INSPECTION REPORT

North East Lincolnshire LEA

09 October 2004

ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas 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

North East Lincolnshire LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. North East Lincolnshire Local Education Authority (the LEA), which is part of the North East Lincolnshire Council, provides learning through the adult and community learning service (the service). The service works with partners to promote equality and inclusion. It is part of the LEA's directorate of learning and childcare. The head of the service reports to the deputy director in charge of the learning division of the LEA. He in turn reports to the chief executive officer. The service has a non-statutory governing body, chaired by a co-opted governor. An elected member from the directorate of learning and childcare sits on the governing body. The service has been though several restructures, the most recent in January 2004. The head of service is supported by five full-time managers, each responsible for a geographical area as well as curriculum areas, and an information and communications technology (ICT) project worker. There are 160 staff in total. Of these, approximately 75 per cent are sessional tutors. The service runs its provision from four of its training centres. It also uses another 40 community learning venues including schools, churches, community centres, libraries and Directgov centres. The service receives approximately £1.2 million from Humberside Learning and Skills Council annually. Approximately two-thirds of the provision is accredited.

2. North East Lincolnshire has a population of approximately 158,000 of which 1.4 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. The unemployment rate in the area is 9.3 per cent. Manufacturing accounts for 20 per cent of the local economy.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Business administration, management & professional

3. There are currently 86 learners on teaching assistant courses. Three of these courses lead to national vocational qualifications (NVQs), one at level 2 and two at level 3, and are taught during the day and in the evening. These run for 36 weeks and each consists of 90 teaching hours. In addition to attendance at sessions, learners are assessed on their performance at work in local schools. There are 16 learners on level 2 courses and 47 on level 3 courses. A series of taster sessions and an introductory course are also provided and are taught during the daytime only. These last for four weeks. There are 23 learners on these courses.

4. Five part-time staff, including the course manager, teach the courses at three venues in Grimsby. All learners on the NVQ courses are women. There are two men on the introductory course. No learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds or have a disability.

Information & communications technology

5. There are currently 1,883 learners on a range of ICT courses provided at 17 locations in North East Lincolnshire including schools, libraries, resource centres and community centres. Of these 1,393 are women. Most of the courses are provided during the day. Courses are available from entry level to level 4. Accredited courses include desktop publishing, word processing, a new computer literacy course for beginners and an examination-based qualification in ICT. Non-accredited courses include digital media, photo scanning and picture editing. Short taster sessions of one to three weeks and short courses of six to 10 weeks are also provided.

6. The ICT provision works in conjunction with other curriculum areas and partners including local libraries, schools and Directgov. There are 17 tutors and a manager with ICT expertise who also has responsibilities for geographical areas. This person teaches occasionally. In addition there is a full-time IT project worker who devotes part of his time to the information management system and to the e-learning strategy.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

7. To date in 2003-04, there have been 522 enrolments on to non-accredited courses in sports that include keep-fit, tai chi and yoga, and an accredited course in football coaching at level 1. Two courses are specifically for adults with physical disabilities and/or learning difficulties. Although most courses are for mixed-ability levels, the tai chi course is provided at different levels. Courses take place during term time in the morning, afternoon and evening and last for one to two hours each session. Approximately 9 per cent of learners are men, and very few learners are from minority ethnic groups. Nine venues are used for delivering programmes, including schools, community and youth centres. Seven teaching staff work part time between two and 10 hours a week. The programme is co-ordinated by a curriculum manager who is responsible for two other curriculum areas.

Health, social care & public services

8. In 2003-04, there have been 94 enrolments on accredited courses and 34 enrolments on non-accredited courses in this curriculum area. Accredited provision comprises a certificate at level 2 and the diploma at level 3 in pre-school practice and the certificate in playwork at level 2. Two non-vocational programmes are provided in special needs and for parents of pre-school children. Four learners are men, one learner is from a minority ethnic group and two have a declared disability. The courses are located at six different venues, across the region and are managed by one full-time manager with curriculum responsibilities and five part-time tutors who are all currently employed within early years education settings. The courses are taught in conjunction with other relevant local agencies.

Visual & performing arts & media

9. In 2003-04, there have been 1,023 enrolments on accredited, non-accredited and taster courses in textiles, interior design, patchwork and quilting, felt making, theatre costume, puppet making, embroidery, painting with watercolour, painting and drawing, stained glass, soft furnishing, painting on china, lace making and life drawing. There are currently 472 learners, of whom 109 are on accredited courses. Learners can enrol throughout the year. In total, 82 per cent of learners are women and 6 per cent have a declared disability. Fifty-three per cent of learners on non-accredited courses and 49 per cent on accredited provision are above 55 years' old. There are currently 56 classes provided at 11 learning venues across the local area. All courses are part time and are provided throughout the day and in the evening, Monday to Friday. A full-time manager with co-ordinator responsibilities manages the provision and a team of 20 part-time tutors.

English, languages & communications

10. In 2003-04, there have been 263 enrolments on courses in French, German, Italian, and Spanish and 20 enrolments on two accredited British Sign Language courses. In total, 66 per cent of learners are women and 10 per cent received fee concessions. Two learners are from minority ethnic groups. The courses are accredited through the Open College Network (OCN) up to stage 2. Unaccredited courses are taught at intermediate or advanced conversation classes. Most courses last for 30 weeks, although some short taster courses last from five to nine weeks. Learners attend for one two-hour session once a week from Mondays to Fridays. Lessons take place at various times of day, with 50 per cent taught in the evening. Three venues are used to provide the courses. There are eight part-time tutors and the provision overall is managed by a specialist linguist.

Foundation programmes

11. There are currently 566 learners enrolled on courses for adults with additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities (ALDD), English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and literacy and numeracy courses. There are currently 25 ESOL courses, 25 ALDD courses and 52 literacy and numeracy courses. Literacy and numeracy courses include English and mathematics workshops and short intensive courses leading to national tests. ESOL courses include group lessons and separate interactive computer-based language learning systems. Courses are provided during the day and in the evening Monday to Friday though four adult education centres and 19 other venues. There are no weekend courses. Most courses last for 36 weeks. The provision is managed by a full-time co-ordinator, supported by five part-time basic skills project workers who each teach one session a week. Most of the teaching is provided by 28 other part-time staff.

Family learning

12. To date in 2003-04, 127 learners have enrolled on a range of non-accredited courses including taster courses, early start and play courses, and language courses for parents and carers of children under five years' old. A further 16 learners are following six story courses. The courses are provided in the morning and afternoon at a number of venues including libraries, adult learning centres and schools. The family literacy, language and numeracy provision is managed by a half-time co-ordinator and a full-time basic skills manager. Other curriculum managers contribute to the wider family learning provision. A team of six tutors and the half-time co-ordinator have some teaching responsibilities. Short projects and day-long events are also provided and include one-off family learning day events, and 17-week programmes focusing on the role of the parent in developing a child's literacy, numeracy and language skills. The provision also includes creative arts, computer skills and healthy eating. A total of 304 learners attended wider family learning events and courses. Overall, 3 per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	13
Number of inspection days	65
Number of learner interviews	482
Number of staff interviews	68
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	43
Number of partner/external agency interviews	7

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

13. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the leadership and management as well as quality assurance are good. Its arrangements for equality of opportunity are satisfactory. Business administration, management and professional, ICT, health and social care, English, languages and communications, foundation programmes and family learning are good. Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel, and visual and performing arts and media are satisfactory.

GRADES

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

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	2

Business administration, management & professional		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	86	2

Information & communications technology		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	1883	2

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation		
- Adult and community learning	95	3

Health, social care & public services		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Early years		
- Adult and community learning	51	2

Visual & performing arts & media		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	472	3

English, languages & communications		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	246	2

Foundation programmes		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL - Adult and community learning	84	2
Literacy and numeracy - Adult and community learning	338	3
Independent living and leisure skills - Adult and community learning	144	2

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	249	2

KEY FINDINGS
Achievement and standards

14. **Achievement is good** in business administration, ICT, health, social care and public services, English, languages and communications, family learning and independent living and leisure skills foundation programmes. In visual and performing arts and media, achievement is good on accredited courses. Many ESOL learners achieve first-class passes on their courses.

15. **Retention rates are excellent in health, social care and public services and good in ICT and visual and performing arts and media.**

16. **Learners' skills development is good.** In hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, learners develop good personal skills. In visual and performing arts and media, foundation provision, learners develop particularly good social and personal skills, and in family learning, there is good achievement of learners' goals.

17. **Learners' achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications is low in foundation.** For example, in 2003-04, only 23 per cent of learners achieved qualifications. However, 61 per cent of enrolled learners have literacy levels at entry level 3 or below.

Quality of education and training

18. **Teaching and learning are good.** Approximately 60 per cent of learning sessions were judged to be good or better. Tutors use an effective range of teaching methods in business administration, management and professional, and teaching is well planned to

match the qualification requirements. In hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, tutors provide particularly effective teaching to meet learners' individual needs, and have good working relationships with learners.

19. **Learner support is good.** In business administration, management and professional, tutors provide good assessment and help learners develop their portfolios. Learners on health, social care and public services programmes are provided with good, well-planned support arrangements. Foundation courses and programmes are planned to meet learners' needs focus on relevant topics and subjects. In family learning, learner support is good through effective partnerships with school and crèche staff.

20. **Tutors work well to meet the needs of employers and learners.** In business administration, management and professional, learners do progress from unemployment and voluntary status onto a nationally recognised qualification route. In health, social care and public services, there are strong local partnership links with children's information services, neighbourhood nurseries, out-of-school clubs, pathway to lone parents and the health service.

21. **Some resources are inadequate.** In business administration, management and professional, there are not enough staff for some courses and teaching groups can be too large. Some of the ICT accommodation in the outreach centres is too small. In some outreach centres used to provide literacy and numeracy and independent living and leisure skills courses, there are not enough learning resources.

22. Tutors in health, social care and public services use a narrow range of teaching and learning strategies. Most teaching is based on paper-based activities with no use of ICT learning resources. In ICT, tutors do not make sufficient use of ICT learning equipment, such as data projectors and interactive whiteboards. Tutors in visual and performing arts and media courses do not have sufficient vocational knowledge and expertise.

23. **Some learners are not able to progress adequately.** There are no progression opportunities for health, social care and public services learners studying at level 2 in playwork. Learning activities are not sufficiently demanding in visual and performing arts and media. The range of provision is narrow in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, and English, languages and communications and family learning.

24. **There is some weak target-setting.** In business administration, management and professional, the recording of learners' individual needs is poor and tutors do not use written learning plans to set individual targets. In hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, Learning goals are too general and there is no ongoing monitoring or assessment of learners' progress. Target-setting is weak on some foundation courses and in family learning.

25. **Some learners are not given adequate advice.** In visual and performing arts and media, not all learners are aware of the costs of the course and materials before enrolment. In foundation programmes, there is no strategy for information, advice and guidance given to learners.

Leadership and management

26. **Partnership arrangements are excellent.** The provider works closely with partners to identify needs, suitable venues and learners' support needs. For example, though work with the LEA's early years and childcare department, the local childcare workforce has been provided with a good range of accredited provision.

27. **Curriculum management is good in most areas of learning.** The curriculum is well planned and organised and staff have clearly identified roles and responsibilities.

28. **Management of change is good.** All staff are involved in identifying how to provide appropriate, well-targeted provision. Staff work well to manage finances, and teamworking is particularly good.

29. **There are particularly effective initiatives to widen participation by disadvantaged groups.** Extensive local partnerships are used to increase participation by specific groups. Accommodation is accessible to those with restricted mobility and/or sensory needs.

30. **The provider has implemented good measures to ensure continuous improvement.** Quality assurance is effective. Teaching and learning observations are well established. There is good use of learner and tutor feedback. Partners are fully involved in course evaluation.

31. The self-assessment process is particularly thorough. All learners, funding agencies, partners and staff are involved in the process and the current self-assessment report is generally very accurate. It correctly identified most of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors.

32. **The management information system is inefficient.** It provides data accurately to meet contract requirements, but it is not capable of monitoring learners' progress. It is not used to plan learning.

33. **There are no formal arrangements to provide literacy, language and numeracy support.** The provider relies on informal methods of identifying needs and meeting them. There is no strategy to plan, resource and manage this support for learners.

34. **The arrangements to provide learners with information, advice and guidance are not effective.** Learners do not receive significant, adequate impartial advice and guidance to help them progress.

35. **Staff carry out insufficient work to improve participation by learners from minority ethnic groups.** There are not enough partnerships with learners from minority ethnic community groups. Staff have not received sufficient relevant training in race and gender awareness.

36. **The provider does not carry out sufficient audit and analysis** to identify trends and improve the provision. There is no yearly analysis of emerging trends, such as complaints.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- excellent partnership arrangements
- good curriculum management
- good management of change
- particularly effective initiatives to widen participation by disadvantaged groups
- good measures to ensure continuous improvement
- thorough self-assessment process

Weaknesses

- inefficient management information system
- no formal arrangements to provide literacy, numeracy and language support
- inadequate arrangements for advice and guidance
- insufficient work to improve participation by minority ethnic groups
- insufficient audit and analysis to identify trends and improve the provision

Business administration, management & professional

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- very good achievement rates
- effective use of a range of teaching methods
- particularly good support for learners
- effective matching of provision with learner and employer needs
- good programme management

Weaknesses

- some inadequate resources
- poor recording of individual needs and targets

Information & communications technology

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- good teaching and learning of practical skills
- very effective developments to widen participation
- good management of the area of learning

Weaknesses

- some inappropriate teaching accommodation
- insufficient use of ICT learning equipment

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good development of personal skills
- particularly effective teaching to meet learners' individual needs

Weaknesses

- poor target-setting and monitoring of learners' progress
- inadequate range of provision

Health, social care & public services

Early years

Strengths

- excellent retention and achievement rates
- good resources
- good learner support
- strong local partnership links to meet employer and learner needs
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- inadequate range of teaching and learning strategies

Visual & performing arts & media

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on accredited courses
- particularly good social and personal gains for most learners
- good range of well-placed learning centres to encourage participation across the community

Weaknesses

- insufficiently demanding learning activities for most learners
- insufficient vocational knowledge and expertise among the tutors
- inadequate advice and guidance

English, languages & communications

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good achievement
- good teaching in most sessions
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- narrow range of provision

Foundation programmes

ESOL

Strengths

- good number of first-class passes on ESOL courses
- good development of personal and social skills
- good teaching and learning
- particularly effective course design

Weaknesses

- weak target-setting in individual learning plans and progress reviews
- insufficient information, advice and guidance

Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- good development of learners' personal and social skills
- good teaching and learning
- particularly effective course design

Weaknesses

- low achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications
- weak target-setting in individual learning plans and progress reviews
- insufficient learning resources in some outreach centres
- insufficient information, advice and guidance

Independent living and leisure skills

Strengths

- good achievement on ALDD programmes
- good development of personal and social skills
- good teaching and learning
- particularly effective programme design to meet learners' needs

Weaknesses

- weak target-setting in individual learning plans and reviews
- insufficient learning resources in some outreach centres
- insufficient information, advice and guidance

Family learning

Strengths

- good achievement
- good teaching and learning
- very effective staff team
- good learner support
- very effective curriculum management

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting
- narrow range of courses

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE LEA:

- the timing of courses to meet their needs
- being able to progress from voluntary work to employment
- making new friends
- the tutor support
- being able to work at their own pace

WHAT LEARNERS THINK NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the number of forms they are required to fill in
- the availability of pre-course information
- the provision of year-round courses to end the long wait between terms
- the length of some classes
- the opening times and hours of the libraries
- the notice given when further fees are required to cover certificates
- the resources in outreach centres
- the timing of classes in line with school times

KEY CHALLENGES FOR NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE LEA:

- continue to provide good learning experiences
- further improve the teaching and learning
- provide learners with effective information, advice and guidance
- improve participation and achievement rates by learners from minority ethnic communities
- increase participation levels from new learners
- provide more effective literacy, numeracy and language support
- continue excellent partnership working
- develop a more systematic approach to continuous improvement
- develop a more comprehensive management information system

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

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

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

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

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

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

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT   Grade 2

Strengths
- excellent partnership arrangements
- good curriculum management
- good management of change
- particularly effective initiatives to widen participation by disadvantaged groups
- good measures to ensure continuous improvement
- thorough self-assessment process

Weaknesses
- inefficient management information system
- no formal arrangements to provide literacy, numeracy and language support
- inadequate arrangements for advice and guidance
- insufficient work to improve participation by minority ethnic groups
- insufficient audit and analysis to identify trends and improve the provision

37. Partnership arrangements are excellent. Good collaborative working arrangements enable the service to develop and to provide learning programmes for hard-to-reach learners. Partners are able to improve the skills and qualifications of their workforce. For example, through work with the LEA early years and childcare department, the local childcare workforce has been provided with a good range of accredited provision. These arrangements have also involved specialists from the early years department observing and quality assuring the teaching of these courses to ensure high standards are maintained. Other partnerships include a particularly effective learning programme for teaching assistants, which enables parents to progress from working as voluntary helpers in schools to becoming appropriately qualified. The family learning programme developed in conjunction with local schools has helped raise children's numeracy and literacy skills. ICT programmes are provided in particularly deprived areas. Successful links have been made with organisations that work with adult learners with disabilities to provide appropriate courses. The provider has been involved in the strategic area review, enabling it to carry out appropriate curriculum planning to meet the needs of the local community.

38. Curriculum management is good. The curriculum is well planned and organised and staff have clearly identified roles and responsibilities. Managers work effectively and there are good working relationships across the organisation. Sharing of good practice is good between managers, tutors and partners. Managers use appropriate ways to keep the high number of part-time staff up to date, with regular and appropriate communication by, for example, e-mail, newsletters and regular meetings. Staff teams are

provided with clear aims and objectives and are encouraged to take responsibility for decision-making.

39. Management of change is good and all staff are involved in identifying how to continue to provide appropriate, well-targeted provision. Staff have access to good, free resources and to external training. Individual staff share relevant information with the rest of their staff team. All staff work well to manage finances, and teamworking is particularly good. Staff work well to find additional funding. For example, in basic skills, significant funding was secured through bids to various agencies to extend the provision. Resources at the main learning centres are very good and include well-decorated and furnished rooms. At some venues, however, resources and accommodation are poor.

40. An effective system of teaching and learning observations forms part of the informal, effective appraisal system for part-time staff. Staff development meets the needs of the business and the curriculum in most areas. However, in one area the team does not have sufficient relevant experience to provide adequate provision. All staff members have access to an internal training course, which is well attended. Many staff have teaching qualifications. The provider works well to ensure its staff keep up to date with the skills and qualifications.

41. The management information system is inefficient and focuses on providing data for the funding provider only. The service only records full achievement of qualifications. However, learners enrol on a roll-on roll-off basis and many achieve partial qualifications in, for example, ICT. The service had difficulties in providing evidence of this to inspectors. Data is available when there is full achievement, but there is difficulty in accessing data to monitor learners' progress from one year to the next. Data on partial achievement and the achievement of learning goals is not readily available or in a format appropriate to monitor trends and set targets. Insufficient use is made of data to help manage the curriculum and plan the provision. Distinction between learners and enrolments is not always clear.

42. There are no formal arrangements for literacy, numeracy and language support. There is no strategy to plan, resource and manage literacy, numeracy and language support. Initial assessment is not sufficiently thorough and does not provide staff with sufficient detail to plan the teaching and learning to meet individual learners' needs. The results of initial assessment are not recorded. There is no evidence of learners receiving appropriate literacy, numeracy and language support. The arrangements for support involve an informal procedure of referral to a skills for life team. Although some good support is provided through this referral process, it is not sufficiently formal to ensure all learners receive it. There is no formal evaluation of the support currently provided.

43. The arrangements for learners to access appropriate information, advice and guidance are inadequate. Until the end of the last academic year, the service provided independent advice and guidance. However this is no longer provided following the retirement of the previous post holder. Other staff and tutors now have to provide this service. A local service previously used for referral has closed. No other arrangements have been established. Learners do not receive significant, adequate, impartial advice

and guidance to help them progress and make the best use of their knowledge and skills. There is prompt follow-up of learners who do not attend or are at risk of dropping out. However, there is no monitoring of learners' destinations.

Equality of opportunity   Contributory grade 3

44. The service has implemented particularly effective initiatives to widen participation by disadvantaged groups including disabled people and those living in particularly deprived areas. Extensive local partnerships are particularly well developed and used to increase participation by learning from these groups. Learning centres are very well situated and other venues have been carefully selected in some of the most deprived areas. The service makes very good use of community buildings, schools and libraries to provide learning programmes. Transportation, childcare needs and study preferences of existing and potential learners are all examined when arranging the provision. The service completed a premises audit in July 2003 and has implemented many improvements to buildings. Accommodation is now more accessible to those with restricted mobility and/or sensory needs. Additional relevant resource are now available for learners. In total the number of disabled learners enrolled has increased from 13.5 per cent in 2001-02 to 14.4 per cent in 2003-04.

45. The staff equal opportunities training programme is good and includes the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Managers effectively share essential information about legislative changes with other staff at curriculum meetings. Effective disabled user group meetings take place at specific learning centres to help develop the service's strategy. The service has secured part funding to provide training in managing equality and diversity, and a manager is due to start this training shortly. Some staff members have received training in providing support for people who speak English as an additional language, basic skills awareness and visual and audio impairment. The service has met the needs of one employer by recruiting builders to its ICT courses.

46. The detailed council equality strategy is used by the service. Managers use it to produce a range of user-friendly supporting documents that raise learners' awareness of relevant issues and set high standards for appropriate behaviour. A summary of the strategy is contained in the learner handbook given to all learners when they enrol and learners have an adequate understanding of relevant issues and the complaints procedure. A learner charter reinforces the service's commitment to inclusive working. This is publicised in the service's programme of courses and is reinforced well by staff. The service has produced a disability statement that is displayed in learning centres and venues and is distributed to staff, learners and partners. The disability statement and the service prospectus are available in Braille.

47. In the family learning and care course, learning materials are particularly sensitive to cultural differences. Marketing materials make good use of appropriate images to promote equality of opportunity. However, not enough publications are available in languages other than English. In 2003-04, the service improved and extended its management of additional learning support funds and increased the number of learners receiving this from 27 to 47. Learners have access to large computer keyboards,

enlarging software, magnifying equipment, adjustable desks and chairs, designated parking spaces, large print learner handbooks and, at some centres, hearing loops. Those learners who follow non-accredited courses do not have access to additional learning support funds to purchase resources. Some of these learners cannot complete their courses.

48. The service carries out insufficient work to improve participation in its learning programmes by learners from minority ethnic groups. There are not enough partnerships with minority ethnic community groups. Courses other than ESOL are not adequately promoted to minority ethnic groups. All staff members have not yet received sufficient training in race and gender awareness.

49. The service does not have an adequate, written improvement plan for equality of opportunity. The most recent development plan expired in 2003 and the short addition to the plan for 2004 does not identify sufficient actions for improvement. Tutors are not sufficiently involved in identifying targets. Not enough data is collected or analysed to set targets or measure improvements. The service collects data relating to gender, ethnicity and disability status, at enrolment but does not capture the achievement and progression of different groups.

Quality assurance   Contributory grade 2

50. The service focuses well to ensure continuous improvement. All elements of the provision are monitored and evaluated. Good use is made of twice-yearly feedback from learners through a learner questionnaire. Learning centres also have their own learner comments books. The feedback is collated and analysed and then given to tutors as well as learners. Tutors use the feedback to plan the provision and to identify weaknesses so that rectifying action can be implemented. Particularly effective observation of teaching and learning takes place. There are very clear procedures, protocols and guidance for the observation of teaching and learning, and managers have a good understanding of the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Clearly identified priorities for the observation of teaching and learning include new tutors and those achieving only satisfactory grades. The observers give comprehensive feedback to the tutors, which is then used to plan their development and training. The tutors are paid for the time they spend receiving the feedback. The observations are analysed and moderated. Staff receive good support to improve their performance. The observations form part of the self-assessment process.

51. Course reviews are good. Each tutor or group of tutors use the reviews to identify what worked well and identify improvements needed. The views of partners are also sought where relevant. The service has produced data on all areas of learning and reported on it. Detailed development plans for each area of learning have identified priorities for action-planning for both accredited and non-accredited provision. Development plans of previous years are studied to assess progress overall. Regular reports are also sent to the governing body for approval and feedback.

52. The self-assessment process is particularly thorough. All stakeholders have been consulted including learners, funding agencies, partners and staff. The current self-

assessment report is the third produced by the provider and is generally very accurate. It refers to the 'Common Inspection Framework' and correctly identifies most of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors. In some areas of learning it was not sufficiently evaluative and did not clearly identify the impact of the weaknesses on learners. Inspectors gave higher grades for some areas of learning than those in the self-assessment.

53. The complaints system is satisfactory. All complaints are dealt with appropriately and are responded to within a stated period. However, there has not been enough analysis of some of the complaints. Some complaints are recurring and an effective solution throughout the service has not been established.

54. There are insufficient audits and analyses to identify trends and improve the provision. For example, the quality of initial assessment, use of individual learning plans, learning style questionnaire and progress reviews are not checked routinely. There is no termly or yearly analysis of emerging trends such as complaints.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration, management & professional		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	86	2

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- very good achievement rates
- effective use of a range of teaching methods
- particularly good support for learners
- effective matching of provision with learner and employer needs
- good programme management

Weaknesses

- some inadequate resources
- poor recording of individual needs and targets

Achievement and standards

55. Achievement rates are very good, at 83 per cent for level 2 learners and 80 per cent for level 3 learners. Learners work towards demanding targets throughout their course. Portfolios are of a high standard and contain a good range of evidence including comprehensive personal accounts of their experiences, witness statements from employers and carefully recorded observations by assessors. In 2003-04, most level 2 learners were unemployed when they started their course. All gained part-time or full-time jobs during the year. Progression is also good, with some level 3 learners progressing onto higher education, including teaching certificate courses and foundation degrees with other providers. Eighty-five per cent of learners progressed from taster sessions to either the introductory course or level 2. Six learners have progressed from level 2 to level 3. Attendance is very good.

Quality of education and training

56. Tutors use an effective range of teaching methods. Teaching is planned well and matched effectively to the qualification requirements. Tutors make good use of course and session planning tools to promote learning. Lesson plans are clear and detailed. Sixty per cent of the teaching observed was good and none was less than satisfactory.

Some lesson plans do not clearly set out the outcomes to be achieved overall or during the teaching sessions. Although there is some monitoring of learners' attainment during sessions, there is no systematic monitoring of learners' understanding during and at the end of sessions.

57. Support for learners is particularly good. Tutors provide good assessment and help learners develop their portfolios. Tutors provide good guidance on the courses available and possible career options. Learners begin the level 2 or level 3 courses with a very good understanding of the job and course requirements. All courses include a four-week period of induction including health and safety requirements, equal opportunities and appeals processes. However, the induction does not meet the needs of level 3 learners. For example, some learners have already been through the induction on their level 2 course and it does not take into account their prior learning and knowledge.

58. The provision is matched effectively to learners' and employers' needs. Learners have good access to the course through a choice of sessions and times. The taster and introductory courses enable learners to progress from unemployment and voluntary status onto a nationally recognised qualification route. Learners' motivation and commitment to learning grows significantly throughout the well-organised and informative introductory sessions. The course helps learners to contribute effectively to community needs within local schools. Many learners have filled the vacancies in local schools. Learners' job skills and knowledge are improved from the early stages of the programme. More experienced learners are able to gain accreditation for their skills. However, there is not enough action to promote the courses to learners from under-represented groups, such as those from minority ethnic groups or those with a disability.

59. Assessment of learners' literacy skills, learning styles and prior learning and experience is satisfactory. The process helps learners develop a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and enhances their understanding of similar activities within schools. Assessment processes help learners to produce good portfolios. Managers, assessors and the subcontracted internal verifier work to continuously improve the procedures for assessment planning and recording. Learners develop a good understanding of the assessment process from group sessions and personal support from their assessor. Verification processes are satisfactory. Learners receive good developmental feedback on their work. However, action points are not always clearly stated on feedback records. There is good teamwork between assessors and verifiers.

60. Some resources are inadequate, a weakness not adequately identified in the self-assessment report. There are not enough staff for some courses and teaching groups can be too large. During teaching sessions some learners are unable to hear the tutor clearly or fully engage in discussions. The pace of these sessions is too fast for some learners. There are not enough good-quality handouts and audiovisual resources. Tutors rely on flip charts, but these are not appropriate for larger groups. The provider has taken some effective steps to deal with this weakness. It has appointed additional staff and purchased new learning resources. It has also implemented team teaching and staff development.

61. Recording of learners' individual needs and targets is poor. Tutors do not use written

learning plans to set individual goals and targets or to carry out progress reviews. Tutors do not ensure that individual learners' needs are met during learning sessions. For example, some level 3 learners are not taught at an adequate pace. Tutors develop a satisfactory understanding of individual learners' needs and work settings.

Leadership and management

62. Programme management is effective. Staff have worked well to meet national initiatives and targets to increase the number of qualified teaching assistants. Managers and staff have adopted new qualifications and implemented learning and assessment infrastructures to meet external requirements. All staff and managers are fully involved in developing courses. Tutors work effectively to teach skills and knowledge and provide guidance for work-based assessment. Managers promote the provision through a wide range of advertising including local newspapers and radio. Letters have also been sent to all local schools and employers. There is effective implementation of strategies to cope with the high level of interest generated by this promotional activity. The service has good working partnerships with other education authorities to share good practice. Managers and staff work well with the awarding body to establish new assessment systems and ensure continuous improvement.

63. Strategic and operational planning is effective. Managers and staff work well as a team and communications within the team and with external partners are good. Staff development is satisfactory and meets the requirements of the occupational sector and assessment regulations. Although adequate use is made of observations of teaching and learning to improve the provision, they are not carried out sufficiently frequently. There is insufficient use of audits to monitor the effectiveness of processes such as initial assessment and individual learning plans. Not enough evaluations of teaching sessions by tutors take place.

Information & communications technology

Information & communications technology		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	1883	2

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates
- good teaching and learning of practical skills
- very effective developments to widen participation
- good management of the area of learning

Weaknesses

- some inappropriate teaching accommodation
- insufficient use of ICT learning equipment

Achievement and standards

64. Achievement and retention rates are very good. For example, over two years, 94 per cent of those learners on courses at entry level to level 3 achieved unit accreditation. Overall, 53 per cent of learners have achieved qualifications. In some of the more demanding courses, such as computerised accounts, achievement rates are over 80 per cent. Retention rates are also good, at over 90 per cent.

65. Learners produce a good standard of work even though many are new to using computers. In desktop publishing, learners demonstrate good design skills. Good displays of learners' work are maintained on some noticeboards. Letters and posters show good use of colour combination and clipart. In their assignment work, learners demonstrate good knowledge of database techniques, cell manipulation and hyperlinks and effective use of tables, charts and images. In the photo media area there is good image manipulation.

Quality of education and training

66. Teaching and learning of practical skills is good. All teaching sessions were judged to be satisfactory or better. Schemes of work are good, well designed and include demanding tasks for learners. Lesson plans and learning activities are good. Tutors use good, relevant examples to reinforce learning. More able learners are encouraged to extend their work. For example, some tutors have designed good, informative handouts

to extend learners' skills level beyond the course specifications. Tutors use oral questions effectively to monitor learners' understanding. Technical terms are clearly explained and used during technical discussions. Tutors give good explanations of computer operations. All teaching staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. There is thorough and regular assessment guidance, encouraging learners to work to a high standard. There of good use of guidance notes and handouts. The computers have a good range of up-to-date software, and access to the internet. There are, however, not enough digital whiteboards or projectors.

67. There are very effective developments to widen participation. The learning centres and venues provide a learning environment and are easily accessible to learners. Funding is available for learners who cannot meet the costs of the courses. A wide range of courses is provided and the service has completed a number of highly effective projects with partners for special interest groups including an ICT for builders course and fast-track 10-week ICT course for lone parents culminating in a level 1 qualification. Some of these learners are now working towards level 2 qualifications. A very effective learning pilot has been developed using the internet, for learners unable or unwilling to attend regular classes to complete a range of specialist qualifications. The LEA has a project team that creates and pilots new courses. There is also regular sampling of the views of the local population to assess ideas and provide courses to meet local needs.

68. Assessment practices are satisfactory and meet all the awarding body requirements. Tutors design the assessment exercise well and the feedback given to learners on marked work includes helpful comments and guidance on how to improve. Learners' attainments are recorded and regular individual coaching sessions take place with reviews of learners' progress. Subject tutors use this information to produce action plans for individual learners. However, these are generally not used to plan learning in the classroom. Learners fully understand the assessment requirements and know what is required to achieve their target grade in accredited courses.

69. Learner support is satisfactory. Tutors are well qualified and appropriately experienced and provide learners with effective guidance. They fully understand the needs of learners, particularly those who are older, and work well to ensure targets are appropriate. Learners have access to self-study learning materials for literacy, numeracy and language support. Pre-course literature accurately describes the course content and all courses include a structured induction. Some courses are targeted specifically at learners with additional learning needs. Systems are in place to provide support for learners with language needs, but are not always used. Adaptive technology, such as large keyboards, tracker balls and software to assist the visually impaired, is also available.

70. There is some inappropriate teaching accommodation in some of the learning centres and venues. In some centres and venues, there are no ICT resources and the rooms are too small for the number of learners. There is insufficient desk space. In some centres and venues, ICT equipment is poorly maintained or does not meet learners' needs. For example, computers are not networked and many centres and venues use a range of different computers. In other centres and venues, resources are good, with

adequate working space and well-maintained computers.

71. There is insufficient use of ICT learning equipment in classes. Many tutors do not make adequate use of data projectors and interactive whiteboards. In one evening class the tutor did not have access to this equipment. In some cases, whole-class demonstrations are carried out on one computer screen, making it difficult for many learners to see or understand what is being shown.

Leadership and management

72. Management of this area of learning is good. Courses are well planned with clearly defined periods of teaching and practical training identified in detailed lesson plans and schemes of work. Teaching resources are well managed. Assignments are used well. For example, learners on some courses use work-based assignments to complete their course in the evenings. There is appropriate access to the internet for learners to continue coursework and to research their projects and assignments. Regular staff appraisals are carried out to identify training and development needs. Informal communications are good and tutors meet formally on a regular basis to share good practice.

73. At induction learners are provided with satisfactory information on equality of opportunity at induction. Not enough reinforcement of equality of opportunity takes place during learning sessions. Learning materials do not refer sufficiently to different cultures.

74. Teaching sessions are frequently observed as part of the quality assurance arrangements. However, there has not been enough moderation of this activity. Although the self-assessment report was generally accurate and inspectors agreed with many of the judgements, they gave lower grades than those in the report for the teaching sessions.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation - Adult and community learning	95	3

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good development of personal skills
- particularly effective teaching to meet learners' individual needs

Weaknesses

- poor target-setting and monitoring of learners' progress
- inadequate range of provision

Achievement and standards

75. Learners develop good personal skills including improvements in balance, co-ordination, flexibility and overall general fitness. Many enrol to improve physical fitness and tackle specific medical problems, such as arthritis, circulatory problems and joint pain. Learners in a gentle exercise class for people with physical disabilities reported significant improvements in their flexibility. One learner with asthma attends a yoga course on the advice of her doctor and has seen good progress in both her breathing and ability to participate in physical activity. Learners with learning difficulties on a football course have made good progress in their co-ordination, skills and concentration. Many learners use their newly acquired skills to make improvements to their lifestyle. Many have greater self-confidence and increased mobility. Learners also make new friends, take part in new activities and gain a better understanding of the benefits of exercise to their own health.

76. The retention rates are generally above 90 per cent over the past two years. However, many learners return to the same course year after year. For example, one learner has been attending a keep fit class for over 10 years.

Quality of education and training

77. Teaching is particularly effective in meeting individual learner needs. Tutors have good working relationships with learners and provide good support. On a course for adults with learning difficulties, additional tutors are provided to work with learners on an individual basis. Tutors use strategies to motivate learners. In most classes tutors provide alternative activities for learners unable to carry out some of the tasks or movements.

Learners' self-confidence and co-ordination improve. Tutors demonstrate good technical competence and plan effectively. They give good, clear instructions and accurate demonstrations, continuously guiding and encouraging learners. Learners clearly understand what they are expected to do. In the better classes, a wide range of teaching methods are used. For example, in one keep fit class a guest speaker was invited to speak about nutrition.

78. Resources are satisfactory. Most tutors have good, relevant experience and hold appropriate subject and teaching qualifications. Accommodation is satisfactory with adequate access for all learners. The training rooms have adequate space for the size of groups taught. The service has recently bought equipment for courses including music equipment and specialist mats and cushions for learners with physical disabilities.

79. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory. Learners complete a satisfactory induction to their course during the first lesson and the tutor completes a checklist. Learners are fully involved in identifying their own additional support needs at induction. The informal arrangements for assessing individual needs during learners' first lessons are satisfactory. There is satisfactory additional learning support. For example, one learner receives additional individual support in a yoga class. The provider has standardised the screening of health and medical conditions. No learners are currently receiving literacy, numeracy or language support.

80. Target-setting and the monitoring of progress is poor. Tutors have a good understanding of individual learners' needs and their progress. However, this information is not always shared with learners. Many learners do not know how they have progressed against their learning goals. Learning goals are often too general. However, some learners do indicate specific targets such as weight loss or increased flexibility. However, these are not monitored or assessed on an ongoing basis. Satisfactory plans are in place to monitor progress, but these do not impact on the learners' development.

81. The range of provision is inadequate and there are not enough progression routes or accredited courses. Only learners on tai chi can progress to a more advanced course. A taster course has been provided specifically to attract fathers and their sons into football. There is insufficient geographical spread of the courses. Not enough systematic analysis of local community needs or market trends takes place. The progress of some learners is hindered by the breaks in courses between terms.

Leadership and management

82. The curriculum manager adequately supports the tutors, but does not have curriculum expertise within this area of learning. Some curriculum planning is taking place at local level, but this information is not adequately fed into the overall review of the curriculum.

83. The quality assurance arrangements are well established. All teaching staff are observed over a two-yearly cycle. Staff receive detailed verbal and written feedback. However, the follow-up of action plans does not always take place. Learner feedback is

collected and analysed at different stages of the course.

84. The self-assessment process involves staff, learners and other stakeholders. However, the outcome of this process is not shared effectively. Some of the weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report do not clearly state the impact on learners. Inspectors agreed with the strengths and weaknesses identified through the self-assessment process. There is some sharing of good practice. Tutors have attended training in equal opportunities, deaf awareness and disability awareness.

Health, social care & public services

Health, social care & public services		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Early years - Adult and community learning	51	2

Early years

Strengths

- excellent retention and achievement rates
- good resources
- good learner support
- strong local partnership links to meet employer and learner needs
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- inadequate range of teaching and learning strategies

Achievement and standards

85. Achievement and retention rates are excellent with good progression from taster and introductory courses onto accredited provision. Overall, the retention rate is currently 87 per cent. The proportion of learners retained on accredited and non-accredited provision in 2003-04 is currently 86 per cent and 81 per cent, respectively. Achievement overall, including partial achievements, is currently at 100 per cent for 2003-04. Learners develop both their personal and vocational skills. Attendance in the lessons observed was good at 80 per cent.

Quality of education and training

86. Resources are good. The learning centres and other venues have adequate space for the classes and appropriate access for disabled people. A Braille version of the prospectus is available at the Thrunscoe learning centre and large print handouts are provided for the visually impaired. Most learners buy a set text for their course and can borrow additional books. The enrolment form includes a section for learners to provide information on additional learning support needs. Most tutors have good, relevant knowledge and vocational experience. They frequently relate theory concepts to practical work. Most teaching and assessment is satisfactory.

87. Learner support is good. Support arrangements are well planned. All learners have at least three individual tutorials on a one-year course to discuss progress and set targets.

The induction is thorough and all learners receive a detailed learner handbook outlining the course, the feedback processes and a copy of the awarding body assessment appeals procedure. Curriculum managers and tutors provide satisfactory advice and guidance.

88. There are strong local partnerships links to meet learner and employer needs. The local authority early years partnership manager is fully involved in planning the provision, learner assessment and lesson observations. Jobcentre Plus staff have identified prospective unemployed learners from disadvantaged areas. Other significant partners include the children's information services, neighbourhood nurseries, out-of-school clubs, pathway to lone parents and the health service.

89. Curriculum provision directly responds to identified workforce development training needs and relevant government reports. Information from a training needs analysis has been used to plan and locate classes to meet local needs. Staff clearly understand the strategic national role of childcare development and its links to the local economy and effectively plan their teaching to respond to these needs. There are no progression opportunities for learners studying the level 2 certificate in playwork. Recruitment of learners from minority ethnic groups is not adequate and currently there is only one minority ethnic learner. None of the staff have received race relations awareness training.

90. Tutors use an inadequate range of teaching and learning strategies. Most teaching is based on paper-based activities with some use of overhead projectors and discussion. ICT learning resources are not used. Learners do not have access to computers, e-learning or the internet. Although some initial assessment and learning styles analyses are carried out, these are not used effectively in lesson planning. In the lessons observed, all learners were set the same tasks and were required to work at the same pace. Tutors do not plan activities to meet the needs of different learners.

Leadership and management

91. Curriculum management is good. Part-time tutors communicate very effectively with their manager at least once a week either face to face or by e-mail. All staff except one have completed disability and discrimination training. The strategic role of childcare development and its links to the local economy are understood by all staff. Local partnerships play a key role in responding to workforce development and curriculum development. Staff attend in-house training and awarding body updates. All tutors currently work within the sector and hold appropriate vocational qualifications. Quality assurance is systematic and the self-assessment process involved all members of the team.

Visual & performing arts & media

Visual & performing arts & media		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	472	3

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement rates on accredited courses
- particularly good social and personal gains for most learners
- good range of well-placed learning centres to encourage participation across the community

Weaknesses

- insufficiently demanding learning activities for most learners
- insufficient vocational knowledge and expertise among the tutors
- inadequate advice and guidance

Achievement and standards

92. Retention and achievement rates are good on accredited courses. For example, in 2003-04, the retention rates and achievement rates on accredited courses were good at 92 per cent and 93 per cent, respectively.

93. Most learners make particularly good social and personal gains. Although many learners start their programme with little or no art and craft experience, they set demanding individual learning goals. They gain new skills quickly and are able to apply them to produce good results. They acquire good, relevant knowledge and understanding and develop good practical skills and techniques. Several learners have made artefacts to decorate their homes and have produced garments for their grandchildren and children. Some learners' work is displayed in the exhibition. Many learners make good progress towards the achievement of their main learning goals.

94. Learners produce a satisfactory standard of work that is displayed at local exhibitions. Learners produce a good variety of work, although the patterns and designs do not sufficiently demonstrate learners' own ideas. Most learners, particularly on non-accredited courses, do not further explore their own ideas and new skills.

Quality of education and training

95. The courses are provided in a good range of well-placed learning centres to encourage participation across the community. Many learners would generally not be able to access learning. However, many of the learning centres and venues are easily accessible and the courses take place at times appropriate to the needs of a wide range of learners. The art studios and classrooms are good with large areas suitable to accommodate a wide range of subject areas and scale of work, for example, patchwork and quilting, painting and drawing, embroidery and glass craft. The community outreach venues are of a similar standard.

96. In 2003-04, 49 per cent of learners on accredited courses and 73 per cent of learners on non-accredited courses were women. There is currently no discrete provision to attract specific under-represented groups.

97. Although most teaching is satisfactory, and in the best sessions learners are learning new skills through challenging tasks, in poorer sessions tutors do not set learners adequate activities and many learners repeat tasks. Tutors rely on textbook and commercially available designs and do not adequately encourage learners to develop their own ideas.

98. Tutors do not have sufficient vocational knowledge and expertise. Tutors' qualifications do not meet the requirements of the range and levels of subjects currently provided. Some tutors teach a wide range of subjects that do not match their formal or commercial levels of expertise. Tutors do not have a good understanding of the historical and contextual issues of their subjects, including paintings, artists, artefacts and craftsmen. There has been insufficient staff training on developing their subject knowledge.

99. Advice and guidance to the learners is inadequate. Not all learners are aware of course costs and materials before enrolment. The arrangements for induction and transfer to other classes are not fully understood by all tutors and learners. Learner progress is monitored at the end of each session. However, learners are not given this information and are not set individual targets. Many of those learners who leave their courses early do so because they cannot afford the cost of materials. Some have transferred to other courses with lower costs. Learners and staff do not know how to access additional learning support. Accredited work meets awarding body standards and learners can progress from non-accredited to accredited courses and from level 1 to level 3.

Leadership and management

100. The area of learning's most recent self-assessment report matched the grade given by inspectors. However, inspectors gave lower grades for teaching and learning than in the self-assessment report. The lesson observation process, while clearly linked to appraisal, does not identify weaknesses to aid action-planning. The provider did not identify some key weaknesses or the impact of these weaknesses on learners. Within the

main learning centres there are clearly developed communication systems. However, there is some poor communication with some learning venues. Access for learners with disabilities is generally good. Specialist equipment is clearly available for learners, for example, one learner was provided with an adjustable table to accommodate a wheelchair.

English, languages & communications

English, languages & communications		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	246	2

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good achievement
- good teaching in most sessions
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- narrow range of provision

Achievement and standards

101. Achievement is good overall. Learners on accredited modern languages courses achieve very good results with 92 per cent achieving qualifications in 2003-04. Overall retention rates are good at over 90 per cent for accredited courses and 98 per cent for non-accredited courses. Achievement and progression were poor on British Sign Language (BSL) classes in 2003-04 following some staffing difficulties. Most learners successfully develop good skills. In modern foreign languages they learn to speak, listen, read and write in the language they are studying. In BSL, learners can sign sentences and stories effectively, using appropriate body language and facial expression to enhance communication.

102. Learners develop satisfactory levels in spoken language. They are able to speak with correct pronunciation, intonation and vocabulary in most modern language lessons. In the best lessons, the skills of reading, listening and writing are consistently practised and learners make very good progress. Attendance and punctuality are generally good, with 81 per cent attendance in classes seen during inspection.

Quality of education and training

103. Most teaching is good, with 60 per cent judged to be good or better. No learning sessions were judged to be unsatisfactory. Tutors plan and manage learning sessions well. For example, in a lesson for beginners in BSL, the tutor structured the session to ensure that learners were introduced to the language at an appropriate level and pace, and learners made good progress. In the best lessons, tutors use the foreign language exclusively and set learners sufficiently demanding tasks. For example, in a Spanish

lesson, learners debated current affairs in Spain and the UK and were able to express themselves fluently and accurately. There is too much use of English in some foreign language lessons. For example, in a level 2 class the tutor used English to deal with introductory routines and give instructions.

104. Tutors are appropriately qualified or are currently in training. They have satisfactory access to support professional development. One tutor makes regular and effective use of the internet to support language learning. An appropriate range of resources is available at most learning venues including computers and suitable audiovisual equipment. In some lessons, tutors use learning materials of particular relevance to the taught languages. These are used effectively to promote learning. For example, in one lesson learners made good use of town plans and tourist information leaflets to plan a day out in a foreign town. Premises are suitably furnished, easily accessible and rooms are appropriately set out.

105. Learners' work is regularly monitored and tutors give appropriate feedback. Accreditation routes are available on beginners' modern foreign language courses. The use of initial assessment is poor. There is much whole-class teaching. It takes little account of individual learner needs identified during the initial assessment.

106. Guidance and support is satisfactory overall. The pre-course information and guidance is appropriate, accurate and meets learners' needs. Information is provided by mailshot, in the library, and on the internet. Support arrangements including concessionary fees, crèche facilities and in-class learning support are satisfactory. Large print worksheets and headsets are available. Induction, attendance and punctuality are monitored effectively. However, during enrolment learners allocate themselves to courses without any effective initial assessment of their skills and ability. There is no standard system of initial guidance.

107. The range of provision is narrow. The curriculum is not planned on the basis of an analysis of local needs or in partnership with other providers. For example, beyond beginner level in modern foreign languages there are no other accredited programmes. No specialist courses, such as business language courses, are available. Unaccredited courses are not planned to enable learners to progress. Pre-course information does not clearly explain what constitutes intermediate or advanced level.

Leadership and management

108. Curriculum management is good. The curriculum manager has particularly good language skills. Professional support for tutors is good. For example, feedback and action plans arising from teaching observations are very detailed. The grading of lessons is accurate and reliable. This gives an accurate picture of teaching and learning and forms a clear basis on which to plan staff development.

109. Communication with part-time tutors is effective. The team meets regularly to discuss different methods of teaching as well as procedural and administrative matters. The course design and accreditation are discussed fully to ensure that the courses

continue to meet learners' needs. BSL tutors are also effectively involved through an interpreter when required at meetings. There is good use of e-mail.

110. Tutors make good use of staff development and share effectively their learning with the team. For example, one tutor who attended a conference on using ICT to support language learning, presented a report to the rest of the team.

111. Quality assurance is satisfactory. However, staff do not fully understand what constitutes achievement in the more advanced conversational modern foreign languages programmes. Learners' progress and tutors' effectiveness cannot be evaluated effectively.

112. Performance data is not used. Available data on diversity and retention figures is not analysed or used to plan the provision.

113. Tutors and managers have satisfactory awareness of policies on equality of opportunity. Tutors give satisfactory additional support to learners who join classes late in the programme and have learning support needs.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL		
‐ Adult and community learning	84	2
Literacy and numeracy		
‐ Adult and community learning	338	3
Independent living and leisure skills		
‐ Adult and community learning	144	2

ESOL

Strengths

- good number of first-class passes on ESOL courses
- good development of personal and social skills
- good teaching and learning
- particularly effective course design

Weaknesses

- weak target-setting in individual learning plans and progress reviews
- insufficient information, advice and guidance

Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- good development of learners' personal and social skills
- good teaching and learning
- particularly effective course design

Weaknesses

- low achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications
- weak target-setting in individual learning plans and progress reviews
- insufficient learning resources in some outreach centres
- insufficient information, advice and guidance

Independent living and leisure skills

Strengths

- good achievement on ALDD programmes
- good development of personal and social skills
- good teaching and learning
- particularly effective programme design to meet learners' needs

Weaknesses

- weak target-setting in individual learning plans and reviews
- insufficient learning resources in some outreach centres
- insufficient information, advice and guidance

Achievement and standards

114. Achievement on ALDD courses is high. Seventy-six per cent of learners gain qualifications and personal learning goals. Achievement on courses sponsored by social services is also good at 58 per cent.

115. Learners on ESOL courses achieve high levels of first-class passes in examinations. Of those entered for examinations, 59 per cent achieved a first-class pass. Eighty per cent passed examinations overall. Sixty per cent of ESOL learners have gained a qualification to date.

116. All learners develop good personal and learning skills. Learners produce good standards of work in their portfolios and make good progress. In one group, two learners who could not read have progressed to entry level 2. Attainment on the learndirect programme for people who speak English as an additional language is good. Most learners achieve 70 per cent or above in course tests and many achieve high pass marks of between 84 per cent and 100 per cent. Learners develop good self-confidence. Many learners join literacy and numeracy programmes to help their children and they develop the skills to help them with their school work. Learners on intensive programmes develop skills to progress to employment and further education.

117. Achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications is low. During 2003-04, only 23 per cent of learners achieved qualifications. The combined achievement rate of qualification and personal learning goals for literacy and numeracy is 53 per cent.

Quality of education and training

118. Seventy per cent of teaching is good or better. Tutors use a good range of effective teaching techniques to integrate reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Tutors work well to meet the needs of individual learners. They plan learning by incorporating a range of learning styles and use a good range of learning activities. Learning resources are good. Learning resources in ESOL lessons take account of different cultures. Where

computer resources are available, tutors make good use of them during learning. In good lessons, learners complete demanding tasks and their understanding is monitored well. Additional learning support is provided by 55 volunteers. In one lesson, three support workers assisted learners with specific health conditions. Group sizes are small and the addition of volunteers increase the amount of support provided to learners and tutors. All literacy and numeracy workshops are of mixed subjects and are managed well. Thirty per cent of current part-time tutors are former volunteers.

119. Course design is particularly effective. Courses and programmes are carefully planned. Course contents meet learners' needs and they learn about relevant topics and subjects. Programmes are located at a wide range of community venues including wards with high levels of low literacy skills, asylum seekers and minority ethnic groups. Effective links with organisations such as the drop-in centre for asylum seekers has increased participation of ESOL learners. Courses are designed to meet the needs of different groups of learners and adaptations to courses are made appropriately. For example, a short course in literacy and numeracy provides intensive training to lone parents aiming to return to work. Tutors have adapted the contents of an ESOL course to meet the specific learning needs of Chinese learners. ALDD learners respond well to relevant topics such as money management, current affairs and self-advocacy. In the main learning centres, ICT facilities are integrated well with the course design. Qualifications are available across the foundation programmes.

120. Initial assessment is satisfactory and takes place following referral to foundation programmes. Learners are working at appropriate levels. Assessment for accredited courses meets the requirements of awarding bodies. Recording of ongoing progress is comprehensive in most courses and clearly details achievements and work completed. Individual learning plans are used across most programmes, but are not used in some ALDD and literacy and numeracy courses.

121. Individual target-setting is not sufficiently detailed. Learners' aims and objectives do not contain sufficient detail to identify what they must do to achieve them. Learners are not set specific, measurable and time-bound targets. Where courses are run as a whole-group programme, tutors use a group learning plan. However, this does not accurately define individual learning requirements. Some tutors agree appropriate targets with learners, but practice is inconsistent. Target-setting in ESOL classes is satisfactory.

122. Outreach centres have insufficient resources. In venues such as schools, furniture is not generally appropriate for use by adults and not all have dedicated teaching areas for adult education. Access to ICT equipment is inadequate. There are insufficient laptop computers available to staff. Tutors cannot permanently store learning resources. Venues do not have sufficient audiovisual equipment. In some lessons, there are inadequate numbers of reading books for all learners.

123. There is insufficient information, advice and guidance to help learners' progress. The service does not have a strategy for information, advice and guidance and relies on individual staff. Initial advice and guidance is satisfactory for ESOL learners. There is a dedicated and fully qualified worker responsible for information, advice and guidance in

a drop-in centre for asylum seekers. Learners are not sufficiently encouraged to use their skills to progress into employment, voluntary and community work and further learning. Information held in outreach centres often comprises only the authorities' service prospectus, and courses provided by other local providers are not well promoted. In the last academic year, 61 per cent of learners returned from the previous year. The service does not yet collect or analyse data to identify and improve the numbers of learners that progress positively from their courses.

Leadership and management

124. The self-assessment report was not sufficiently evaluative and did not fully identify all the weaknesses found by inspectors, which included target-setting and initial advice and guidance. Systems to observe teaching and learning are well established and are effective at identifying where tutors can make improvements. Quality assurance systems do not systematically identify where practice is inconsistent. This weakness has been identified by the service and some staff have received training from an external facilitator. Training included target-setting.

125. There are regular meetings between staff and managers. Communication is effective. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory, although there is insufficient use of data to increase participation of learners from minority ethnic groups, except in ESOL classes. Use of data to direct and improve programmes is weak. Data is not collated in a manner to ensure efficient and effective use of it. Achievement of different groups is not adequately recorded or analysed. Data related to ethnicity and disability is not available for the current year.

Family learning

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	249	2

Strengths

- good achievement
- good teaching and learning
- very effective staff team
- good learner support
- very effective curriculum management

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting
- narrow range of courses

Achievement and standards

126. Achievement by learners is very good. In 2003-04, all learners achieved units of credit from the OCN on courses for parents and volunteers supporting children's learning in either literacy or numeracy. Twenty-three learners gained OCN accreditation on courses for parents and volunteers helping children's numeracy, and 23 on a similar course to help children's literacy.

127. Learners have made significant gains in self-confidence. Learners are able to apply their skills and understanding to support their children's learning. There is marked improvement in their children's performance where the parents have given them more support. Many learners are now able to fully understand what their children learn. They are able to hold meaningful discussions with their children. The children work well with their parents. Retention rates are high at approximately 90 per cent over the last two years.

Quality of education and training

128. There is good teaching and learning. All teaching is good or better, with 38 per cent of sessions graded as very good. Most sessions are well structured, with good working relationships between tutors, learners and children. Lessons are well planned with a good mix of practical activities and language development for adults and children. There is a high level of participation by learners in discussions. Many of the family literacy, language and numeracy courses teach skills used by parents in well-supported joint sessions in the school or crèche with their children. Parents learn the skills and

develop the confidence to use games and activities with their children to further develop their language, literacy and numeracy skills. Tutors fully understand learners' individual needs. In one good session, the tutor prepared examples that took into account both the adult learner's own literacy difficulties and her child's speech problems. Premises used are generally appropriate and easily accessible to learners. However, some rooms are unsuitable, with inappropriate furniture and insufficient space.

129. The staff team is very effective. There is effective mutual support in developing resources for teaching and learning. Staff are highly motivated and have a strong commitment to the service and to the learners. There are good working relationships with early years staff, teaching and mentoring staff in schools, and with crèche and play workers. Team teaching with school and crèche staff shows effective preparation and ensures that resources for adult learning are tailored to the needs of the school, learner and child. Teaching resources are good. Tutors make particularly effective use of the basic skills resource centre. There have also been regional initiatives in which the team has made a good contribution. These have brought further resources for promoting skills for life with learners who have been hard to reach.

130. Learner support is good through effective partnerships with school and crèche staff. Learning mentors and other partners make substantial contributions to the pastoral care of learners. This includes supportive home visits and inter-agency links which benefited the school, the learner and the child. For example, a new home was quickly found for a mother and child after it was discovered that the child was being bullied at school.

131. Learners are fully involved in assessing their own progress and discuss it with the tutor. Formative assessment is satisfactory. Tutors give good feedback and encouragement to learners. Summative assessment is satisfactory. There are satisfactory reports from external verifiers.

132. There is insufficient target-setting. Not enough use is made of initial assessment to modify courses. Individual learning plans are not effective and are not used well. Some learners do not progress at an appropriate pace. There is no collation and analysis of data from assessment, or use of data to modify and amend learning programmes. Tutors adapt learning materials and presentations when necessary. Tutors identify some of the learners' needs. However, there are no specific targets for learners to improve their own skills.

133. The range of courses is narrow. The provision meets external requirements and provides a range of learning for parents and carers to gain skills to support their children's learning. Courses are provided at times suitable to the parents near their home. There is effective targeting of parents from particularly deprived wards with very low educational attainment. However, learners do not have access to an adequate range of courses. Short family learning courses are used principally to attract new learners, such as events for family learning week or adult learners' week. Although this has been successful in reaching new learners, there has not been enough provision of activities for families to attend. At the time of inspection, wider family learning courses consisted of only two

computer skills classes. There are, however, some plans with partner groups to extend this area of learning.

Leadership and management

134. Management of the curriculum is very effective. Teamwork is particularly effective. The team is well supported, with good access to training and development. Communications are very good, with regular, well-prepared meetings and good use of e-mail and other communication networks.

135. There is good use of observations of teaching and learning. Feedback is used well to identify staff development needs. Training is effectively arranged and all tutors take advantage of special arrangements of learning vouchers for staff.

136. Insufficient use is made of data to improve the provision. There is effective updating of skills and much sharing of good practice. Networking and communication between staff is good, and has enabled staff to cope with the considerable changes in organisation of their work.

137. All staff have had recent training in disability awareness. Frontline staff have had cultural diversity training. Tutors fully understand issues of race and gender and use culturally diverse curriculum materials.