

Kirklees Metropolitan Council

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Background information

Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Community Development

Description of the provider

1. Post 16 and Adult Learning is part of the recently formed Learning Service within the Children and Young People Service of Kirklees Metropolitan Council. Adult Learning specifically focuses on working with adults who have benefited least from education in the past and those facing barriers to accessing education and training while supporting the development of strong communities in the most disadvantaged areas of Kirklees. The Kirklees Post 16 and Adult Learning Team works with partners to fulfil its mission:

'To secure a comprehensive range of good quality, inclusive and accessible learning opportunities for the people of Kirklees, which enable them to maximise their potential.'

2. The Adult Learning team fulfils two roles: secretariat to the Kirklees Adult Learning Strategy Group, which includes acting as lead partner for some of the group's projects, and management of adult and community learning (ACL), and family programmes budget. This forms part of a wider programme of adult learning in Kirklees. Kirklees Metropolitan Council has consolidated all of its provision under the heading of Community Development and at the time of the inspection there were 210 learners. The funding contract is with the West Yorkshire LSC.
3. Within Kirklees, there are significant variations in residents' experiences in education and work. There are marked differences between the wealthiest and poorest areas. Kirklees is ranked 77th in the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation. The most disadvantaged wards are in inner urban areas and suburban estates. There are small pockets of disadvantage in more rural areas. Just over a quarter of Kirklees residents live in areas that are in the 20% most deprived nationally, while only 4% live in areas ranked in the 20% least deprived, nationally. In 2005, Kirklees had a population of nearly 300,000 people aged 19 and above. This is predicted to grow, particularly amongst older residents. According to the 2001 census data, 15% of the population belong to minority ethnic groups, of which about half are from Pakistani backgrounds.
4. There are higher rates of unemployment in the most disadvantaged wards and among young people, older people, those with long-term health issues, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The Kirklees Adult Learning team carefully targets such groups, and organisations that are able to support them.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2

Achievement and standards	Outstanding: Grade 1
Quality of provision	Outstanding: Grade 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding: Grade 1
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1

Sector subject area

Community Development	Outstanding: Grade 1
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

5. The effectiveness of the provision is outstanding. Achievement and standards, the quality of provision, leadership and management and equality of opportunity are outstanding. Provision in community development and the Councils' approach to social inclusion are outstanding.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

6. Kirklees Metropolitan Council has demonstrated that it has a good capacity to improve. Since the previous inspection and reinspection, Kirklees Metropolitan Council has significantly reduced the range of provision. The two main general further education colleges in the region now fund provision aimed at mainstream LSC targets. The Kirklees Metropolitan Council provision strongly focuses on community development and neighbourhood regeneration. Since this change in focus, the Service is exceeding many of its main targets for recruitment and achievement.
7. Council officers are particularly effective at enabling and assisting contracted partners to provide a good quality learning experience. A wide range of good quality resources, intensive support and guidance assists providers to meet and maintain rigorous quality standards. Systems used to monitor the performance of providers are good. All staff follow through the clear improvement plans well.
8. All council staff participate in a performance management scheme and this includes regular individual meetings with line managers as well as half-year reviews and annual appraisals. At these meetings, managers discuss and agree performance targets and objectives.
9. The self-assessment process is both thorough and inclusive. Council staff assist the contracted providers to develop and create their own self-assessment process and report. For many in the voluntary and community sector this process is new. The council then incorporates these reports into the overall self-assessment report for all the provision. The report is well written and clearly records the areas the council judges as strengths and areas for further improvement. However, inspectors graded all areas higher than the council did. The Service has taken good actions since the previous inspection to review, rationalise and improve the community development provision.

Key strengths

- Excellent achievement of skills and confidence
- High retention and achievement rates
- Very good teaching and learning
- Very good resources to support learning
- Excellent monitoring of learner progress and achievement
- Highly effective support for learners
- Very clear and focused strategic management
- Outstanding influence on and brokerage of provision
- Good quality systems to assure and improve programmes
- Outstanding approach to equality and diversity

Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient formal recording of learners' progression

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Outstanding: Grade 1

10. The achievement of learners' skills and confidence is excellent, a strength recognised in the latest self-assessment report. Hard to reach and disengaged learners achieve very good personal and social development through involvement with a range of partners for example - Green Door, Outlook, SHAP and Inroads projects. For example, often-isolated parents make friends and work together while their children mix and learn to share their toys and books. Parents in family learning courses use their new skills in successfully supporting their own families' learning at home and as volunteers to help with reading in school. Learners gain significantly increased levels of confidence and wider experiences through residential courses organised in partnership with Northern College.

11. The successful acquisition of computing skills enables learners to communicate effectively in their everyday lives by using email, or ordering shopping online as well as preparing them for employment. Many young adults become highly motivated to re-engage in learning through music and media provision. They gain skills which exceed their own and their tutors' expectations. Severe barriers to learning such as problems of homelessness, drugs misuse, language or poverty and poor self-esteem are common. Through involvement in their courses, many aspire to and succeed in progressing to voluntary work and tutoring within the organisation. Many have become excellent role models for new learners.
12. In 2006-07, retention and achievement rates on accredited courses were high at 87% and 88% respectively. Retention and achievement rates on non-accredited courses were also high at 93% and 98% respectively. Attendance is good, averaging 88% overall.

Quality of provision

Outstanding: Grade 1

13. The quality of provision is outstanding. Teaching and learning are very good. This is identified as a strength in the latest self-assessment report. All observations of teaching and learning were at least good or better. Extremely well planned sessions involve activities that stretch and challenge learners extremely well. Highly effective negotiated learning supports both individual and group needs in a flexible and responsive way. A good variety of very successful learning activities meets the individual needs of every learner. Tutors record these in detailed individual learning plans. The very thorough initial assessment is excellent in identifying learners' starting points and it is used well to agree individual goals and aspirations. For example, learners with long-term issues of homelessness plan learning goals to promote healthy lifestyles and ways of achieving economic well-being. Literacy, numeracy and language assessments, and initial interviews, successfully identify learners' needs.
14. Monitoring and recording of learners' progress and achievement is excellent, a strength not identified in the self-assessment. Relevant evaluative comments by tutors enable learners to understand what they have learnt and what they need to do next. Very good use of weekly progress sheets and learner diaries promote and value reflective learning practices. Peer feedback and evaluation creates a very positive learning experience in many classes. Learners with previously low levels of self-esteem successfully develop the ability to give and receive constructive criticism and praise within peer groups. This peer group learning includes successful personal development, problem-solving and social interaction. The highly effective use of personal targets helps the learners to develop skills to manage their own independent learning and personal progress. Tutors and learners have a good understanding of all the stages of recognising and recording progress and achievement. Good use is made of them as an essential part of the learning process.
15. Very good resources support learning, a strength recognised in the self-assessment report. Venues are accessible to all learners and are located in the heart of communities. Outreach centres have good quality information and communications technology equipment and current software. Tutors and learners produce learning materials of very good quality. Excellent partnerships between contributing agencies facilitate the sharing of resources to better meet the needs of all learners. The programme uses facilities and

equipment that would not be available without this relationship. Highly qualified and experienced tutors motivate specific groups of learners.

16. Support for learners is highly effective. This is also identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. Language support for those for whom English is an additional language is very good. It is available through learning-support assistants and the translation of materials into other languages. Interpreters and signers support deaf learners in some classes. Learning materials are of a good quality, generally including visual and written information. All courses, materials and childcare are offered free of charge to learners. Well-managed volunteers support learners and there are many examples of learners who become volunteers and tutors, providing positive role models for others. A good range of assistive technology is available and is used well to support learners with specific needs.
17. Information, advice and guidance are very well organised and available for learners on all courses. Programmes include the planning of the learners' next steps, along with visits from information, advice and guidance staff in the middle of the course and further support in later sessions. Pre-course information is usually lively, colourful and informative and often includes a booking form and an invitation to talk to staff before the course starts. Learners know what to expect from the course and often have a pre-course interview to complete initial assessment and start individual learning plans.
18. The range of programmes is highly effective in meeting the needs of the local communities. Partnership working is successful in ensuring learning opportunities are available throughout the borough. Learning goes beyond formal classroom activities. It has a very positive impact in developing learning organisations in the voluntary and community sector.

Leadership and management

Outstanding: Grade 1

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1

19. Leadership and management are outstanding. The strategic management of the Councils' ACL provision is very clear and focused on the needs of learners within particular targeted groups. The latest self-assessment report identifies this strength. Council managers and elected members provide a strong commitment to adult learning. Senior managers have a good understanding of the strategic significance of adult learning and its role in improving the quality of life for disadvantaged groups. The programmes provide exceptional support to the vision of the Kirklees Partnership Community Strategy for 2006-08. Managers and staff make an excellent contribution to the Kirklees Adult Learning Strategy Group and the Kirklees Learning Partnership, providing both a secretariat and a knowledgeable contribution to developments and strategies.
20. The success with which Kirklees Metropolitan Council influences and brokers provision is outstanding. Although worded slightly differently, this strength is also recognised in the latest self-assessment report. Highly effective neighbourhood learning networks play a key role in influencing the role and nature of the provision in individual communities. Staff actively involve a wide range of community groups and effectively co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to provision, enabling greater networking between the agencies

while reducing duplication of effort and resource. Council staff are superb network enablers and act as a catalyst for even more activity by providers than can be funded by the council. The council very successfully bids for a wide range of additional funding to support the provision.

21. Extremely good partnerships and co-operation with both community providers and local general further education colleges result in a well-managed and co-ordinated provision for all learners. Flexible and highly effective systems provide information, advice and guidance for all learners alongside a very well managed and effective childcare system that removes this barrier to learning for parents and carers.
22. The council use good quality systems to both assure and improve programmes, a strength recognised through the self-assessment process. Rigorous contract management ensures that all subcontracted provision meets the council's high standards. Good quality resources such as a tutor handbook and course evidence file give exceptionally good support to providers who come mainly from the voluntary and community sectors. Recognising and recording progress and achievement is well established. The process for observation of teaching is well developed. Detailed records and feedback provide a good evaluation of standards of teaching. Staff follow up satisfactory and inadequate performance with both action-planning and further observations.
23. Regular interviews with centre managers and tutors raise awareness of quality issues and contribute to the provider performance review process. Good support enables tutors to access and gain qualified teacher status. Monitoring of performance and management decisions are supported by good quality management information. Guidance and support is given to providers to enable them to self-assess their performance.
24. The council has an outstanding approach to equality and diversity, as recognised in the latest self-assessment report. The provision managed by the council demonstrates an outstanding approach to widening participation, particularly amongst those most disadvantaged. Key performance indicators target the provision at the hardest to reach and most socially deprived residents in Kirklees. Programmes exceeded their targets for 2006-07. Managers have set targets that are more challenging for 2007-08. Highly effective actions by some providers engage with learners and communities to create greater cohesiveness and to challenge previously held stereotypical views of other communities. One scheme has been nationally recognised with a prestigious award.
25. Formal recording of learners' progression to the next stage is insufficient. Systems for capturing and recording progression to voluntary or paid employment are not currently in place. While some providers record progression in case studies, the evidence currently collected by the council is largely anecdotal.

What learners like:

- The improved confidence – ‘I have come to this centre for the disabled at rock bottom in my life and all the people I have met have turned me round and I am applying for jobs’
- One mute woman indicated that she had not been out of the house or made contact with a stranger for years until she came to this class and now she can communicate with anyone and be regarded as a ‘normal’ person
- Learning new skills – ‘I had never used a computer before and now I have booked a flight and selected my seat online’
- ‘I didn’t think that coming to a computer class could be so comfortable and sociable and giving me confidence to apply for jobs’
- Learning new life skills - a homeless learner previously in care reported that ‘I have learnt not to be angry with everyone all of the time’
- ‘The tutors are great we can talk to them about anything and we get lots of help’
- ‘The course is held at a time and place suitable to us all’

What learners think could improve:

- No comments