and attainment. Data on overall retention is reliable but cannot be broken down sufficiently to guide the setting of particular targets or for monitoring the performance of individual tutors, centres or clusters. Achievement rate data is unreliable. Data from the management information system shows qualification achievement rates at 28 per cent, which is poor, while data extracted manually from representative centre records shows more satisfactory achievement rates. Reliable retention and achievement data is routinely available in the college and is partly used to monitor retention for individual tutors and programmes. However, decisions about changing individual programmes and the overall provision are not yet sufficiently supported by consideration of the available data. Progression data

shows the destinations of only half the leaving learners. The service recognises this problem in its self-assessment report and has plans to improve the collation and use of data.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hospitality and catering</i> - Adult and community learning	803	4
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i> - Adult and community learning	1480	4

Hospitality and catering

Strengths

- good application of learning to wider life

Weaknesses

- inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- low achievement on basic food hygiene programmes at adult education college
- inadequate programme co-ordination

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good development of skills on yoga courses
- good application of learning to wider life

Weaknesses

- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- some unsatisfactory resources
- inadequate monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- inadequate programme co-ordination

Achievement and standards

90. Learners' development of skills in yoga courses is good. Learners are able to demonstrate higher levels of co-ordination, balance and suppleness than would be expected of them. They work to a high standard and demonstrate good levels of skill and body awareness. Learners use breathing techniques effectively to aid concentration and meditation in classes. In one yoga class an 83 year old learner performed 'the Crane', a pose requiring her to balance on one leg with the other leg outstretched for an extended period of time, demonstrating very high standards of performance. Learners develop a

good understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of yoga. The application of yoga to the maintenance of health and vitality is a key feature of classes and was demonstrated through discussion, during observed sessions.

91. Learners gain many additional benefits from their learning outside of their classes. They recognise that improving fitness, flexibility and co-ordination significantly improves their quality of life and general wellbeing. Many fitness learners use their attendance at classes to monitor and control their weight. Additionally, learners appreciate the social and personal benefits of exercise. They describe how they are better able to control stress, alleviate injuries and ailments and play a full part in the lives of their families. A learner in a baking class previously lacking in confidence gained the knowledge, skills and confidence to bake cakes at home for the family. Learners in yoga classes and some keep fit classes maintain their skills by practising postures and exercises at home as part of their everyday lives.

92. Achievement rates on basic food hygiene programmes at the college are low. Only 86 per cent of those who started the course in 2002-03 passed, compared with the national average achievement for these programmes of 95 per cent. Food hygiene programmes form over 80 per cent of the accredited provision. Over the past two years achievement rates have been consistently low at 86 per cent in 2002-03 and in 2003-04.

Quality of education and training

93. Too much teaching is unsatisfactory. Learners' needs are not always identified or met. Basic food hygiene learners had not received the course handbook they need to study for the course. In many learning sessions learners do not receive sufficient individual attention to enable them to fully participate and perform well. Tutors are often unable to see all learners because of the poor teaching positions they adopt. Classes do not include enough different activities to enable learners of different abilities to choose alternative exercises more appropriate for their abilities. Learners in one tai chi class were told not to perform movements that were too difficult for them, rather than being offered an effective alternative. Poor performance is often not identified and corrected, and learners in some classes are given exercises that pose a risk to their health.

94. Resources in many settings are unsatisfactory. Accommodation and equipment are deficient at many venues. These deficiencies include rooms that lack privacy for learners taking exercise classes, noisy ventilation systems, and noisy corridors and adjoining rooms. Some rooms are too small for the number of learners on the register, and the desks and chairs around the room take up valuable space the class could have used. Equipment is not always available and learners in some settings are required to provide their own. One tutor demonstrated a stretch using a tape that was not available to any of the learners. Chairs are often used as supports in exercise for those who have difficulty balancing. A common feature of some classes is that learners assist the tutor to move large pieces of equipment to allow the class to take place. There is a clear risk of injury in these circumstances. Tutors have satisfactory qualifications, although not all tutors teaching groups of older learners have a specialised qualification.

95. The monitoring and recording of learners' progress is inadequate. Individual learners' needs are not always identified. Tutors have an informal awareness of learners' individual goals but this is rarely recorded. Assessment of learners' progress is inconsistent, and tutors often do not identify or record learners' progress. For example, in Ju Jitsu tutors do not routinely identify or record when learners attain skills and apply techniques successfully. Learners are not sufficiently aware of their attainments and progress. Tutors do not understand the need to monitor learners' progress. Monitoring and recording documents are not used effectively in classes. The systems for recording progress and assessing learners are poorly understood and used by tutors. Many tutors maintain their own recording methods in addition to the standard documents required by the LEA.

96. The range of programmes offered is narrow and very few innovative courses are available to meet the diverse needs of the community. At the time of inspection 81 per cent of all provision in the area of learning was in yoga and fitness. Although many versions of these classes are offered, they are all at the same level and involve similar activities. Fitness classes are described in many ways, such as 'keep in shape', 'aerobics', 'slim fitness', 'aerobics rebound' and 'bums, tums and thighs' but are all based on standard keep fit activities. Very few classes are targeted at particular groups. Few new courses are introduced to encourage participation by groups not traditionally involved in learning and not enough progression opportunities are available for existing learners. Few classes are offered at more than one level, and where different levels do exist, there is confusion among learners and tutors about the level of the class.

Leadership and management

97. The co-ordination of the programme is inadequate. Overview of the curriculum area is inadequate and no-one currently has responsibility for the co-ordination of the area of learning. Local management in some centres is effective. Data is not used adequately to set and monitor targets, and few targets are set for the area of learning. Data produced by the management information system is unreliable. Managers at each setting submit data for analysis which, when returned to them, is then not recognised as reflecting provision in their setting. Many learners repeat their courses. Waiting lists in some areas are not managed. Insufficient sharing of good practice takes place and teaching staff have insufficient knowledge of assessment systems. Setting managers have insufficient understanding of what other courses are available elsewhere, and their capacity to guide learners on potential progression opportunities is restricted.

98. Safe working practices are not adequately enforced. Health screening before exercise is inadequate for many learners and its application is not monitored sufficiently by the service. The risk assessment for specific activities and learner groups is inadequate. Some learners are unaware that wearing jewellery in exercise classes is potentially a hazard, and this is not always pointed out by the tutor.

99. The self-assessment report accurately identifies many of the weaknesses identified during inspection. However, it identifies some aspects of the provision as strengths that

are normal expected practice. For example, retention rates on the accredited courses are no more than what would be expected for short programmes. Action points identified in the self-assessment report had not been followed up at the time of the inspection. For example, low achievement rates on the basic food hygiene course identified in the self-assessment report had not been dealt with.

100. The tutor observation scheme is not thorough enough. The observer's assessment of the learning session does not reflect the grade awarded. Many observations do not identify action points or adequately provide feedback to tutors on ways of improving their teaching. The progress teachers make in resolving weaknesses identified during teaching observations is not monitored.

101. Equality of opportunity is not thoroughly applied to the benefit of the service. Observed classes had significant gender imbalances. Very few courses are aimed at older age groups. Staff training in equality of opportunity is poorly attended and has not significantly influenced the methods tutors use to promote equality in learning sessions. Access to premises for learners with restricted mobility is satisfactory.

Health, social care & public services

Health, social care & public services		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Early years</i> - Adult and community learning	235	2
<i>Complementary health services</i> - Adult and community learning	212	2
<i>Other contributory areas</i> - Adult and community learning	2070	2

Early years*Strengths*

- good personal and academic achievement
- good progression to higher level courses and employment
- much very good teaching
- responsive programme meeting learners' and community needs
- good monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- inadequate resources for accredited early years courses
- insufficient sharing of good practice
- unreliable and inaccurate management data information

Complementary health services*Strengths*

- much very good teaching
- good personal and academic achievement
- responsive programme meeting learners' and community needs

Weaknesses

- insufficient sharing of good practice

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- very good pass rates on first aid courses
- much very good teaching
- good monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- unreliable and inaccurate management information

Achievement and standards

102. Pass rates on first aid courses are very high and above the national average. All learners were retained in 2002-03 with 96 per cent passing their course. All learners were retained again in 2003-04, with 98 per cent successfully achieving their first aid qualifications. First aid qualifications are a mandatory requirement for many occupational areas.

103. Students on early years accredited programmes are making satisfactory progress, and the individual unit achievements so far are in line with the successful completion of the award in the planned timescale. Learners apply theory to childcare practice well in learning sessions. They are able to discuss how well-known early years educationalists have influenced present practice. They are also able to discuss the effect of current child protection and equal opportunities legislation on their practice. Retention rates on childcare courses are satisfactory and pass rates are very good. In 2003-04, pass rates were 100 per cent on the diploma in pre-school practice and 94 per cent and 91 per cent respectively for the intakes on the shorter introduction to pre-school practice courses.

104. Learners on early years programmes progress well to higher level courses and to related employment. On the level 3 diploma in pre-school practice, 9 of the 13 learners had progressed from associated introductory and certificate programmes and the other four had successfully completed other appropriate level 2 courses. This was a women-only group recruiting Muslim learners from a wide range of Islamic communities. Learners discussed their achievements with pride and confidence and all had plans for working in the early years sector. Learners on complementary therapy and personal development courses make good progress. The learners on the Indian head massage and mendhi courses develop good practical skills. Two women learners on the developing confidence programme were successfully using the course to support them in returning to paid work.

Quality of education and training

105. Much teaching is good. On the accredited courses in early years and first aid, learning sessions are carefully planned and the documents supporting this planning are detailed, focused and well matched to the qualification requirements. On the non-accredited courses the documents are not detailed enough. Schemes of work and session plans are not routinely in place. Teachers across all programmes are well qualified. Their considerable teaching and vocational experience supports the good teaching. Clear links between theory and vocational practice are integral to their planning and delivery. For example, learners on level 3 childcare courses are able to apply theory to practice, understanding how Bowlby's theory of attachment is demonstrated when children first attend a new, unfamiliar setting. They learn the importance of praising children's efforts when they are involved in practical activities such as painting or tying their shoelaces. They gain understanding of how activities affect a child's emotional development, and techniques for managing a child's behaviour. Learners on the pre-school practice certificate learn and practise activities that they can use in the nursery or after-school and breakfast clubs for their playwork qualification. All learners gain an understanding of how important legislation in areas such as health and safety, data protection and equality of opportunity affects daily practice in the nursery. They transfer this learning to their own children by spending more time in supporting their homework. In a Mendhi lesson, the teacher gave an informative introduction to different traditions in henna handpainting. The Muslim women learners used these to produce a range of Mendhi designs to enhance family and other cultural celebrations. In an all-Muslim women's learning sessions for the diploma in pre-school practice, the tutor encouraged small group discussion on the importance, for the children, the families and the pre-school, of good two-way communication between carers and the childcare provider. All the women confidently shared their ideas and made clear notes from the lively full-class plenary feedback session.

106. Equality opportunity is promoted well. Scenarios for group discussion set a context for learners to explore topics relating to potentially disadvantaged groups. These have included the recruitment of male volunteers in pre-schools and the development of productive links with parents and carers who speak English as an additional language. A session on working with children's families included very careful consideration of a wide range of family types, including children cared for by gay or lesbian partners, reconstituted families and communal families.

107. Learners' progress is monitored well. Progress on accredited courses is monitored and reviewed with learners in tutorial sessions. Learners are able to discuss their progress and how it relates to the qualification requirements. They are also keen to discuss their plans for progression to further study and related employment. Opportunities for progression to higher level courses, however, are not always available or well publicised.

108. Innovative programmes, providing a 10-week introduction to careers in the police service and nursing, have been successfully introduced in a disadvantaged area of the city. The learners are largely drawn from the local minority ethnic communities. The courses in preparation for entry to the police and other public services, delivered in

partnership with the Leicestershire Constabulary, recruited its first 15 students in January 2004. These learners are now being considered for appropriate training or employment within the constabulary. A further 15 learners were recruited in April 2004. Their attendance has been excellent. The parallel preparation for a career in nursing or midwifery delivered in partnership with a local university has been running successfully since 1998 and has provided an accessible and successful route into nursing and the caring services.

109. One particularly good initiative in an area of disadvantage in the city is aimed at raising the achievements of 'looked after children', and teenage parents. The learners gain a basic understanding of good childcare practice and parenting skills, which can be accredited should they move into childcare as a career. Courses are well publicised and timetabled to meet the needs of the learners. Many of the learners have been enabled to return to learning by the good crèche facilities. However, there are no crèche facilities to support the first aid courses delivered at the local headquarters of a voluntary ambulance service.

110. Literacy, numeracy and language support is satisfactory. Tutors adapt their teaching and learning strategies to meet the specific needs of their learners. Tutors and learners are aware of the additional support available, but some tutors are not clear how to arrange this. Initial assessment is only in place for accredited courses.

111. Resources are inadequate on early years courses. Some learners have no access to a centre library or bookstore and have insufficient access to ICT. Tutors provide many of the learning resources used in learning sessions themselves and lend their own books to learners.

Leadership and management

112. Good collaborative projects with other community services have been established to support quality curriculum development. Examples include projects with a pre-school learning alliance in the planning and delivery of early years courses, and with a voluntary ambulance service in the delivery of first aid courses, with the Leicestershire Constabulary and a local university in the delivery of taster courses for careers in the police and health services.

113. Information on the recruitment, achievement and progression of learners is unreliable. Managers are unable to interpret clearly the centrally collated statistical data they are provided with. The quality of data is not adequate to support planning and course development.

114. Not all staff understand the range of provision and opportunities for progression available to learners. Learners have insufficient knowledge of the courses running outside their local area. Managers are not aware of the full range of provision in this curriculum area. Opportunities for learners to progress are restricted. Insufficient planned sharing of good curriculum practice takes place. The teaching and learning observation scheme is not sufficiently developed and does not clearly lead to

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improvement across the provision. Managers are not aware of the full range of provision in this curriculum area. However, community learning managers are responsive to the identified needs of learners in their community.

Visual & performing arts & media

Visual & performing arts & media		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts - Adult and community learning	2433	3

Arts

Strengths

- good standard of work for most learners
- good retention
- very good teaching in the adult education college
- good resources

Weaknesses

- insufficient reflection of cultural diversity of community in course content
- insufficient sharing of good practice
- ineffective use of management information

Achievement and standards

115. Most learners' work is of a good standard. Learners are committed and develop good technical skills in arts and crafts. Most repeat learners progressively develop their skills and apply them in interesting and innovative ways. In the best classes observed learners develop good skills of critical analysis. This knowledge and understanding enables them to broaden their ideas, produce more creative pieces, progressively develop their visual language and define their personal taste. In an art workshop learners with no experience of art since school produced bold compositions based on the work of contemporary artists. These were translated from two-dimensional visual images into objects for use in the home. The learners acknowledge that the process has given them a better understanding of form and colour. They now feel confident to apply these skills to gardening and interior design. In embroidery and bead classes, two learners had won national competitions. Learners acknowledge the wider benefits of learning to their personal development and confidence. Some learners have become sufficiently competent and confident to use their skills commercially.

116. In watercolour classes learners' work is of a satisfactory standard. These learners rely too much on the use of secondary source materials such as postcards and photographs as stimulus for their work. This results in a formulaic approach to painting techniques. Too many learners do not wish to be challenged by exposure to new approaches and materials and are content to attend the classes without further

exploration of ideas and techniques.

117. Most courses have good retention, with many learners attending for the full duration of the programme. Only 9 per cent of all learners in 2003-04 left courses early. There are no differences in retention between minority ethnic groups. The attendance rate during the inspection period was 71.3 per cent.

Quality of education and training

118. Teaching in the college is very good, with all teaching observed there being graded better than satisfactory. Tutors set challenging and diverse activities which encourage learners to extend their skills and knowledge and to explore ways of working which are totally new to them. This encourages learners to be innovative. The learners have a very broad range of prior experience and skills. Tutors manage diverse groups of learners well, which include those who have not studied since school as well as art graduates and practising professionals. Learners receive good individual support and constructive feedback in practical classes to help them improve further. Tutors use learners' work effectively as a learning resource, and use critiques to evaluate and discuss pieces of work. Tutors draw from a range of 20th century art movements to illustrate different techniques. Despite some very good teaching, 12 per cent of the teaching is unsatisfactory. The weaker teaching is in community classes.

119. Specialist accommodation is of a good standard throughout the settings and much of it has been purpose built. Several workshops and studios have specialist library facilities available for the learners. One centre offers access to the internet for learners to carry out research. The studios, workshops and general areas have good displays of visual source materials and learners' work. Venues are accessible for learners with restricted mobility. The Vista centre is a very good resource for visually impaired learners. The facility is very attractive, well maintained and includes tactile displays appropriate for the users of the centre.

120. Tutors use some good learning materials, many of which are differentiated. However, the content of courses has insufficient cultural diversity. A few courses, such as Punjabi sewing, are targeted at minority ethnic groups. However, insufficient use is made of art materials and traditions from the cultures represented in the community as source materials for researching and developing ideas for arts and crafts. Too much reliance is placed on materials drawn from European cultural traditions. Language skills are not always developed on specialist targeted courses.

121. Greater attention has recently been given to a more careful definition of learning outcomes in most courses. Individual learning outcomes and progress towards their achievement are monitored on some courses. Tutors work flexibly to ensure that informal assessment is carried out continuously in the classes, and this forms part of the individual support that learners receive.

122. The range of programmes is satisfactory, with a wide choice of subjects offered and

some opportunities for progression. Minority ethnic groups are under-represented in the curriculum area. Eighteen per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups, compared with approximately 30 per cent of the population in the Leicester City area. Ten per cent of the learners in the college are from minority ethnic groups.

123. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory. Tutors respond to learners' additional support needs when they are identified. Learners with restricted mobility are integrated with groups in the college and in community settings. In one art class, a learner with a hearing impairment was provided with a signer so he could progress at the same pace as other learners.

Leadership and management

124. Internal verification of accredited courses is satisfactory. The self-assessment report accurately recognises many of the areas for improvement identified by the inspection. The teaching and observation grades awarded by internal observers are similar in profile to those awarded by inspectors. Tutors contribute to the self-assessment process through course reviews.

125. Some features of leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Insufficient sharing of good practice takes place across the clusters. Attendance of part-time tutors at curriculum review meetings and staff development events is poor. The standard of teaching across the settings is variable and the processes through which courses are planned, managed and delivered are inconsistent. The wide range of grades awarded for teaching and learning reflect the variation in standards.

126. Ineffective use is made of management information. Numerical data is collected but not translated into information for the effective monitoring of equality of opportunity. No progression data is collected. The service does not monitor retention and achievement in relation to equality of opportunity. Information is not systematically collected to support curriculum review and self-assessment, and quality assurance processes have an insufficient effect on the learners' experience. Information on learners' performance and progression is based on anecdotal information. Individual learning outcomes have only recently been introduced and there is insufficient information with which to measure learner achievement.

English, languages & communications

English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>English</i> - Adult and community learning	355	3
<i>Languages</i> - Adult and community learning	1550	3

English

Strengths

- good attainment in creative writing
- good teaching and learning in the adult education college

Weaknesses

- insufficient planning of progression opportunities
- poor achievement rates

Languages

Strengths

- good attainment in most languages
- good teaching and learning in the adult education college
- particularly broad curriculum in modern foreign languages

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates
- inadequate identification of learning goals
- insufficient planning of progression opportunities

Achievement and standards

127. Achievement rates on accredited qualifications are unsatisfactory. The overall success rate for 2002-03 is 43 per cent. Few learners on GCSE courses achieve higher-grade pass rates. Indian learners have a particularly poor success rate of 18 per cent, compared with a 45 per cent success rate for white British learners. Seventy-two per cent of learners on accredited courses are taking OCN-accredited qualifications. In modern foreign languages, learners typically decide not to produce complete portfolios for accreditation.

128. Learners' attainment is good in creative writing and modern foreign languages. Modern foreign languages learners can speak with fluency and can engage in discussion. Learners in the writing school produce good-quality writing and give constructive feedback on each other's work. Retention is satisfactory, at 84 per cent. Retention is particularly high for non-accredited courses at the college, at above 90 per cent. However, the autumn mid-course review of modern languages at the adult college showed much lower retention of 76 per cent. Retention for 2002-03 fluctuated between subjects, at 77 per cent in English, 86 per cent in AS/A2 and GCSE languages and 93 per cent in other accredited provision. Evidence from registers shows that some learners are not being withdrawn after a period of absence.

Quality of education and training

129. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Over 60 per cent of teaching overall is good but its quality is much better in the college. Seventy-five per cent of lessons in the college are good, whereas in community settings only 38 per cent are good. Some teaching of modern foreign languages is very good. In a beginners' French lesson learners had made such rapid progress that they were able to narrate rehearsed topics in French fluently and accurately. Tutors enhance learning through good relationships and by creating a pleasant and enjoyable atmosphere. Most sessions are well planned and offer a suitable range of activities which keep learners focused. For example, learners in an advanced Spanish class used the native language to compare arrangements for maternity leave between different countries in Europe. Learners produce written testimonies praising the support given by tutors. In most modern foreign languages classes, effective use is made of the foreign language as a medium of learning.

130. In weaker lessons learners are too passive, the range of teaching methods is not wide enough, and learners are given insufficient opportunities to make decisions and think for themselves. In weaker modern foreign language lessons tutors and learners use English too much. Some lessons start late, and lateness by learners is not always adequately checked.

131. Resources are satisfactory. Most tutors at the adult education college have qualifications in the subject and have teaching qualifications. In the writing school, most tutors are practising writers and are able to give practical, relevant and up-to-date information on writing for publication. However, only 47 per cent of tutors in the writing school have a teaching qualification. Over three-quarters of modern foreign language tutors and all GCSE English tutors in the college are qualified teachers.

132. Most rooms are pleasant and well decorated. Some accommodation for modern foreign languages in the college and in community settings is inappropriate, with poor acoustics and an inappropriate match between the group size and the room. However, one community setting provides an outstanding, state-of-the-art facility for teaching modern foreign languages. In some community settings, some GCSE English classes are in rooms which are accessible only by a staircase, even though learners with disabilities are present in these classes. In GCSE English classes, texts chosen do not reflect the

ethnic diversity of the groups.

133. The identification of learning goals is inadequate. Insufficient initial assessment takes place in some classes. In modern foreign languages classes, a self-assessment form is used effectively to ensure that learners are recruited to the correct level. However, insufficient use is made of initial assessment to develop individual learning plans. In non-accredited classes, individual learning goals are sometimes identified, but they are not recorded in enough depth. Few short-term learning goals are set. Learning outcomes are sometimes recorded as having been achieved without enough firm evidence of achievement, and individual learning plans are simply a record of attendance rather than progress and achievement.

134. The provision is highly responsive to community needs. The curriculum offer in modern foreign languages is particularly broad, in accredited and non-accredited provision and in the college and community settings. Language courses on offer include French, Italian, Spanish, Punjabi, Gujarati, Thai, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, Urdu, Japanese, Turkish, German, Greek, Portuguese and Swedish. Learners comment positively on the choice and breadth of provision in the city. However, the curriculum offer in English is limited to GCSE and one pre-GCSE course at the college.

135. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Community learning centres and the college provide clear, attractive publicity materials and course brochures. Many learners who telephoned for information have been given helpful advice. Learners in modern foreign languages currently determine their own appropriate level by identifying their own prior experience and knowledge. However, a more thorough system with clearer guidance is being developed. At one community setting, many learners have successfully applied for financial support with fees and books. The college provides good information brochures for learners. Reliable information is readily available.

136. Progression routes are not always clear to learners. Insufficient information is available on progression opportunities between clusters. For example, no clear progression route exists between creative writing classes offered as literacy, numeracy and language skills classes in community settings and the college's writing school classes, which start at level 4.

Leadership and management

137. The languages co-ordinator is taking action to make improvements in this area of learning. A pilot system of self-assessment has been introduced, the number of formal meetings and training sessions has been increased and the procedures for the observation of teaching and learning have been formalised. The college, with its various partners, has successfully attracted additional funds for a number of interesting initiatives.

138. Insufficient planning and co-ordination between clusters takes place. The college co-ordinators and the community settings have little contact with each other. In languages, a best practice tutor role has been established to support teachers and to encourage sharing of good practice, but this has not yet been fully implemented. There

are no curriculum co-ordinators responsible for work in the community settings. Decisions about the curriculum offer in community settings are generally made by the centre managers in response to local demand.

139. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The writing school has attempted to increase its recruitment of minority ethnic learners, and the proportion in the writing school has risen from 16 per cent in 2002-03 to 22 per cent in the current year. For example, the school has promoted talks by Asian and African-Caribbean writers and journalists and organised book weekends featuring literature written in English by Asian and African writers. However, despite these initiatives, the proportion of learners from minority ethnic communities is low in the area of learning overall. Currently, approximately 80 per cent of learners are white British which is significantly higher than their representation in the city's population. No monitoring of the retention and achievement of minority ethnic groups has taken place in the settings. Data on achievement and retention is unreliable for all groups.

140. Community settings provide friendly, convenient venues for learners who might otherwise have difficulty in accessing learning, for example those with disabilities or childcare commitments. Reception and administrative staff are often from minority ethnic communities. Learners with disabilities receive satisfactory support. A classroom assistant helps learners with severe disabilities.

141. Quality assurance is satisfactory. An extensive programme of observation of teaching and learning has been established in the college and in some clusters. Observers provide detailed and constructive feedback. The college provides a programme of support provided when observations are unsatisfactory, with a second observation then being carried out. In the settings, observations are not carried out by subject specialists. Tutors are involved in the development of the self-assessment report. The self-assessment report for the area of learning is realistic and recognised, at least partially, most strengths and weaknesses.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Literacy</i> - Adult and community learning	719	3
<i>ESOL</i> - Adult and community learning	1020	4
<i>Community learning</i> - Adult and community learning	358	2

Literacy

Strengths

- some good teaching and learning
- high level of support for learners

Weaknesses

- incomplete recording of learners' progress
- insufficiently thorough implementation of quality assurance

ESOL

Strengths

- good development of language skills
- good support and encouragement for learners
- responsive provision to local community needs

Weaknesses

- unsatisfactory attendance on adult education college course
- poor achievement rates on accredited courses
- insufficient focus on individual learning needs
- narrow range of teaching and learning activities
- ineffective use of initial and diagnostic assessment
- insufficient recording of learners' progress
- insufficient curriculum co-ordination
- inadequate quality assurance

Community learning

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- very effective support for learners with mental health problems
- well-designed provision for homeless adults and those in temporary accommodation
- good provision for adults with mental health problems

Weaknesses

- insufficient resources
- insufficient formal assessment of literacy, numeracy and language support needs

Achievement and standards

142. Achievement rates are poor on accredited courses. The service recognises this weakness in the foundation self-assessment report. The achievement rate on accredited ESOL courses is poor, with only 20 per cent of learners successfully achieving the OCN qualification. The service has been slow to introduce accreditation in literacy and numeracy, and the number of learners with mental health problems taking up the accreditation opportunity is small. Achievement rates for the small number of learners with mental health problems taking accredited courses are good, at 96 per cent in computing and 88 per cent in creative arts in 2002-03. In addition, 11 learners entered employment and 10 entered mainstream education at further and higher levels. In 2003-04 to date, 13 learners have entered employment, four have entered voluntary employment and seven have moved into mainstream education.

143. Remit learners on courses not leading to a qualification make good progress. They gain new practical skills and enhance their knowledge, redevelop concentration and memory, gain confidence and self-esteem and are able to contribute to a group learning experience. Many learners, in all foundation programmes, make significant gains in confidence. One learner is now able to help her son with his reading. Other learners have passed a few OCN units and have improved their oral skills. One learner has passed a literacy test and is now working towards the numeracy test. Learners on ESOL programmes develop language skills well. Tutors focus on developing learners' written and spoken language skills and learners talk readily about being able to write simple letters and improving their ability to communicate at work. During the inspection, the average attendance rate was 72 per cent. Overall attendance for ESOL learners was unsatisfactory, averaging only 52 per cent at the college's adult education main building and community learning centre..

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144. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good in the Remit provision and mostly good in literacy and numeracy. However in ESOL more than 13 per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. In Remit classes the distinctive needs of individual learners are effectively planned for, and productive learning takes place. In classes for learners with learning difficulties and on Remit courses, detailed learning session plans take good account of the different needs of learners and focus on individual work. Learners are well motivated, working on relevant materials and drawing on personal experience.

145. Good attention is given to different learning styles in literacy and numeracy particularly for dyslexic learners, although insufficient evaluation of the learning achieved takes place during sessions. Learning session plans are completed well and show how activities will be covered. A variety of teaching methods is used including small group work, the effective use of open questions, quizzes and the demonstration of practical skills.

146. Insufficient focus is placed on individual learning needs in ESOL classes, and some class activities are insufficiently varied. Unsatisfactory teaching is particularly evident in courses where learners study a practical subject as well as English. In some learning sessions observed vocational skills tutors were not qualified to teach language skills, and in one session learners were asked to write even though they were not literate and could not complete the set tasks. A significant weakness in ESOL is the labelling of vocational classes as for ESOL learners when the tutor is not qualified to teach ESOL and language learning is not the purpose of the class. In classes with mixed levels of ability and attainment, the more able learners are not sufficiently challenged or set additional tasks to extend their knowledge. In oral work tutors do not always make good use of the prior experience of learners as an aid to discussion. In the better sessions tutors give learners positive feedback, remind them of learning goals and check on learners' understanding of tasks set.

147. Individual learners in most Remit classes and those for adults with learning difficulties record their progress and topics covered, with help from the tutor or support worker if required. Tutors know their learners well and are encouraging and supportive, and many work sensitively with less confident members of the class. Many learners give positive feedback about their learning experience.

148. Provision is responsive to meet the needs of learners. The service offers extensive community provision, well-designed provision for homeless adults and those in temporary accommodation and good provision for those learners with mental health problems. Good outreach work is taking place with particular minority ethnic groups and recent arrivals. Staff create a productive and purposeful learning environment at most community centres. Courses are offered across the city at a range of venues and levels. Community development strategies are targeted at local neighbourhoods and vulnerable groups. A wide range of courses is available and childcare is often provided. In one community centre, the staff work with the local school to encourage the mothers to attend ESOL classes. They use the mothers' interest in cookery as the basis for teaching. The provision for homeless adults and those in temporary accommodation is flexible and

creative. It takes place in various hostels, enabling the learners to take their first step in formal learning for the first time for many years. Programmes for adults with mental health problems take into account the specific needs of this group. Learners can join the programme at any stage, which enables those who have to leave the classes because of ill health to come back and take up their learning where they left off. Potential learners do not have to wait too long between referral and beginning a course. Most classes take place between 10:00 and 16:00, which suits the needs of this group of learners. A wide range of courses is offered, some of which lead to qualifications. Progression opportunities are narrow for learners in some literacy and numeracy and ESOL classes in some community venues.

149. Learners generally receive good personal support. The college's student support organiser and a dedicated support worker for ESOL learners provide personal support, advice and guidance on progression opportunities. Learners comment on the friendly staff who support them well. Effective use is made of volunteers and support assistants, some of whom work with individual learners while others work with the whole group. Qualified staff at the college and in workshops offer support for learners with dyslexia. At the main centre used by adults with mental health problems, a dedicated guidance worker provides impartial advice on progression routes, helps organise voluntary work placements and supports learners entering employment. This centre also has a well-equipped information room with internet access which enables those learners who have difficulty in expressing their needs to obtain useful information. The procedures for gaining access to the learners' support fund take too long to complete and not enough skilled workers are available to meet learners' needs in some areas such as translation services.

150. Many foundation settings provide a suitable learning environment. A few centres make effective use of ICT in some literacy and numeracy classes. Accommodation is welcoming and adequate or better in most settings. However, a few rooms are of an unsuitable size or are too noisy. Some rooms used for literacy teaching are not fit for purpose. Although many tutors in ESOL and literacy and numeracy have general teaching qualifications, too few have specialist curriculum training. Too few ESOL tutors have sufficient specialist knowledge of teaching methods to rectify weaknesses in their teaching. Some Remit classes have insufficient learning resources, and, learners are unable to complete tasks promptly because they have to share equipment.

151. The assessment and recording of learners' progress is inadequate. No formalised diagnostic assessment is carried out for learners with mental health problems. Initial assessment is not completed in all literacy classes. In a few instances, learners do not receive timely support to meet their needs. Initial assessment does not always support target-setting, and learners' progress reviews are not carried out systematically in literacy and numeracy courses. However, learners on Remit courses receive good and regular progress reviews. Individual learning plans have been introduced only recently in some areas, and are not used consistently on foundation courses. Learners in some literacy, numeracy and ESOL classes are not always aware of their learning goals. Initial and diagnostic assessments are not used effectively to plan teaching and learning. They are not sufficiently thorough and learners are sometimes placed on a course that is not

suitable.

Leadership and management

152. Curriculum management and quality assurance are satisfactory for most Remit learners. The planned expansion of the Remit programmes has been managed satisfactorily and some good work is being carried out with partner organisations. The implementation of quality assurance systems is not sufficiently thorough in ESOL and literacy and numeracy. Insufficient specialist curriculum input and course co-ordination take place in ESOL and literacy and numeracy programmes. Few classroom observations are carried out by subject specialists and improvements are not always identified. Insufficient specialist advice from a curriculum specialist is sought before foundation programmes are set up in the community. Not enough trained tutors are available to offer classes above basic level in the community learning centres. Classes are inaccurately described as offering language development opportunities alongside the opportunity to develop a vocational skill. The vocational tutors are not qualified to teach language skills. Learners in some community learning centres do not have enough opportunities to gain accreditation and to progress. More able ESOL learners often do not achieve their potential and comment that they have been studying at the same level because little else is on offer in the local area. Data is not used effectively to plan learning and for developing new provision. Some good sharing of practice takes place at the college but this is not replicated across the service.

153. Not enough active promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity takes place. The teaching and learning materials used in ESOL and literacy and numeracy do not reflect the diversity of the learners or the communities they come from. Insufficient focus is placed on topics relating to gender and disability. Learners' own diverse backgrounds and experiences are not used frequently enough in most classes as a resource to enrich teaching and learning. Data collected on ethnicity is not used to plan or influence the course offer. Remit provides good opportunities for groups of learners who have severe barriers to learning but staff have had insufficient specialist training opportunities on working with learners not traditionally involved in learning.

Family learning

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	2281	2

Strengths

- good attainment
- very effective teaching and learning
- good range of programmes
- good support for diverse needs of learners
- good programme management and development

Weaknesses

- insufficient recording of individual learners' progress

Achievement and standards

154. Individual attainment and achievement of personal and social skills are good on most courses. Learners enhance their knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, and are more confident about supporting their children. Learners are able to talk about the progress they have made since joining family learning programmes. One learner had felt inadequate and inferior before enrolling on a numeracy course, because her child always had to approach her father for help. Through her achievements on the numeracy course, she now feels 'equal' to her husband and better able to support her child. Other learners develop good creative skills and make learning aids for their children such as games, puppets and story books, often of an extremely high standard. One group of parents who attended a multi-cultural version of the story sacks programme are seeking funding to set up in business making resources. They have made a video of their work and are attracting attention nationally for their innovative approach. Learning also increases some parents' motivation for further study and career progression, helping in schools and training as classroom assistants. A course in teaching BSL to different generations of a family effectively enhances communication and also prepares learners for progression onto a stage 1 accredited course in BSL. Learning has a measurable effect on the community ethos and success of schools. Head teachers and community tutors testify to the parents' improved confidence in communicating with the school and are starting to note enhanced attainment in children. One school gained particular credit in an Ofsted inspection for its community involvement.

155. Achievement rates are satisfactory overall. Reliable data on overall attainment was not available during inspection. The percentage of family literacy and numeracy provision leading to accreditation is low. Some learners, mainly those on longer family

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literacy and numeracy courses, have access to external accreditation. Seventy-nine per cent of these learners have achieved an award in literacy or numeracy in the year 2003-04 to date. Retention for the year 2003-04 averages 95 per cent across all programmes. No figures have been collated for previous years.

Quality of education and training

156. Teaching and learning in family learning are very effective. Sixty-six per cent of learning sessions observed were good or very good, and 14 per cent were outstanding. Only one session was graded poor. Teaching is inspirational, appropriate in level and content, and very well paced. It captures the interests of all learners, adults as well as children, and draws on a good range of learning styles. Most activities are well planned and tutors use good-quality resources and learning aids. Learners on a numeracy class explored the properties of solid shapes interactively in 'feely bags.' Most tutors start sessions by going over previous work and summarising new learning outcomes, allowing learners to reflect on their own learning. Some tutors do not effectively cover all learning outcomes, and do not mention the parenting skills to be attained. Most sessions either incorporate or culminate in a joint activity with children. The tutor in one numeracy class concluded with a number game to demonstrate to parents the skills they can use and develop in teaching their children. In another session, the tutors played loud music while asking learners to complete a questionnaire as an introduction to a discussion about listening skills. Tutors encourage learners to try out skills at home, and check up on learning through homework diaries. Wider family learning incorporates a wide range of practical skills including dressmaking techniques, measuring the health benefits of a walk in the park, and learning Indian head massage, with children practising on their parents in a reversal of the natural stereotype.

157. A wide range of programmes is available in family literacy, language and numeracy and wider family learning. Programmes are offered at levels ranging from entry level 1 to level 2 and at a variety of locations, particularly in deprived wards of the city. Courses are held in schools, a church, libraries, community and Sure Start centres and adult education centres. Some courses offer accreditation, through the OCN or national tests in literacy and numeracy, while others act as tasters with requirements for formal achievement. A wide variety of subjects is offered including Spanish, music, cookery, health-related programmes and ICT. Provision is specifically targeted at the needs of particular groups. Examples include communication skills for parents of children with hearing impairments, a session for a Somali women's group and a music course for parents of children with visual impairments. The service also uses half-day workshops to attract more mixed groups of parents into learning. One numeracy workshop succeeded in bringing two fathers into the centre for the first time. The city is piloting Early Start programmes for pre-school children this year, but is adapting its format to meet specific requirements. Provision is available at various times during the day and at evenings. Two courses run on Saturdays. The service collaborated with the county council in running its family learning weekend activities.

158. Good support is available for the diverse needs of learners. A funded crèche is

available at every venue where it is needed. Learners receive help with transport when they travel out of their neighbourhood. The service uses interpreters for a range of community languages, and communicators for deaf learners. Many tutors are multi-lingual. The ratio of tutors to learners is good, with tutors often team-teaching and schools frequently providing a home-school teacher as an additional resource. In one session, two tutors interchanged between using Gujarati, Punjabi and Hindi, but also involved two learners with different cultural backgrounds together in a paired activity so that they could learn about each other's languages. At the same school, three tutors team-taught a 'fun with ICT' class, with eight families accessing activities on laptop computers purchased by the service. Family learning provision contributes actively to breaking down cultural barriers. A dress-making class teaches 'western' styles of clothing at the request of Muslim learners who want to try these out. The use of multi-cultural story sacks, involving 18 schools, brings in language, images and stories from around the world.

159. Resources are satisfactory overall. Tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced for their role, with family literacy and numeracy tutors having a background in literacy, numeracy and language, and Early Start tutors having some experience with pre-school provision. Where necessary, specialists are brought in to complement delivery. For instance, a speech therapist with experience of working with deaf children teaches a short course on communication skills, and another contributed to one session on the difficulties children face in developing speech. A dietician advises on healthy eating, and librarians run story-telling sessions for parents and children. Accommodation varies from satisfactory to very good. The better accommodation offers good spacious and comfortable rooms, where tutors display learners' work. Some rooms in schools are cramped and furniture is designed for small children rather than adults. Paper-based resources and guidance notes for learners are satisfactory, although some sessions rely too much on photocopied worksheets. Access to other resources, such as craft materials, and money and transport for trips, is good. Learners are able to borrow books, jigsaws and other learning materials for home use. Resources made by learners are attractive and often laminated for durability.

160. Insufficient recording of individual learners' progress takes place. Most tutors have a good understanding of initial assessment and the need to adapt work to meet the needs and interests of learners. However, in some cases initial assessment is incomplete, not recorded in a learner's file or not available to the tutor in planning a session. On one occasion, activities provided in a session were inappropriate to the skill levels of the learners. Tutors in the best programmes use innovative approaches to self-assessment for learners to record their starting points and to monitor their progress. In a course to encourage healthy exercise, learners are given pedometers and rate their performance at the start of the programme and their subsequent improvements. In another course, learners rejected a 'fun' way of portraying their starting attitudes in favour of a more formal record.

161. Tutors are actively encouraged to use diverse methods of recording learners' progress. Some use graphic representations, while others encourage parents and children to keep learning diaries. All family literacy and numeracy and 'keeping up with

the children' courses have a common format for individual learning plans, with targets mapped to the literacy or numeracy adult core curriculum. Early Start tutors use a format recommended by the Basic Skills Agency for recording the frequency of parental support and interventions at home. However, in most sessions, none of these formats is used as a working tool to assist learning, and tutors complete their records of progress in their own time away from the class. No regular time is set aside for individual progress reviews. Where group learning goals are pre-set, it is expected that individual learning goals are added. These are not always completed and learning goals are often insufficiently specific or measurable. As learning goals are attained, a date is entered in the plan, but often no supporting evidence is included to show what activity or piece of work this is linked to. Plans are not checked or audited for their sufficiency, yet they are used as a tool to mark achievement of non-accredited learning. Tutors are reluctant to deter learners by introducing too much paperwork or formal assessment, but in the cases where progress is being recorded effectively, learners are grateful for this boost to their confidence.

Leadership and management

162. The management of family learning and its rapid development is good. A family learning co-ordinator manages provision across the city, and an Early Start co-ordinator leads this area. A clear strategy for family learning is in place and both the strategy and action plan have been issued for consultation to a range of partners. The plan has precise targets. The self-assessment report for family learning was written when the co-ordinator was new in post. Changes have occurred rapidly and the report is no longer up-to-date with the developments that have taken place.

163. Part-time tutors are well supported. Good communication takes place through a newsletter, telephone calls and regular monitoring visits. New staff, including those engaged through partner organisations, are given a personal induction and are supported through work shadowing and team-teaching, sometimes by one of the co-ordinators. Tutors have received a good range of staff development in the past six months. These sessions have been well attended. Some tutors have received individual support on keeping records, and one deaf tutor has been given personalised training through the medium of sign language. The system for observing teaching and learning is well planned and executed. Ninety-five per cent of current teaching staff have been observed. Although no regular format for recording actions has been agreed, memos and reports show that action has been taken, including the closure of one very poor class.

164. Partnership arrangements are used actively to promote learning opportunities for disadvantaged groups. Good working arrangements have been established with other sections of the council including early years provision, the library service and the special needs teaching service. External partners include Sure Start agencies, voluntary sector groups and a resource centre for deaf people. The service contracts out its longer family literacy and numeracy programmes to a local college of further education, sanctioning separate but parallel systems for the management of that part of the service by the college. Those systems are broadly comparable. The service contributes to a national group for benchmarking good practice in the sector. The family learning co-ordinator

approves bids for funding from external groups, imposing clear success criteria and minimum standards. Each programme supported is evaluated at its conclusion and decisions are made about continuation funding. The service uses community tutors particularly creatively. They develop ideas originating from their community contacts and local knowledge, prepare a bid and then are often involved in the trial and delivery of the programme. They are well supported in this by being included in staff development events.

Community development

Community development		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	2221	3

Strengths

- good attainment for many individuals and groups
- good use of external funding to enhance provision
- very effective local partnerships

Weaknesses

- ineffective resourcing of specialist learning support in some centres
- inadequate measures to capture and disseminate good practice in projects

Achievement and standards

165. Many individuals participate in learning through support from a wide range of community development activities. Learners progress from being people who do not perceive learning as being important in their adult lives, to those who attempt short courses and other first-step learning opportunities. For example, one learner started an IT course in 2002 having never touched a computer before. The learner has progressed through several IT courses for beginners and various levels of a basic computer literacy qualification and is now about to take a business administration course exam.

166. Many learners have used the skills and knowledge they have gained and have progressed to work in their local community centre in either voluntary or paid jobs. Several unemployed learners have followed structured learning programmes leading to qualifications, gaining the skills and confidence to move onto higher education courses and to find employment in their own communities. For example, one woman from a minority ethnic group accompanied her son to a course at a local centre, both started learning together and both progressed to an access to higher education course. The son went to university but the mother could not afford to attend. Instead she took an advice and guidance course and is now working at the centre in paid employment as an advice and guidance worker. At another centre, an unemployed father without qualifications attended a range of courses to acquire the necessary skills for a job in a new leisure centre being built in his own community. He has successfully gained employment and is now receiving further training with the local council. Many learners now have increased confidence and feel able to take on responsibilities in their own communities. For example, one learner works in a local voluntary family centre appointing new staff, something she says she never thought would be possible. At another centre, a learner with severe physical disabilities from a minority ethnic community has gained sufficient

confidence to leave her home regularly to attend her local neighbourhood centre. There she meets other people with similar disabilities and also speak with other women in her first language. Her confidence has grown to such an extent that she is now able to go out to the local shops with other learners. Two learners with learning difficulties have not only trained to become advocates themselves but now contribute to the training of other learners with learning difficulties. They act as mentors for these learners to become advocates for people with learning difficulties.

167. The standard of learners' work seen in classes is satisfactory. Many centres have interesting and stimulating displays of artwork. Learners are issued with certificates of attendance and have opportunities to achieve qualifications in areas such as food hygiene, first aid, basic computer literacy, BSL, NVQs in childcare and teaching qualifications. In 2002-03, 54 per cent of learners achieved a qualification.

Quality of education and training

168. Good use is made of additional and external funding to enhance learning and community facilities. Access to many different kinds of funding has been made easier by the LEA to enhance the kinds of learning and support that local communities are able to offer learners. Much of the funding has been used to improve the quality and range of accommodation and facilities available to communities. Refurbished local community centres are well decorated and furnished and have attractive leisure and learning facilities. Learners find the improved buildings attractive and welcoming. Health centres have been added as an integral part of many community buildings and this has increased their overall capacity for different uses by community members. However, learners in one centre commented on the insufficient space to accommodate all the activities taking place. In some centres the noise from adjoining rooms causes disruption. The service has invested in the purchase of specific resources, such as a new cooker to enable cooking courses to take place and additional laptop computers that can be taken out and used by local tenants' groups. In many centres, external funding has been used to refurbish crèche facilities and playgroups. Courses are offered free of charge to remove barriers to learning, with childcare and, in some clusters, travel costs being covered. Resources to support learning are generally satisfactory and some are good.

169. Considerable energy has gone into creating strong partnerships between the local authority and local community groups to strengthen and encourage greater participation in learning. Leicester's many and diverse cultural and faith groups are well represented on management groups and community associations which reflect accurately the local community. Learning opportunities are made easily accessible to local people and this enables diverse communities to meet together and develop good relationships. For example, a centre in the Belgrave area provides accommodation and learning opportunities for a group of women from minority ethnic communities who are physically disabled. All women have been referred to the group by social services. Local development workers and staff in community centres work closely with statutory and voluntary education providers to ensure that learning opportunities are responsive to local community needs. Examples include a partnership with an association for deaf

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people to train their signers to become more effective teachers. The service has good partnerships with employment projects on local estates to provide training to enable local people to apply for jobs. For example, NHS Workforce Development courses designed to enhance access to job opportunities in the NHS are set up in response to the needs of local communities. English language courses for overseas graduates and professionals living in the area have also been established. Additional courses are set up in response to requests from learners, such as courses in signing and alternative therapies. Learners benefit from the Directgov online IT facilities available in local centres.

170. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better learning sessions, learners make good progress, advance their knowledge and gain in confidence. Learning activities are appropriately planned and learning objectives are clearly defined. Tutors pay attention to the fact that many learners lack confidence initially and offer a good combination of activities to engage learners' interest while enabling them to value their previous experience and expertise. For example, in one session learners were able to contribute extensively to a discussion about alternative therapies, drawing from knowledge from their own cultures in activities such as Indian head massage and reflexology. In some sessions, good use is made of e-learning. Not all tutors check sufficiently that learners understand before moving on to a new topic. In a few sessions an insufficient range of resources is used and tutors rely too much on worksheets.

171. Staff in local centres use formal and informal approaches to consult on and identify the needs of individuals and groups. Where learners are participating in formal learning, tutors set individual goals and satisfactorily monitor learners' progress. Learners are given advice and guidance as well as support on personal matters such as housing, benefits and family concerns. Staff are sensitive to language and cultural matters. Learners have good access to interpreters and specialist IT equipment. Crèches are readily available during daytime classes, which allows many learners to participate.

172. Learners in some centres have insufficient access to specialist support. Funding requests for additional support, such as for adaptive technology, take far too long to access, especially for learners on short courses. This has a detrimental effect on the capacity of some learners to achieve. Some centres do not know how specialist support, for example for learners with dyslexia, would be provided if money was available. One centre provides additional help with portfolio-building to learners with poor literacy skills. Not enough staff have the necessary skills and experience to provide literacy, numeracy or language support and few have received any training in this area. Learners do not have enough opportunities to attend specialist literacy and numeracy classes or to get support with these skills as an integral part of their course. One centre in a community with large numbers of people who speak English as an additional language does not provide any ESOL support or discrete courses to develop these skills.

Leadership and management

173. The leadership and management of individual projects are satisfactory. Some good monitoring and auditing of individual projects takes place at local levels. Individual projects are evaluated at different stages, and the effect they have had on individuals and

local communities is monitored. Specific projects aimed at widening participation are well documented. The use of funding is strictly monitored. Learners are asked to evaluate projects at different stages of their development. Data is collected on the numbers of learners recruited and those who are new to learning. Tutors are invited to LEA training programmes but these are often held at times which mean that they are unable to attend. Local centre managers attempt to arrange alternative training sessions for these tutors.

174. The service does not have an effective strategy to capture or share good practice and knowledge gained in community development projects. Valuable lessons learned from one project are not systematically passed on to others. Staff from a recently started NHS partnership project are not sharing their experiences with two other projects about to begin in the city. Plans to capture information in two large community development projects which are about to end are insufficiently comprehensive. Community groups and learners have expressed concerns about the sustainability of two large development projects and the potential loss of opportunities to meet their increased learning expectations and aims. Dissemination of the findings from projects across the LEA has been insufficient and work in one area of the city has little effect on work in other clusters. Very little progression data is available to indicate what has happened to learners recruited through these projects. Knowledge from data is not always shared effectively between staff in local centres, and centre managers do not have sufficiently detailed knowledge of what information is available. This information is not collated centrally across the city or analysed to identify trends or areas for improvement. Data on the overall numbers of learners engaged in learning through community development activities is not available. Data on learners' progression is also incomplete, making it difficult to quantify the scale of the successes. Data on 'new' learners is available in local clusters and is collated centrally by the LEA, with aggregate figures provided each year on returns to the LSC.

175. Progression routes for learners on first-step learning activities are not fully developed in all areas. Some ESOL learners have been in the same class for two years. New learners wanting ESOL teaching are not able to join classes. Some tutors providing advice and guidance have a narrow view of progression routes.