

REINSPECTION REPORT

Leicester LEA Reinspection

26 May 2005



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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

REINSPECTION REPORT

Leicester LEA Reinspection

Contents

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	1
About the reinspection	3
Overall judgement	3
Grades	3
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	9
Foundation programmes	13

REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The LEA provides adult and community learning through its adult learning service (the service). The service has two strands - community settings and the Leicester Adult Education College (the college). The community settings are eight secondary community colleges, four primary community centres, five neighbourhood centres and seven independent projects. Approximately 40 per cent of the service's provision is delivered by the college.
2. The service is part of the lifelong learning and community development division of the LEA's education department. The division is also responsible for provision in early years, play, youth work and community development. The service receives funding from Leicestershire Learning and Skills Council (LSC). This includes a small element of discretionary funding for specific projects. Approximately half of the provision is accredited.
3. The head of service is supported by a senior management team, three area managers, 14 area co-ordinators and curriculum leaders. The college is led by a principal and senior management team and has its own governing body. There are more than 450 part-time tutors.
4. The city of Leicester has a population of over 290,000. Thirty-six per cent of the population, and more than 52 per cent of the school-age children are from minority ethnic communities, and over 47 languages are spoken in the city. Leicester City Council has recently been awarded Beacon status by the government for its good practice in community cohesion. The city has accommodated many waves of migrants and asylum seekers, mostly from Somalia, Central and Southern Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.
5. In February 2005, the unemployment rate in Leicester was 4.6 per cent and the national average was 2.3 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

6. The service provides a variety of hospitality, sport and leisure courses. These include cake decoration, food hygiene, keep fit, yoga, aerobics, tai chi and the sports leader award. Some courses are targeted at specific groups such as women and those aged over 50. Some yoga classes are offered at beginner and intermediate levels. Sessions are one to two hours long, and courses run for between 10 weeks and one year. Food hygiene classes are mostly run over one full day, but some in community settings take place over four weeks. Classes are offered in a range of venues including schools, colleges and community centres.

LEICESTER LEA REINSPECTION

7. In 2004-05, 2,071 learners enrolled on courses, 1,108 of them in sports and 966 in cooking and food hygiene. In hospitality, 81 per cent of provision leads to a qualification. None of the provision in sports is accredited except for one sports leader award course with 15 learners. The service employs 46 tutors in this area of learning. They work between two and five hours a week.

Foundation programmes

8. More than 1,863 learners are on foundation programmes. Approximately 51 per cent attend courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), 30 per cent attend literacy and numeracy courses, and 19 per cent attend programmes aimed at meeting the needs of people recovering from mental health problems. Seventy per cent of the learners are women, 27 per cent are white, 51 per cent are of Asian origin and 10 per cent are African-Caribbean.

9. In 2003-04, 638 learners enrolled on literacy and numeracy classes. Currently, there are 418 learners on literacy courses, and 143 on numeracy courses. The college provides 89 per cent of the literacy and numeracy courses, and the remainder are offered at 14 community learning centres. Learners are encouraged to work towards accreditation through national tests and Open College Network (OCN) qualifications. Courses range from pre-entry level to pre-general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) English and mathematics. The college employs two full-time basic skills co-ordinators and the LEA has recently appointed a part-time basic skills co-ordinator.

10. A total of 944 learners attend ESOL classes through the college and the service. In the current year, the college runs 194 ESOL courses, which have 520 learners and make up 55 per cent of the total provision. In addition, the service runs 40 courses directly in local community centres, which 424 learners attend. Seventy per cent of 2004-05 learners are women. The service is managed by a skills for life officer and an ESOL curriculum leader. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. The college has two full time ESOL co-ordinators. Courses are run for a term at a time, although learners can study for a full academic year. Courses range from pre-entry to level 2. Additional courses with an ESOL component are offered in other subjects including soft furnishings, computing, driving theory and a range of family learning. Citizenship courses, and courses in 'ESOL and your child's health' and 'ESOL for academic purposes' have been developed in the community centres.

11. The 'Remit' project provides courses for adults with mental health problems. The 'Reach' project offers learning opportunities for people who are sleeping rough or in temporary accommodation. Remit has between 250 and 300 learners at any point throughout the year. It has received 232 new referrals to date in 2004-05 and received 202 in 2003-04. Reach has worked with 220 learners between April 2004 and March 2005. Remit runs accredited courses in computing, from beginners' computing to level 2, as well as in creative art, ceramics and poetry. Non-accredited courses include an introduction to philosophy, acoustic guitar, women's gentle exercise and the environment. Courses offered to Reach learners include computing, art and craft and playing drums. Most courses at Remit extend over 38 weeks and run for two hours each week. Some run for 12 weeks, and the service also offers a summer programme of taster sessions. Learners attend up to three different courses each week. They can join most courses at any stage. Most Remit courses are delivered at the main centre, but there is outreach provision in six community centres. At the time of inspection, 358 learners have made 1,339 enrolments on 55 courses in the Remit programme and 31 in Reach.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	16
Number of learners interviewed	176
Number of staff interviewed	66
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	27
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	1

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

12. At the previous inspection in June 2004, all aspects of Leicester LEA's provision were judged to be satisfactory or better, with the exception of hospitality, sport and leisure, and foundation programmes. At the end of the reinspection process, foundation provision is good and hospitality, sport and leisure is satisfactory.

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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

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

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

Visual & performing arts & media		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts - Adult and community learning	2433	3
English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
English - Adult and community learning	355	3
Languages - Adult and community learning	1550	3
Foundation programmes		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Literacy - Adult and community learning	719	3
ESOL - Adult and community learning	1020	4
Community learning - Adult and community learning	358	2
Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning - Adult and community learning	2281	2
Community development		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning - Adult and community learning	2221	3

LEICESTER LEA REINSPECTION

Grades awarded at reinspection

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hospitality and catering</i> - Adult and community learning	963	3
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i> - Adult and community learning	1108	3
Foundation programmes		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>ESOL</i> - Adult and community learning	944	2
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i> - Adult and community learning	561	2

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.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hospitality and catering</i> - Adult and community learning	963	3
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i> - Adult and community learning	1108	3

Hospitality and catering

Strengths

- good application of learning to wider life
- very good development of food hygiene courses into many community languages

Weaknesses

- inadequate response to meet learners' additional needs
- insufficient support for programme development

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good skills acquisition and improved fitness to improve quality of learners' lives
- very good management action to bring about improvements
- very effective use of specialist observers

Weaknesses

- insufficiently focused lesson plans and schemes of work
- inconsistent recording of learners' progress by tutors

Achievement and standards

13. Learners in hospitality and sports continue to apply their learning effectively to their lives. This strength has been maintained since the previous inspection. For example, learners on a basic cookery course have changed their shopping habits. They now buy less convenience food, as they have developed the confidence to cook fresh ingredients at home and follow recipes effectively. Learners on food hygiene courses are well able to relate their learning to a variety of home and work situations. Cookery learners develop satisfactory practical skills, demonstrating hygienic and safe working practices in the kitchen. In cake decorating, much of the work is of a high standard.

14. Sports and fitness learners acquire good skills and their increased physical fitness improves the quality of their lives. For example, yoga has helped learners, particularly older learners with conditions such as osteoporosis and arthritis, to maintain and, in some cases, improve their joint mobility. Learners are better able to manage stress. They improve or maintain their strength, balance, co-ordination and cardio-vascular function. The overall standard of learners' performance is satisfactory.

15. Achievement rates on accredited foundation food hygiene courses were a weakness at the previous inspection. They have improved substantially and are now satisfactory. This programme is offered to a wide range of learners, some of whom have few previous qualifications. In addition to the qualifications, learners make good gains in personal development and enjoy the social benefits of learning.

Quality of education and training

16. The service has taken very good action to develop the foundation food hygiene programme in a number of community languages. It regularly offers courses in the main community languages such as Mandarin Chinese, Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu. Attendance and achievement rates for these courses are good, and additional courses are scheduled to meet the needs of learners who speak English as an additional language. When appropriate, learners attending a hygiene course taught in English are given support materials in a community language. Learners from minority ethnic groups are able to achieve a qualification and apply for jobs in many parts of the hospitality industry. Courses in sports satisfactorily meet the needs and interests of learners. This is confirmed by the learner surveys and focus groups. Most learners interviewed identified a range of physical and psychological benefits from the sessions they attended.

17. Teaching was a key weakness at the previous inspection but is now satisfactory. Of the 16 sessions observed, 88 per cent were satisfactory or better and 44 per cent were good. In the best classes in hospitality, tutors give good explanation of key learning points and support these with many relevant examples from the work or home environment. Learners develop better understanding in lively group discussions. In most classes, tutors give helpful individual coaching to learners. In one cake decorating class, learners were able to produce intricate arrangements of sugar flowers and leaves. The quality of handout material is satisfactory, although tutors do not make much use of colour handouts and do not use the measurements used in industry. Learners on the hygiene programmes now receive the relevant course book.

18. Teaching standards in sports have also improved since the previous inspection. Most sessions are well designed and focus on the needs of the learners. The lessons are well paced and provide an appropriate level of challenge. In most good sessions there is effective use of varied levels and intensity of exercise and postures, to accommodate different ability levels. Health and safety concerns raised at the previous inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily.

19. The accommodation and resources for learning are now satisfactory for hospitality

LEICESTER LEA REINSPECTION

and sports. Kitchens are small but adequate for the number of learners on programmes. There is appropriate equipment for the level of courses offered.

20. The monitoring and recording of learners' progress has improved and it is now satisfactory. The service managers have done considerable work to standardise record-keeping. Most staff have been trained appropriately. The learning goals set are now more specific and measurable, and they are monitored satisfactorily. Some learners do not have sufficiently individualised learning goals.

21. Sports and recreation learners benefit from satisfactory support including help with literacy, numeracy and language. During induction, tutors make all learners aware of the level of support available. Information on support is clearly detailed in learners' handbooks. One learner for whom English is an additional language was very sensitively supported in a fitness session by the tutor, who translated exercise instructions.

22. The service does not adequately meet the additional needs of hospitality learners. Learners attending food hygiene courses at the college do not receive any initial assessment. Where additional needs have been identified, staff try to meet these needs, but the current arrangements are inadequate. For example, in one cookery class, a visually impaired learner is unable to participate effectively in weighing and measuring ingredients. Enlarged handouts are of poor quality. No action has been taken to help a learner with mobility difficulties to participate fully in a cookery class. On food hygiene courses at the college, learners do not get adequate literacy support. Records in learners' files of identified additional needs and actions taken are inadequate. Many learners' additional needs do not appear in centralised records where managers could respond to them.

23. Lesson plans and schemes of work, particularly in sport, are insufficiently focused. Most lesson plans do not include specific learning objectives against which the degree of learning in a session could be accurately measured. Most schemes of work refer generally to topics and themes. They do not make clear the approach and methods to be used. They do not illustrate a link between overall learning objectives and session learning objectives.

24. Tutors in sports do not keep consistently good records of learners' progress. Most tutors do not have systems to monitor learners' progress towards the development of specific skills, or their ability to perform specific postures and exercises. Learners, and in some cases staff, are unable to tell how much progress they have made in developing specific skills.

Leadership and management

25. Since the previous inspection, the service has taken very good management action to bring about improvements in programme co-ordination. Tutors' skills have been improved through an extensive staff development programme attended by 90 per cent of the tutors. The topics included teaching, lesson planning and initial assessment. Tutors are given further individual support through an excellent mentoring scheme. The

mentors help the tutors to bring about improvements in areas of weakness identified during teaching observations. Managers have established specialist curriculum groups in sports to work on improvement activity. This work has included the development of subject-specific learning objectives, initial assessment and progress-recording paperwork. The roles and responsibilities of staff and departments are now clear. However, the contract for the food hygiene courses has insufficient details on the standards of performance and the monitoring arrangements. The service has recently produced a detailed three-year development plan in line with national initiatives and local priorities. The service now has a clear overview of the range of programmes offered and the strategy behind it, but has not clearly defined the target groups it hopes to reach through sports programmes.

26. The previous inspection identified that many sessions were essentially recreational activities in which no new learning took place. Managers have taken effective action to convert some of these sessions in to self-managing clubs. Plans are well advanced to transfer the remaining recreational sessions to local sports and recreation departments, and to community colleges with fitness sports expertise.

27. The service has made very effective use of specialist teaching observers in sports, and has conducted an extensive programme of over 40 lesson observations since January 2005. The specialist observers have been very effective in providing sports-specific teaching support to improve teaching skills and exercise and safety practices. In hospitality though, most tutors are insufficiently self-critical when evaluating their lessons, and records of evaluations are inconsistent. Tutors do not use information routinely to improve future teaching sessions.

28. There is insufficient professional support for tutors to drive continuous improvement in hospitality. Tutors are too dispersed to share good practice and resources effectively across the provision. This has been recognised by the provider and there are plans to establish subject-specific meetings. However, these plans do not include the food hygiene tutors at the college. Data collection and recording of learners' progress and attendance in different areas are unreliable. For example, learners may attend several programmes in different parts of the city but the management system is unable to capture this information accurately. Some learners have to fill in several application and enrolment forms. The two sets of data produced by the college and the service are not integrated. The staff and managers cannot make any meaningful analysis for planning and development purposes. It is very difficult to monitor the progress of the learners or analyse trends.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>ESOL</i> - Adult and community learning	944	2
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i> - Adult and community learning	561	2

ESOL*Strengths*

- good learner achievement
- good teaching and learning
- very effective use of a wide range of resources
- particularly effective action to manage programme

Weaknesses

- insufficient development of independent learning skills in some classes
- inconsistent focus on individual learning targets

Literacy and numeracy*Strengths*

- good achievement of qualifications
- good teaching
- broad range of provision to attract new learners
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- inconsistent target-setting

Achievement and standards

29. ESOL learners develop good listening, speaking and reading skills. They are able to follow conversations and make telephone calls to their employers and public agencies such as health and utility services. They can read newspapers and public information leaflets. The standard of learners' oral work is good, and the development of their reading skills is mostly satisfactory. This service has maintained this strength since the previous inspection.

30. The achievement rates on accredited ESOL courses are good. More widely recognised examination-based qualifications have replaced the portfolio-based OCN

accreditation. The learners' achievement in pilot and subsequent phases is excellent at 100 and 90 per cent respectively. Learners can take the examinations at flexible times when they are ready. In addition to the external accreditation, all learners also work towards more specific learning outcomes. Sixty-five per cent of the learners have achieved all their learning goals and 31 per cent have achieved some part of them.

31. Learners make good progress from ESOL classes to voluntary and paid work. They have progressed into occupations such as restaurant work, dental nursing and business administration. There is also good progress into mainstream classes, including those leading to GCSEs and national vocational qualifications.

32. Attendance at ESOL classes has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. The learners fully understand the importance of regular attendance and subsequent achievement. The service takes account of major local religious periods and festivals, such as Diwali, Ramadan and Eid, when organising classes.

33. Literacy and numeracy learners also develop good skills in reading, spelling, punctuation, measuring and estimating. They gain self-confidence and their self-esteem is significantly enhanced. They learn to read newspapers and books confidently for themselves or for their children and grandchildren. They use these skills daily to leave notes for the tutors or write simple formal letters. Numeracy learners use their newly acquired skills to work out the true cost of food items. The standard of learners' work is also good in literacy and numeracy.

34. Rates of achievement of external qualifications for literacy and numeracy learners, including those on employer training pilots, are good at over 80 per cent. The number of learners achieving OCN qualifications has nearly doubled from 33 to 63. Thirty-three per cent of the learners have now achieved external qualifications, compared with very few achievements at the previous inspection. The numbers achieving these qualifications are still low but increasing.

35. Literacy and numeracy learners progress within their job roles and some plan to study for nursing or teaching qualifications once they have achieved GCSE-equivalent literacy and numeracy qualifications. Older learners are able to enjoy their newly developed skills to read for pleasure and with their children and grandchildren.

36. The standards of learners' achievement have been maintained on Remit and Reach programmes. Their self-confidence is enhanced and they continue to build essential social skills. In some cases, the learners prepare effectively for work and qualifications. The inspectors saw a very good magazine produced by the learners, for the learners. Retention rates are good, at 72 per cent, considering the learners' very difficult personal circumstances. Progression rates are satisfactory. In the current year, five learners have gone into full-time jobs and four into voluntary work. A further six have gone into further and higher education. This compares well with the achievement levels at the previous inspection.

Quality of education and training

37. Teaching and learning on ESOL and literacy and numeracy programmes is now good. The narrow range of teaching and learning activities was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. Ninety-four per cent of the classes observed were satisfactory or better. Of the 16 observed sessions, 50 per cent were good and 13 per cent were excellent. Lesson planning in ESOL is good. Lesson aims are clear, concise, well expressed and linked both to the national core curriculum and the new external accreditation. The tutors effectively use a range of language teaching techniques, such as explanation, task setting, questioning and facilitating. They use a mixture of whole-class teaching, and small group, individual and pair work in the classes. In a good session, the learners accessed a range of relevant and stimulating websites on the internet for some good grammar-based activities and multicultural stories. They used this experience as a stimulus for their own written work. In another good session, learners gave a short presentation on an item relating to their culture and answered questions from the rest of the group. Bilingual tutors use their knowledge of the learners' mother tongue to help them overcome difficulties with pronunciation and intonation. Relevant audiovisual resources and computers are used well in classes.

38. Literacy and numeracy teaching is also good. Lesson planning is very good. Lessons are a good mix of whole-group and individual teaching. Volunteer tutors are deployed well to provide excellent in-class study support to the learners. The high level of support was a strength at the previous inspection. Tutors bring everyday objects into the classes and use them to bring learning to life. In an excellent session, the tutor brought three packets of biscuits to the class to teach learners about value for money for items advertised as 'buy one, get one free.' In another very good session, the tutor made individual worksheets for learners who wanted to read a newspaper and learn to distinguish fact from opinion.

39. There is a broad range of programmes to attract learners new to literacy and numeracy classes. A range of taster courses, progression courses, intensive courses during the summer months, employer training pilots and fast-track courses are attracting many new learners into learning. Learners can achieve literacy or numeracy qualifications at an appropriate level within five three-hour sessions. The number of new learners has increased from 39 per cent in 2003-04 to 69 per cent in 2004-05. The ESOL programmes are responsive to community needs. The previous inspection identified this as a strength. Classes are provided in a variety of community venues at convenient times during the day and evening, and include women-only classes. Learners have good opportunities for progression and external accreditation at various levels. The need for ESOL classes is identified through various activities such as family learning. Information about ESOL courses is widely available and has been translated into the eight commonly used community languages. Support for learners with study and personal matters remains good.

40. ESOL tutors make very effective use of a wide range of resources. The service has established a new tutor resource centre with good stocks of a wide range of learning materials linked directly to the curriculum. A designated tutor has conducted a good

analysis of learning resources, including web-based resources. Each of these resources is analysed for its suitability and relevance to each learning activity and for learners at various levels. In addition, there are small libraries of resources in each community centre and these are well used. Tutors are provided with a tutor tool kit and a trolley to carry the resources. The service has plans to develop this centre as a tutor resource centre for all adult and community learning. In addition to using the commercially produced sets of books, many tutors produce their own resources. One used laminated visual aids and accompanying flashcards for a lesson on tourist attractions in the UK and Leicester. Other tutors bring in real-life objects, particularly for topics such as shopping. The provider has developed a very good package of learning materials on citizenship. The resources are based on the lives of the multicultural community in Leicester.

41. In some classes, ESOL learners are not taught independent learning skills and do not develop them sufficiently. Most learners have not studied at all in this country and some of them have had no formal education whatsoever. They do not have sufficiently developed learning and study skills. Many of their folders are disorganised. Tutors pay insufficient attention to developing their awareness of opportunities outside the class to use English. They are not taught the appropriate study skills to use reference materials.

42. The focus on individual learning objectives for some ESOL learners is inconsistent. Some learners are making slow progress. Initial and diagnostic assessment has improved since the previous inspection but it is still not used effectively for all learners. For example, some learners have specifically asked to develop skills in a particular context, but these objectives have not been included in the individual learning plans. No targets have been set for achieving these objectives. Planning for individual learning is inconsistent. Learning plans are a general record of what was covered in the class rather than an accurate record of an individual's learning or progress. The service has made good progress to improve recording of learners' progress but it is still inconsistent and patchy.

43. For literacy and numeracy learners, target-setting is inconsistent. Group learning targets are good but individual learning targets are unsatisfactory in some cases. For example, group targets are repeated on learners' individual learning plan. Individual learning objectives are very similar for the whole group. The context for developing learning objectives is not clear. For example, learners have been asked to learn 10 new words without defining the context in which this should take place. In some cases, target-setting is meaningless. For example, in some cases the targets were set and met on the same date. However, inspectors saw good evidence of some very specific and measurable targets for many learners.

Leadership and management

44. The management of foundation programmes, including their quality assurance, is now good. Very highly experienced senior managers give clear strategic leadership and direction. Staff development is extensive and attended by most tutors. It has focused on improving classroom practice and rectifying the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The new system of observations of teaching and learning is much more

LEICESTER LEA REINSPECTION

rigorous. It correctly identifies tutors who need help to improve. Performance management is good. Some of the weak ESOL tutors have left the service, and managers have given appropriate support to help the others improve. The service has appointed two new full-time managers and has given enhanced responsibilities to some tutors. There has been a substantial investment in learning resources. Communications are excellent. Literacy and numeracy classes are run over two terms and significant emphasis is placed on the achievement of qualifications. ESOL managers have piloted and successfully introduced new qualifications. The titles of classes are now fully standardised. This helps to place learners in classes at the appropriate level especially when they move to other parts of the city.

45. Partnership arrangements with various agencies such as SureStart, family learning and other providers are good. They promote productive relationships and a more coherent delivery plan. The service and the college are represented on the skills for life consortium. Curriculum planning is good and is based on a thorough needs analysis. All needs or requests for new provision are discussed at the consortium meetings and the most appropriate provider is delegated the task of providing learning. Planning is also good and coherent. Some of the less successful classes have been closed and the college has withdrawn its provision from some of the centres. The consortium has secured substantial funding for the foundation area of learning. The service works in close collaboration with a variety of organisations representing asylum seekers and refugees. It has responded well to local community needs, and set up a variety of classes offering accreditation and progression.

46. Achievement levels for learners are good. The service is making a good contribution to the development of its less advantaged citizens by giving them the chance to acquire new skills and qualifications, and develop their capacity to seek better jobs.

47. The standards of teaching and achievement levels have risen substantially since the previous inspection. Quality assurance is thorough and is now well established.