Lincolnshire County Council

Inspection date   22 February 2008

Inspection number   319763

Contents

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:

- Information and communication technology
- Sport, leisure and recreation
- Arts, media and publishing
- Languages, literature and culture
- Preparation for life and work
- Family learning

Description of the provider

1. Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) is funded by Lincolnshire and Rutland LSC to provide adult and community learning (ACL) and work-based learning. LCC is contracted to deliver personal and community development learning, first steps, family learning, and family literacy, language and numeracy and Entry to Employment (E2E).

2. At the time of the inspection, there were 2,240 learners in adult and community learning and 30 on the E2E programme. In 2006/07, LCC had 6,291 enrolments on adult and community learning and 83 on E2E. LCC provides courses in nine sector subject areas and family learning.

3. ACL provision is managed by the library and learning service, within the community's directorate. The E2E programme is managed by the council's Teenage Services Department within the children's services directorate.

4. LCC subcontracts provision to four local external institutes. They currently provide about 43.9% of the adult and community learning provision. LCC provides learning programmes in some 150 centres, including schools, colleges, libraries, village halls and community centres.

5. Lincolnshire covers an area of over 6000 square kilometres with a population of 673,530. The main population centres are in Lincoln, Grantham and Boston, the remainder being widely dispersed. Although overall the population is growing due to inward migration, the birth rate is in decline. The net effect is an ageing population particularly on the eastern side of the county.

6. According to the 2001 Census, 97% of Lincolnshire's population identify themselves as being White British. However, since then, there has been a marked increase in the number of migrant, predominantly eastern European, workers and their families.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	**Inadequate: Grade 4**

Adult and community learning	**Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4**
Work-based learning	**Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2**

Capacity to improve	**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

Achievement and standards	**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

Adult and community learning	**Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3**
Work-based learning	**Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2**

Quality of provision	**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

Adult and community learning	**Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3**
Work-based learning	**Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2**

Leadership and management	**Inadequate: Grade 4**

Adult and community learning	**Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4**
Work-based learning	**Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2**

Equality of opportunity	**Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3**

Sector subject areas

Information and communication technology	**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

Sport, leisure and recreation	**Inadequate: Grade 4**

Arts, media and publishing	**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

Languages, literature and culture	**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

Preparation for life and work	**Inadequate: Grade 4**

Family learning	**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Inadequate: Grade 4

Adult and community learning   Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4
Work-based learning   Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

7. The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate. In work-based learning, it is good. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall and good in work-based learning. In non-accredited ACL provision, attendance is low. Learners on many programmes gain in confidence and apply their learning effectively to real life situations.

8. The quality of provision overall is satisfactory. In work-based learning it is good. Teaching and learning are good in work-based learning and satisfactory overall, although teachers in ACL employ a narrow range of teaching methodologies and make little use of information learning technology. Non-accredited provision assessment is inadequate and the recognition and recording of learners' progress and achievement and initial assessment is weak.

9. LCC's response to social inclusion is good. There are good initiatives to engage priority target groups. The council works well to engage learners in the community in areas of high deprivation and those defined as hard to reach. LCC works well with its partners, both within the council and in the county to plan learning programmes and activities to benefit these groups.

10. Guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Personal practical support for learners on the E2E programme is particularly good. In ACL, pre-course information is not always sufficiently detailed and is poorly communicated to potential learners.

11. Leadership and management are inadequate overall and good in work-based learning. There is clear strategic direction and good partnerships have been established to meet community needs, but internal communication is poor. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. LCC's strategy for embedding skills for life within the curriculum and across the council is ineffective. Quality improvement arrangements are still underdeveloped. The information used to generate data to inform management is flawed and the targets set as a result are of little practical use.

Capacity to improve
Satisfactory: Grade 3

12. The service demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve. It has made some progress in effecting improvements since the previous inspection. However, the development of the ACL provision has been hampered by a prolonged restructuring process in many areas of the council. The council has decided to commission much provision from partners and to provide programmes to meet local needs directly. The new matrix management model provides access to wider specialist support, but has yet to impact on the provision. In work-based learning, the E2E programme is now good. There are new arrangements for the management of subcontracted provision in ACL. Appropriate service level agreements

are in place but the provider relies on the subcontractors' quality improvement systems. At curriculum level, council staff have little awareness of partners' activities.

13. The self-assessment process overall is inadequate. In work-based learning it is good; the process is inclusive and consultative but the report over critical. In ACL, the process was inclusive, however, many strengths identified in the report were actually improvements. The report was overly descriptive and some judgements based on flawed data. Many completion target dates in the quality improvement plan are in August 2008 and will not impact until 2008/09.

Key strengths

- Good development of learners' skills and confidence
- Good partnership working
- Clear strategic direction
- Very good E2E programme

Key areas for improvement

- Poor internal communication
- Narrow range of teaching methods
- Inadequate marketing and promotion of programmes
- Ineffective processes to recognise and record progress and achievement
- Ineffective quality improvement systems
- Insufficient accuracy and use of data

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Adult and community learning   Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning   Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

14. Achievements and standards overall are satisfactory. Many learners develop good skills and improve their confidence. In work-based learning progression into employment or further education and the acquisition of additional qualifications are good. In ACL, learning success rates in accredited provision overall are satisfactory. Learners make satisfactory progress in lessons, however, in non-accredited provision, achievement data is insufficiently reliable to make judgements on individual and course achievement. Self-assessment judgements on achievement are flawed. The provider defines achievement as retention and learners are retained if they have not been withdrawn following four consecutive absences. This applies to all courses many of which are short six-week courses.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Adult and community learning   Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning   Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

15. The quality of provision overall is satisfactory. In work-based learning it is good. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. In work-based learning they are good, however, in much of the ACL provision, tutors use a narrow range of teaching methods, rely too heavily on handouts and make insufficient use of information learning technology. In ACL, assessment is used inadequately to plan for differentiation in lessons and courses or to monitor learners' progress against individual or course aims and objectives. In work-based learning, the involvement of employers in learning is good during work-placements.

16. Overall, the programmes and activities satisfactorily meet the needs and interests of the learners. In work-based learning they meet them well. Literacy, numeracy and language support outside the discrete provision is satisfactory. *Every Child Matters* outcomes are satisfactory in preparation for life and work and family learning programmes.

17. Guidance and support for learners overall is satisfactory. In work-based learning it is good. In ACL, the care, advice and guidance and other support for learners was at least satisfactory in all the sector subject areas and in three it is good, however, the quality and accessibility of information available before enrolment was generally inadequate.

18. The self-assessment report recognises many of the areas for improvement in the quality of provision and these are reflected in the quality improvement plan.

Leadership and management

Inadequate: Grade 4

Adult and community learning   Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4
Work-based learning   Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity   Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

19. Leadership and management are inadequate. However, a clear strategic direction has been established by the council for ACL. The council provides satisfactory support for adult learning and has allocated additional resources to support the local priority of 'leisure learning'. At the strategic level, ACL has refocused on national and local priorities and the service has undergone significant changes in recent months. The new service structure is in its infancy. In moving away from an area based approach to a curriculum model, key managerial posts have only very recently been filled.

20. Quality improvement processes and procedures are underdeveloped. The quality improvement plan is regularly monitored, both within the service and by senior officers. A well conceived observation of teaching and learning scheme is in place. Curriculum managers and co-ordinators carry out observations of teachers within their team and all have had training in the process. It captures reasonably well the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching and learning. However, the monitoring of follow up action to ensure improvements are made is inconsistent. Management information is regularly collected, however, the rigour of some data does not provide a useful basis for assessing performance. The collation and use of feedback from learners and the sharing of good practice is underdeveloped.

21. The self-assessment does not accurately identify the key strengths and areas for improvement. In curriculum areas, assessments are too variable. Judgements on the standards of achievement are not based on reliable data and consequently the standards achieved by learners have been over estimated. The self-assessment is overly descriptive and too often, improvements or changes made in provision are translated into strengths without assessing the impact of these. Staff, learners and stakeholders were not sufficiently involved in the development of the self-assessment.

22. Operational management is not effective overall and in some curriculum areas, management is unsatisfactory. Planning and implementation to meet the council's priorities is inconsistent. Recent changes in the service have not effectively been communicated to staff and learners. The marketing of the curriculum has been poor. The curriculum offer is being realigned in relation to council priorities and curriculum areas are further ahead than others in this respect. Training, development and support for tutors are satisfactory.

23. The recognition and recording of learners' progress and achievement is ineffective. The service has introduced some systems to monitor achievement, however, these are not consistently understood and applied across all curriculum areas. Initial assessment, planning in response to individual needs and measuring progress and achievement are underdeveloped.

24. Partnerships are good. The council is actively working with partners to improve the consistency of the curriculum offer in the county. The service has developed a wide range

of partnerships that enable a broader curriculum to be delivered. Provision delivered through local colleges provides good progression opportunities for learners. Effective partnerships with schools broaden opportunities for family learning.

25. The service's approach to health and safety is good**.** There is consistent practice across the service and tutors and managers are clear about their responsibilities. There is strong and ongoing emphasis on the provision of a safe environment for learners and staff. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. The council's policies are clear and comprehensive and staff have received appropriate training.

26. The service's approach to equality and diversity is satisfactory. The service works within the council's equality and diversity policy. The council has achieved Level 2 of the Equality Standard. Impact assessments for equality are undertaken on all major policy developments. Provision is increasingly being targeted at priority groups. Outstanding literacy work is undertaken with prisoners in HMP Lincoln. However, learners from some disadvantaged communities have limited access to provision and the service lacks a coherent approach to increasing access for priority groups.

What learners like:

- Supportive and helpful tutors
- 'The staff treat you as an adult'
- Friendship
- 'I'm now not stressed when I have to speak'
- 'I thought I was hopeless at mathematics but now I'm going to go on and do my Level 2 numeracy'
- 'It's given me hope and encouragement to keep contact with my kids'
- The crèche support is good

What learners think could improve:

- It was difficult to find information about the class
- 'It's OK – it can be boring sometimes'
- 'You can't enrol electronically'

Sector subject areas

Information and communication technology

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

27. LCC has eight adult learning centres that provide information and communication technology (ICT) instruction, which currently supports 211 learners. Accredited provision includes the European Computer Driving Licence, an examination-based computer literacy qualification at Levels 1 and 2 and a Level 2 information technology (IT) course. In addition, LCC offers short introductory courses to introduce learners to the use of computers and develop basic computing skills. These include word processing, spreadsheets, databases, multimedia courses and internet and web-design. Of all learners who have enrolled in 2006/07 to date, 65% are female. LCC employs one part-time co-ordinator and 12 ICT tutors.

Strengths

- Good development of learners' confidence and skills
- Particularly effective leadership of the curriculum area

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning to meet individual needs
- Inadequate promotion of courses for learners

Achievement and standards

28. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Standards of work are satisfactory. Learners' work is effectively corrected with care and attention given to encourage learners.

29. Learners develop confidence and improve their practical ICT skills. Beginners grow in confidence on programme and many are keen to progress to higher-level courses. Many older learners have bought their own laptop computers as a result of attending courses and are more confident in using software programs. Other learners have been able to transfer skills acquired to the workplace and improve their job skills. A number of learners have gained practical skills, which they have applied to their own businesses. They have learnt how to use shortcuts when using spreadsheet software programs to be able to work more efficiently and effectively. Learners are well motivated.

30. Success rates on accredited courses are satisfactory. It is not possible to determine achievement rates on non-accredited courses, although retention and attendance rates are high. Attendance during inspection was 79%.

Quality of provision

31. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better sessions, tutors use a good mix of formal tuition and individual coaching to support learners. They give clear instructions to

learners and make good use of questions to check and extend learners' understanding. In the less effective sessions, plans do not take account of individual learners' needs and exercises do not provide reinforcement for the more able learners or help for the slower learners. General course objectives are set and agreed, however individual needs are not always recorded or used effectively to plan outcomes. Personal targets are frequently not set, measured or reviewed for evaluation purposes.

32. All learners are positive about the encouragement and support and individual attention they receive. For some learners, it is the first opportunity that they have had to use computers and they are very positive about learning computer skills.

33. Initial advice and guidance are satisfactory. All learners are interviewed and complete a brief initial assessment of computing skills. Monitoring and review of progress is satisfactory and is particularly effective on accredited courses.

34. The needs and interests of learners are met satisfactorily. The range of courses has been extended to accommodate a wider range of learners and courses are now offered in the south of the county. Many older learners benefit from short entry level courses, which include basic instructions on using computers. They are able to progress to more advanced and accredited courses. Recording of assessment of learners' work is satisfactory but is not always sufficiently detailed.

35. Learners' support takes place in the class with a focus on individual instruction and coaching to improve skills. Personal support is satisfactory. Induction arrangements are satisfactory with appropriate coverage of course contents, health and safety and equality of opportunity including complaints procedures.

36. Accommodation and resources are mostly satisfactory. Learners benefit from a good range of resource booklets to support learning and highly value their contents and use. Some libraries do not have sufficient resources such as whiteboards or charts to support learning.

37. Learners receive some information, advice and guidance at the start of their course. Courses, however, are poorly promoted throughout the county. Administrative arrangements are often inadequate and many tutors do not receive sufficient information about enrolments at the beginning of courses. Learners complain of poor publicity for courses, which are not advertised locally or at learning centres, particularly those learners who are keen to enrol on further courses for the summer term. Many learners enrol on courses by chance and not through targeted marketing or publicity. Course information sheets do not always contain clear information on learning outcomes and progression routes for learners. There has been a low take up of some courses across the county and a number of courses have been cancelled.

Leadership and management

38. Leadership and management overall are satisfactory. The leadership of the curriculum area is good with clear direction provided by the curriculum manager. A review of programmes has improved the range and availability of programmes and extended the geographical spread. The review included feedback from learners and staff on suitable courses. The number of courses offered has increased from 40 to 83 over the past three years. Internal communications are good. Team meetings are well supported and recorded

and used to discuss progress and review courses. Reviews have been effective and led to improvements in the provision. Staff have produced a good range of regularly updated learning resources to support learners. Tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced. They are observed and actions for improvement agreed. Observations are supportive and judgements are realistic. Tutors are quick to make improvements. Staff training and development is considered a priority to ensure staff are up-to-date with new developments. The curriculum manager does not have sufficient access to management data on the non-accredited provision to effectively monitor the provision or to set targets for quality improvement.

39. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learners are treated with respect and consideration of their individual needs. Most tutors demonstrate appropriate awareness of equality of opportunity principles during teaching and learning sessions. A range of adaptive equipment is available to support learners. The self-assessment report was accurate in grading the provision and recognising some strengths and areas for improvement.

Sport, leisure and recreation

Inadequate: Grade 4

Context

40. LCC offers non-accredited courses in four subject areas: Tai Chi, exercise and fitness, golf and Yoga. At inspection, there were 173 learners on 15 exercise and sports programmes. In 2006/07 there were 353 learners enrolled on 62 courses. Courses are offered during the day and evening. Most run for 10 consecutive weeks three times per year. The provision is spread through the county at 11 centres including: halls, schools, colleges, and community centres. In 2006/07, 12% of learners were male, 10% had learning difficulties and/or disabilities, 1% were from Black and minority ethnic groups, and approximately 67% were over 50 and 21% over 65 years of age. The curriculum co-ordinator for sport and leisure works for 25 hours per week and there are six part time tutors.

Strengths

- Good development of learners skills, knowledge and confidence levels
- Good health benefits particularly for older learners

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient embedding of recognising and recording progress and achievement
- Narrow and declining range of courses
- Ineffective marketing and recruitment initiatives
- Poor translation of the service priorities into curriculum planning
- Insufficiently developed quality improvement mechanisms

Achievement and standards

41. The development of learners' skills, knowledge and confidence levels are good. In exercise classes, they learn how to exercise safely, specific exercises for developing different fitness components, the principles of exercise and how to adapt exercises for home use. In Yoga and Tai Chi, they learn the principles and philosophies associated with each, and develop confidence and competence in performing a range of postures and exercises. In golf, they develop knowledge of basic techniques such as grip, stance, posture and swing.

42. Health benefits particularly for older learners are good. They experience benefits to their physical, mental, emotional, and social fitness and well-being. They report significant improvements to their muscular skeletal conditions, enhanced recovery from injuries, relief from medically diagnosed conditions, greater mobility and improved ability to perform everyday tasks. Many learners experience reduced stress levels, better relaxation and improved sleep patterns. The standards of learners work are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

43. Overall standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. In better sessions, tutors effectively plan, use a variety of learning resources, incorporate differentiated activities

and use a range of teaching methods that engage and challenge learners. They observe well and assist individual learners to reflect, refine and improve their performance. Tutors support learners well with enthusiastic encouragement. Poorer sessions lack sufficient planning, support for individual learners and an emphasis on correct technique. Activities are insufficiently challenging, there is little differentiation according to ability level and the pace is slow. Too much time is spent listening to the tutor rather than practicing and improving personal performance.

44. Resources to support learning are satisfactory. Venues are suitable and appropriately equipped. Tutors are experienced and possess appropriate subject qualifications but none possess recognised teaching qualifications.

45. Recognising and recording progress and achievement is insufficiently established. Individual learning plans are not completed by all tutors. Initial assessment is not sufficiently thorough and does not always take account of learners' prior knowledge and abilities. There is insufficient focus on the identification of individual learning goals, target-setting and the monitoring and formal recording of learners' progress. Group learning goals are often tutor prescribed and not agreed with the learners. Individual learner progress is often not effectively recorded. There is an over reliance on informal general feedback to learners regarding their progress. Achievement on most non-accredited courses is not accurately defined and there is no collation of achievements at course level. The curriculum co-ordinator has developed good materials to promote more effective use of recognising and recording progress and achievement but these have not yet been sufficiently communicated or used by tutors.

46. The range of courses is inadequate. Course provision is very narrow and has greatly declined over the last three years. None of the courses offered provide opportunities for learners to gain accredited qualifications. Yoga and Tai Chi offer progression routes onto higher level programmes. The number of suitably qualified and experienced tutors available is low.

47. Guidance and support is inadequate. The marketing of courses and recruitment of learners is unsatisfactory. Learner recruitment is low. Ten courses advertised in 2007/08 were cancelled due to insufficient learner numbers. Many learners are unaware of the service's new marketing methods and enrolment processes. Several reported a lack of accurate information about courses and their start dates. Learners complained about the lack of up-to-date course prospectuses. Many older learners are unable to access the council website for course information. Only 15% of new learners enrolled in 2007/08.

Leadership and management

48. Leadership and management are inadequate. The translation of the service priorities into curriculum planning is poor. There is no operational plan to align sports and leisure provision to council strategic aims and objectives. Links between sport and leisure and other curriculum areas such as family learning or preparing for life and work are underdeveloped. Partnerships with internal services, outreach workers, external agencies and colleges to identify local needs and to plan and co-ordinate provision are underdeveloped. Insufficient use is made of data and information to set targets within the

curriculum area. For example, only 13% of learners are male but there are no strategies to increase this.

49. Quality improvement mechanisms are insufficiently developed. Weaknesses identified through observation are not always reflected as action points. Managers insufficiently monitor action point completion. Some action points are not sufficiently specific or time bound. Managers do not effectively monitor or systematically record tutors' continuous professional development. The service has recently introduced initiatives to address this but they have not yet been fully implemented. There are insufficient staff development opportunities and tutor attendance at team and staff development sessions is poor. The identification and sharing of good practice are insufficient. Learner and tutor feedback at individual course level is not collected and used effectively. Data is not sufficiently used to inform planning or identify improvement targets. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate and identifies several strengths and areas for improvement identified during inspection.

Arts, media and publishing

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

50. During inspection, there were 182 learners on 17 non-accredited courses in arts, media and publishing. In 2006/07, 700 learners attended non-accredited courses and 12 learners attended accredited courses. Classes include ceramics, upholstery, watercolour painting, life drawing, patchwork, dancing, acoustic guitar and music appreciation. Most courses run for ten weeks in two hour sessions during the day or in the evening, with taster sessions and some provision at weekends and in summer.

51. Of the learners, 81% are female, 22% are aged 65 and over and 1% are from a minority ethnic background. Courses run at 15 outreach venues including community centres, schools and colleges. One local college runs subcontracted courses. Two curriculum managers share subject co-ordination and overall management responsibility for arts, crafts and performing arts. A craft curriculum co-ordinator has recently been appointed. There are 11 part time tutors.

Strengths

- Good acquisition of technical skills
- Good development of confidence and self-esteem
- Good teaching in music appreciation and upholstery

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning to meet individual needs of learners
- Insufficient sharing of good practice
- Limited and declining range of courses
- Insufficient communication to inform curriculum planning

Achievement and standards

52. Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory. Learners acquire good technical skills. Most work is of a high standard. In upholstery, learners were renovating Victorian spoon back chairs to a professional standard, and in music appreciation, learners are able to identify tempo, rhythm and melody. Learners make good progress from their initial starting points. In acoustic guitar, learners play with increasing confidence and in ceramics, learners were making large portrait heads using different clays. Learners generally enjoy their classes and grow in confidence and self-esteem. Most courses show satisfactory success rates. Retention and attendance is generally good.

Quality of provision

53. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. Courses are generally well planned with appropriate schemes of work and lesson plans.

However, there is insufficient planning to meet learners' identified individual needs. The potential of recognising and recording progress and achievement for learners to take more responsibility for the direction and pace of their learning is underdeveloped. Personal learning plans are completed but the information is not sufficiently used to plan teaching strategies for mixed ability groups or for learners who have attended for many years. Written plans are used to assess progress but there is little imaginative recording of learners' creative work.

54. Teaching is challenging in some classes. In music appreciation the learners are challenged to research the social and political context of the composer and how this may be reflected in the work. Learners engage fully in the discussion. In upholstery, learners strip furniture to a basic frame and then rebuild it to a professional standard using complex traditional techniques. However, the less effective lessons move at a slow pace and a club atmosphere pervades. In some lessons, the beginners struggle while advanced learners are not challenged. Handouts are dated and some are photocopied pages from books.

55. There is insufficient sharing of effective teaching strategies. For example, the planning of individual learning, the use of short demonstrations which do not limit the practical activity time and using peer demonstrations overseen by the teacher. Varied questioning techniques are used in the better lessons to encourage learner participation but the less successful lessons are dominated by the teacher.

56. The range of courses offered is inadequate. The range is limited, and declining. For this academic year, 94 classes were planned, but only 22 ran. Curriculum planning is often based on historical patterns and teacher availability with little consideration of the needs and aspirations of the community. Learners find it difficult to access direct information about their local classes. A website is in the process of development which allows learners to access course information, but it is not yet possible to enrol electronically.

57. Support for learners is satisfactory. Learner induction is effective. During inspection week, new learners were seamlessly integrated with existing classes.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management are inadequate. The implementation of appropriate quality systems following reorganisation have yet to have a positive impact. Internal communication between management, customer services, marketing, co-ordinators and tutors has yet to be fully developed. Marketing strategies have been unsuccessful in promoting courses and enrolment confirmation procedures are slow. Customer services have yet to establish rapid and correct responses to course enquiries.

59. There is insufficient communication to inform curriculum planning. The Access and Engagement group has yet to report on their audit of courses available in the region. However, course provision for next year is to be discussed and planned with the colleges in the near future using current local knowledge.

60. Observations of teaching and learning grades are generally accurate and match those of inspectors. However, there has been little impact on improving teaching and learning following the observation cycle. Actions are identified and further lesson observations are planned. However, there is no staff development activity focused on teaching and

learning. Staff development has been provided to support the implementation of recognising and recording progress and achievement, but attendance at events is difficult for part time staff.

61. The self-assessment report identifies areas for improvement but there is no action plan for the sector subject area. The self-assessment report identifies the difficulties in recruiting appropriate tutors to expand the curriculum and acknowledges the decline in courses and learners. There is little use of ICT and many centres have no available IT resources.

62. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory with some good specialist workshops. Tutors often provide specialist materials and sell them to learners. Many learners provide their own tools and materials and continue to work at home. However, some music classes have no access to the equipment in specialist music rooms. Equal opportunities enable access to the curriculum, but the celebration of cultural diversity does not feature in planned lesson activities. Work is on display in some centres but there is little celebration across the provision.

Languages, literature and culture

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

63. LCC provides courses in French, German, Spanish, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, and British Sign Language (BSL) with 932 learners enrolled on 72 courses at 26 centres. Most language courses are non-accredited. Courses in French, German, Polish Spanish, and Italian are available at beginners and intermediate level. French is available at advanced level. Most foreign language courses are of 25 weeks duration. Courses in BSL lead to a qualification at Level 1 or 2 and last for 31 and 45 weeks respectively. Most learning sessions are of two hours duration.

Strengths

- Good pass rates on BSL Level 1
- Learners' development of good listening skills
- Good use of the foreign language by teachers
- Wide geographical spread of programmes

Areas for improvement

- Ineffective strategies to develop learners' speaking skills
- Insufficient planning of learning to meet individual needs
- Insufficient progression routes

Achievement and standards

64. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners on BSL Level 1 achieve pass rates well above national averages. Learners on foreign language courses make good progress in developing listening skills. In beginners' classes, they become confident at listening for gist and can follow teachers' instructions and explanations. BSL learners are confident signers. In higher level language classes, learners understand complex information given at near native speed and can pick out specific detail from recorded conversations. Reading and writing develop satisfactorily but learners' speaking skills are often unsatisfactory. BSL learners achieve lower than average pass rates at Level 2. Retention is satisfactory. Attendance is good on accredited courses and satisfactory on non-accredited programmes.

Quality of provision

65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers make good use of the foreign language throughout the lesson for all communications, including explanations of grammar points. Some use choral repetition for practising pronunciation and intonation. Most teachers are adept at using synonyms or rephrasing to clarify unfamiliar language. In better lessons, teachers display learning outcomes for each lesson and learners know what they should be able to do by the end of the lesson. Classes are lively and varied with games, role-plays and quizzes. Many lessons contain cultural material to help learners understand customs, artistic traditions, political and social issues. Learners work productively and enjoy their lessons. However, many teachers do not adopt effective

strategies to develop learners' speaking skills. Learners in beginners' classes frequently revert to English during pair work or for simple transactions such as to request help. Teachers do not enforce the use of the foreign language sufficiently. Dialogues are too often supported by printed text with few opportunities for independent production of language. Exercises requiring translation into English prevent learners from thinking in the foreign language. Little use is made of ICT, even when available, to provide visual stimulus without recourse to text.

66. Systems for the monitoring and recording of progress on non-accredited courses are satisfactory. All teachers keep records of progress and carry out mid-course reviews. However, initial assessment practices are inconsistent. In some cases, learners' starting points are established through self-assessment against the course outcomes. In others, learners simply state their previous experience. Few teachers make objective assessments of learners' competence in each skill from which to measure progress. Teachers do not all use the information collected to plan for learners' individual needs with defined differentiation strategies. Many teachers provide extra support to the weaker learners, but rarely provide extension activities for the more able learners.

67. The service satisfactorily meets the needs of learners. It offers a wide geographical spread of courses. Courses take place at 26 venues across the county during the day and evening. In addition to the main European languages, the service offers courses in Polish in response to the inward migration of Polish workers. The local police force requested a course in Polish to enable officers to communicate better with the Polish community. However, the programme does not contain sufficient progression routes. Only 24% of the languages provision is above beginner level. Most progression courses are at improver or intermediate level with advanced level classes only in French. This results in widely differing levels of ability in post-beginner classes. The service cancelled almost half the courses offered in the current year because of poor marketing during restructuring of the service.

68. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Teachers provide effective support on an individual basis in the classroom and some actually contact absent learners with missed work. The learner handbook gives clear information on accessing additional learning support, although course information is unsatisfactory above beginner level. Prospectuses and information leaflets are not clear enough about levels of experience and skills required at higher levels. Signposts to providers at higher levels are not given.

Leadership and management

69. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Most staff are suitably qualified in their language and hold a teaching qualification. A satisfactory range of generic and specialist professional development activities was organised in 2006/07. Teachers now have individual meetings with the new curriculum co-ordinator. However, the absence of specialist support during the initial phase of restructuring resulted in too few opportunities for tutors to meet and share good practice in the Autumn term of 2007. Targets are not yet set for retention and achievement.

70. Quality assurance is satisfactory. A language specialist carries out classroom observations which are detailed and helpful. Observations pay particular attention to monitoring, recognising and recording progress and achievement. The observations clearly describe strengths and areas for improvement with action points identified. Inspectors were in broad agreement with the judgements but found some lessons generously graded. Action plans are not always monitored. The service gathers learner and teacher feedback for use in the self-assessment process. However, although accurately graded, the self-assessment report describes a number of improvements as strengths.

71. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Teachers make proper adjustments to meet the needs of learners with disabilities or sensory impairments. The proportion of male learners in non-accredited courses is higher than usual. A few teachers choose learning material which reflects diversity. However, equality and diversity are not sufficiently promoted through the curriculum.

Preparation for life and work

Inadequate: Grade 4

Context

72. Of the 121 learners on accredited and 163 on non-accredited adult programmes, 65% are female and 9.5% are from minority ethnic groups. There are 9 literacy, 12 numeracy and 13 English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) courses. The 16 programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are partnerships with other agencies. Course levels range from pre-entry to Level 2. Most literacy, language and numeracy learners attend for two hours each week for ten weeks. The 24 teachers are supported by one of four co-ordinators. Two curriculum managers support the provision. During 2006/07, 788 learners were on the programmes.

73. On the E2E programme 30 learners attend, of whom 13 are male, two are of a minority ethnic background and three have a disability. The programme is in the south of the county and is managed by a senior youth development worker supported by five tutors and a clerical assistant.

Strengths

- Good progression and achievements on E2E
- Good teaching and learning on E2E
- Very good resources and accommodation for E2E learners
- Comprehensive support for E2E learners
- Good strategic and operational management in E2E
- Good development of self-esteem for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Areas for improvement

- Poor success rates on accredited adult programmes
- Low attendance
- Ineffective use of initial assessment, target-setting and review to usefully inform teaching
- Narrow range of teaching methods with insufficient variety of resources
- Underdeveloped range of established literacy and numeracy programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Insufficient understanding of progression and achievement data in E2E
- Insufficiently well implemented quality improvement systems

Achievement and standards

74. Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory. In work-based learning they are good. In E2E, progression into further education, work-based learning or employment has increased from 58% in 2005/06 to 77% in the first five months of 2007/08. Since August 2007, 32% have progressed into further education or work-based learning but 43% have progressed into employment without training. Learners achieve a wide range of qualifications from entry level to level 2. In the first five months of 2007/08, 64% of leavers achieved adult literacy at Level 1, 28% at Level 2, 51% achieved adult numeracy

at Level 1 and 15% at Level 2. Learners are confident, able to take part in discussions and develop positive team working attitudes.

75. Success rates are low on adult accredited programmes with 53% of learners on literacy and numeracy courses gaining and 29% of ESOL learners gained nationally recognised qualifications in 2006/07. Attendance is low. During 2006/07, attendance rates were 68% on ESOL, 70% on literacy and numeracy and 82% on courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Quality of provision

76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good on the E2E programme. In E2E, content is highly relevant, challenging and promotes honest self-evaluation. Learners are enthusiastic and identify personal strengths and areas for development in each session.

77. Resources and accommodation are very good. E2E takes place at a well-equipped youth centre. Accommodation is extensive, rooms are spacious and there are good e-learning facilities. Resources allow learners to undertake a variety of practical tasks including cooking simple meals, washing and drying clothes, undertaking art and craft activities and horticulture. The E2E programme is responsive to learners' needs and there are clear links to the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes. Learners can also access a wide range of supportive, work experience opportunities.

78. E2E learners receive comprehensive support including: daily transport for learners living in outlying areas; staff acting as advocates and intermediaries when learners' home circumstances become difficult; and help to re-house learners. The training centre is available when learners have nowhere to go. Staff undertake home visits and maintain contact with external support agencies. Diffident learners are accompanied to interviews. Learners are bought or loaned clothes and receive help with personal hygiene and grooming.

79. Support for learners on adult programmes is satisfactory. Teachers respond appropriately to learners who need personal coaching during lessons and support staff work appropriately with learners. Financial help for childcare is available and specialist support is available for dyslexic learners.

80. ESOL and literacy and numeracy programmes meet learners' needs appropriately. Classes take place at times and in places accessible to learners.

81. The range of established literacy and numeracy programmes for learners with difficulties and/or disabilities is underdeveloped. The range of meaningful contexts available for learners to develop communication, literacy and numeracy skills to support independent living is narrow. This is recognised in the self-assessment report.

82. Some teachers assess and record learners' progress appropriately. However, in too many classes initial assessment, target-setting and review do not usefully inform teaching and learning. The outcomes of initial and further assessment of learners' skills is not always known or recorded in sufficient detail. Individual learning targets are not identified or recorded clearly enough, or used sufficiently in session planning or teaching. Learner progress reviews frequently fail to use original targets to identify learner progression.

83. The range of teaching methods and resources in many lessons is narrow. Learners spend too much time passively listening to the teacher. There is insufficient interaction between learners or opportunities for them to learn from each other. The pace of learning is too slow. Planning is insufficient to ensure learning takes place throughout the session. There is an over-reliance on handouts and content is insufficiently linked to learners' experiences.

Leadership and management

84. Overall leadership and management are satisfactory. In E2E they are good and inadequate in ACL. In E2E, programme planning is good and there is a detailed tutor pack which gives clear guidance on planning individual learning and session delivery. However, there is insufficient sharing of good practice in recording learner objectives and achievement.

85. Strategic and operational management of E2E is very effective. Senior managers respond to local and national initiatives. The delivery of the programme and the progress of each learner are regularly reviewed at frequent management and team meetings. Learner feedback is obtained both informally and through bi-monthly learner forums. Excellent links with employers ensure good work placements for learners. Staff involvement in the E2E self-assessment process is good. The self-assessment report is comprehensive and evaluative but over-critical. There is insufficient understanding of progression and achievement data in E2E. Staff did not recognise inconsistencies in the data in the self-assessment report, before and during the inspection, although this has now been addressed.

86. Many new management systems are in place on the adult programme including extensive professional development and support systems for staff and a good, comprehensive tutor handbook. However, quality improvement systems are insufficiently well implemented. Documentation to record individual learning is not consistently being completed accurately or in a way to usefully inform teaching and learning. There is no internal verification system for non-accredited learning. Moderation of schemes of work has not yet resulted in significant improvements. Arrangements to share good practice are insufficiently effective. Not all teachers have been observed or are appropriately qualified. Some grades awarded at observation were overgenerous. Some staff do not clearly understand communication routes or line management.

87. The self-assessment report is insufficiently evaluative with much of the data related to achievement being inaccurate.

Family learning

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

88. LCC offers a range of accredited family literacy, language and numeracy programmes and courses for wider family learning. In 2006/07, there were 123 family learning programmes mostly delivered in partnership with primary and secondary schools. In 2006/07, 448 learners attended accredited programmes and 477 learners non-accredited programmes, including 54 learners on Kick Start programmes. At inspection, there were 32 courses running and 429 learners had attended courses in the year. A further 128 had attended one off workshops. In the spring term 2008, most of the wider family learning courses have been from the Keeping up with the Children programme. In 2006/07, 9% of learners were male, 4% were from an minority ethnic group, 9% had a disability and 25% were new learners. Most courses in 2006/07 and in the Autumn term 2007/08 were run in the daytime on weekdays. Currently four twilight and evening programmes offer family learning with IT. The family learning service is managed by two full time curriculum co-ordinators.

Strengths

- Good development of personal skills and confidence
- Very effective partnerships

Areas for improvement

- Poor attendance
- Inadequate monitoring of learners' progress
- Narrow range of teaching methods

Achievement and standards

89. Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory. Learners' personal skills and confidence develop well. Learners are well motivated to re-engage in learning. Parents improve their understanding of how literacy and numeracy is taught at school and how their children learn. They develop skills enabling them to continue working with their children at home. Parents have become volunteers at school and enrolled on classroom assistant courses. Standards of learners' work are satisfactory. Progression from the Kick Start programmes is good with 80% of learners moving on to further learning.

90. The success rate on accredited courses is satisfactory at 64%. Attendance is poor. In 2006/07, attendance on accredited courses was 67%, on non-accredited courses it was 58%. In most sessions observed during inspection, attendance was poor.

Quality of provision

91. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. There is, however, too much unsatisfactory teaching. This was identified by the provider in their self-assessment report. In the better sessions planning is detailed, incorporating a wide variety of interactive fun activities and family learning. Tutors work effectively with school teachers to plan and deliver stimulating sessions with a clear emphasis on skills development and application to learning outside of the class. In both the unsatisfactory and satisfactory sessions there was a narrow range of teaching methods and an over-reliance on handouts. This is exacerbated by small class size and poor attendance which restricts the variety of teaching and learning strategies. In the unsatisfactory sessions, tutors had insufficient subject knowledge. ICT is used insufficiently to extend the range of learning activities or promote independent learning. In poorer learning sessions, there is insufficient differentiation to reflect learners' abilities.

92. The monitoring of learners' progress is inadequate. There is little linkage between initial assessment and the learning objectives set in individual learning plans or teaching. Individual learner targets are insufficiently challenging and lack detail. Some individual learning plans record work completed, rather than targets identified or achieved.

93. The range of programmes to meet the needs and interests of learners is satisfactory. The service works in partnership with a range of organisations to widen participation, for example, the service runs an innovative 'Dads Reading Together' family learning course

with the local prison which encourages fathers to develop their parenting skills and sustain contact with their children. Some courses are specifically targeted to attract men, although plans to increase the participation of learners from minority ethnic groups are delayed by budget restraints. The service has recognised that it needs to extend the number of courses run at different times of the day and at weekends. The service has developed new courses including 'Keeping up with the Children plus' to enable learners to achieve a literacy or numeracy qualification and implemented Kick Start programmes.

94. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory. Crèche support is provided for all family learning courses. Some learners in remote areas have free transport provided. Information, advice and guidance is provided by tutors during the course and through a 'reunion' session which invites all learners who have recently completed a family learning course to attend a one off session to encourage further learning.

Leadership and management

95. Leadership and management is satisfactory. Very effective partnerships widen participation. These include schools, prisons, libraries, women's centres, adventure playgrounds and voluntary organisations. Partnership arrangements with schools are very good. All schools receive a partnership handbook which sets out roles and responsibilities and clarifies expectations. The service works with a range of partners to target underrepresented groups. This work is currently limited by funding.

96. Curriculum management is broadly satisfactory. However, the family learning service recognises that its quality arrangements need improvement and plans to increase observations of teaching and learning and to formalise the development and support observations for new tutors. Observation grades are moderated to ensure consistency. Curriculum managers use data to inform the planning process but do not use it sufficiently to monitor performance. The sharing of good practice within family learning is satisfactory although the closure of area offices has meant many tutors travel long distances for meetings. The self-assessment process does not include all the stakeholders.

97. Support for tutors is satisfactory. There are regular in service staff development opportunities, termly cluster meetings and ongoing support provided by the two curriculum co-ordinators. Staff are paid when attending meetings and training. However, professional development has not yet sufficiently impacted on teaching and learning.

98. Accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms in school settings have appropriate furniture and areas with family learning resources where parents, carers and their children can learn and play together. The service relies on the schools to market its family learning provision. Insufficient action is being taken to address the small class sizes or to use additional marketing strategies.

Annex

Learners' achievements

Outcomes on **Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes** managed by Lincolnshire County Council **2005** to **2008**

Year	Number of leavers in the year	Achieved objectives rate*	Progression rate**
2005-06	66	57.6	57.6%
2006-07	80	63.8	63.8%
2007-08 (5 months)	53	73.6	77.4

Note: 2007-08 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the three months or greater of the LSC contract year

* These are key objectives identified for each learner following an E2E programme

** Progression is measured in terms learners' movement to further education, education and employment, during or at the end of their training period