

REINSPECTION REPORT

Staffordshire LEA Reinspection

28 February 2006



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - inadequate*

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.*

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.
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**)

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.

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Staffordshire Local Education Authority is funded by Staffordshire Learning and Skills Council for the provision of non-accredited adult and community learning activities throughout the eight district council areas in Staffordshire. The responsibility for this provision is with the adult and community learning service (the ACLS), which is part of the education and lifelong learning directorate of Staffordshire County Council. The manager of the ACLS is supported by a quality improvement manager, a principal of an adult residential college, and a family education officer. The quality improvement manager is directly responsible for a community learning development worker and four district adult and community learning managers. Each of these managers is responsible for two district council areas and for linking with and monitoring the subcontractors and partners in those areas.

2. The ACLS contracts with seven colleges of further education and two schools to offer formal adult education courses. The ACLS also operates projects in conjunction with a range of other community and educational organisations. In total, the ACLS provides learning services at 320 venues throughout Staffordshire for in excess of 20,000 learners.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

3. The ACLS offers over 500 courses in this area of learning that are delivered by six further education colleges and two schools at over 80 community venues. Subjects include yoga, tai chi, Pilates, keep fit, badminton and aqua aerobics. During 2004-05, 5,534 learners enrolled on courses, of whom 82 per cent were women, 1.5 per cent were from minority ethnic groups and 4 per cent declared a disability. There are currently 5,500 learners on courses provided by the ACLS. All the provision is non-accredited. Most of the courses recruit on a termly basis and last for an average of 10 weeks. Four district adult and community learning managers are responsible for monitoring the provision that involves over 80 part-time tutors.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learners interviewed	176
Number of staff interviewed	3
Number of subcontractors interviewed	14
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	20

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

4. The ACLS was previously inspected in March 2005. Leadership and management and the arrangements for quality assurance were satisfactory, and equality of opportunity was good. Training was good in family learning, visual and performing arts and media, foundation programmes and land-based provision. Information and communications technology, and English, languages and communications programmes were satisfactory, but training in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel was unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, the quality of training in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel was found to be satisfactory.

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at previous inspection

Land-based provision		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Other contributory areas</i> - Adult and community learning	561	2

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Using IT</i> - Adult and community learning	451	3

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Hospitality and catering</i> - Adult and community learning	1000	3
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i> - Adult and community learning	6594	4

Visual & performing arts & media		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	4944	2

English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Languages - Adult and community learning	914	3

Foundation programmes		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Community learning - Adult and community learning	3317	2

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning - Adult and community learning	3857	2

Grades awarded at reinspection

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation - Adult and community learning	5500	3

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i> - Adult and community learning	5500	3

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good health and social benefits for many learners
- wide range of geographical spread of classes

Weaknesses

- restricted curriculum range

Achievement and standards

5. Many learners gain good health and social benefits from attending classes. This was identified as a strength at the previous inspection and has been maintained. Learners gain greater confidence and a sense of wellbeing, and develop a more positive outlook on life. New members to classes are made welcome and the supportive atmosphere allows them to settle quickly into the group activities. Learners increase their flexibility, co-ordination, balance and stamina. Some gain significant relief from medical conditions such as back and joint problems. Learners' ability to perform everyday tasks involving bending and stretching is improved. They enjoy working with others in the classes and the good friendships that are developed help to give learners greater motivation and interest in the activities.

Quality of education and training

6. As identified in self-assessment and at the previous inspection, the geographical distribution of sport and leisure classes is good and meets local needs. This strength has been maintained. Classes are provided at over 80 venues throughout the county in a wide variety of local facilities. The ACLS collaborates with local partners to ensure that the provision is not duplicated. Community link workers visit local groups to promote courses to people who would not normally be involved in learning. New courses are provided in response to local needs or requests from local groups. Taster courses are offered before enrolment to help learners in making informed choices about the suitability of the course.

STAFFORDSHIRE LEA REINSPECTION

7. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. All classes have schemes of work which are generally adequate, and in some cases quite detailed. In a number of classes the standards of teaching and learning are good. The learning environment is managed and organised effectively, and there is a stimulating approach to teaching and the development of learners' understanding. In these lessons tutors have a high level of concern for individual learners' welfare and progress, and adaptations are made to exercises to cater for any physical limitations or medical conditions that the learners may have. The satisfactory classes usually involve teaching the class on a group basis, with little emphasis on individual learners. The activities observed were safe and the lessons were reasonably well structured, but not enough consideration was given to the benefits or purpose of a particular exercise. In the small number of classes where teaching was less than satisfactory, not enough attention was given to health and safety and the welfare of individuals in the classes.

8. The monitoring and recording of individual learning were weaknesses at the previous inspection, but these have now improved and are satisfactory. Most learners have individual learning plans. A considerable amount of work has taken place throughout the provision to place greater emphasis on learning and individual progress in lessons. All classes observed during the reinspection had documents which stated the aims for each learner, and the periods when individual progress would be reviewed. A number of learners questioned the value of completing these documents, as they regard the activities carried out in lessons as being recreational. However, most teaching staff are completing the documents, and in some cases this is clearly viewed by some learners as a useful way of monitoring and recording their short- and long-term progress.

9. The initial assessment of learners has improved since the previous inspection. Health screening now exists for all of the activities, and there are some good examples of how this information is being used by the tutors to give improved awareness and support to individual learners. For example, learners may highlight a previous injury or medical condition that requires modifications to physical activity. In a small number of cases however, the forms are completed and filed away with little or no reference to any health issues that may have been identified. All the classes inspected had completed a risk assessment, although the quality and usefulness of these did vary. The good assessments were detailed and thorough, but some others simply highlighted a few issues concerning the facilities or the equipment, with little reference to the physical activities being carried out.

10. Resources are satisfactory. Classes take place in a variety of community locations and these are generally appropriate for the activities being carried out. Most facilities are of a suitable size, are bright and welcoming and have sufficient equipment. In a small number of locations, the rooms were cold and in a few cases untidy and dirty. Staff have suitable experience and competence in the activities they are teaching, but most of them do not have teaching qualifications.

11. The range of activities available in sport and leisure is restricted. Most classes consist of yoga or gentle stretching and mobility exercises. The curriculum attracts only a few men and most learners are over 50 years of age. There are not enough activities within

this area of learning to attract men, young adults and learners who would be interested in specific sports activities.

Leadership and management

12. The leadership and management of hospitality, sport, leisure and travel has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Communications are effective enough between the ACLS district managers and the subcontractors delivering the provision to plan the programme of activities, and to implement and standardise quality improvement procedures. Subcontractors' compliance with service level agreements is better now. Tutors are routinely observed in their work and feedback to staff is used to help identify any training and development needs. More staff are being encouraged to study for teaching qualifications, although a significant number still do not have qualified teacher status, but rely on their knowledge and experience of the specific activities that they are leading. Learners' feedback is now collected and analysed to consider possible improvements to the provision.

13. The self-assessment process is quite detailed and indicates that managers have a good insight into programme issues and the quality of the provision. Good progress has been made through the post-inspection action plan to improve the provision and to resolve previously identified weaknesses. The initial assessments of learners are now used to identify possible health issues, and learners' progress is more closely monitored and recorded. Tutors now have schemes of work and are using satisfactory lesson plans. Classes are distributed well throughout the county, although the curriculum is restricted and does not currently attract a large enough cross-section of the community.