

Devon County Council

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Contents

Background information	3
Inspection judgements	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider.....	4
Summary of grades awarded	5
Overall judgement.....	6
Effectiveness of provision	6
Capacity to improve	6
Key strengths	7
Key areas for improvement.....	7
Main findings	8
Achievement and standards	8
Quality of provision.....	8
Leadership and management	9
Equality of opportunity	9
What learners like	11
What learners think could improve.....	11
Sector subject areas.....	12
Health, public services and care	12
Information and communication technology.....	15
Preparation for life and work.....	18

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:

- Health, public services and care
- Information and communication technology
- Preparation for life and work

Description of the provider

1. Devon County Council (DCC) is in the South West of England. Adult and community learning is provided by Devon Adult and Community Learning Service (DACL) which is part of the adult and community services directorate of the County Council. Devon and Cornwall LSC fund the adult and community learning. DACL provides non-accredited and accredited adult and community learning in a range of venues and community centres across Devon. It employs a head of service to manage a team of eight senior managers comprising three area managers, three skills managers, a systems manager and a quality manager. The management structure has undergone several changes over the last few years and the most recent one was a significant change with the new head of service being appointed four months before this inspection. Other staff are also relatively new to their posts. Provision and services are focused around eight main centres situated in the main market towns from which local outreach programmes also operate. During 2006/07 there were 493 part-time teaching staff across the direct delivery and a further 18 engaged in partnership delivery provision.
2. At the time of inspection, 11,588 learners were enrolled on 2117 courses during the year 2007/08 to date. Provision is offered across most sector subject areas.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Sector subject area

Health, public services and care	Good: Grade 2
Information and communication technology	Good: Grade 2
Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Leadership and management and equality of opportunity are good. DACL has a clear strategy for the provision which is closely linked to the strategy for Devon County Council and is understood by all senior staff. DACL has good partnership links which are learner focused and effectively monitored. Effective action is taken to widen participation through the equality champions and representation from under-represented groups is proportionate and improving. The management information system has been developed well and is beginning to provide the reports necessary to manage the provision effectively.
4. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good. Tutors plan the learning sessions well and course documentation is monitored carefully. This monitoring has identified some gaps which are currently being rectified. A wide range of adaptive equipment is available to support learners with additional learning needs. Programmes and activities meet the needs of learners satisfactorily. Guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Achievement and standards are good overall and in those areas where they are not there are signs of improvement.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

5. Capacity to improve is good. The movement of the provision into the DACL and the reassignment of key job roles and personnel has led to a more integrated approach. Newly revised quality assurance arrangements have been shared with recently appointed team leaders and key senior managers. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of these measures. However, there are signs of a marked improvement in the quality and thoroughness of teaching and learning with a more systematic approach to monitoring learner progress. Working relationships between staff across the county in the restructured provision are good and the number of partner organisations offering increased opportunities to under-represented learners is growing. DACL has maintained its growth in personal and community development learning (PCDL) and has increased the number of venues to reach more isolated rural areas. Joint working with community organisations is good. DACL has worked well to maintain the quality of its provision during this period of organisational change and overall success rates for most of accredited and non-accredited courses have improved.
6. Quality improvement is satisfactory. Arrangements for observing learning sessions are good, with offers of support and staff development opportunities for those who require it. Not enough is recorded about how staff development needs will be met and when they will be followed through. Learner feedback is collected by all courses and used to improve the provision.
7. The self-assessment process is good. Judgements regarding the quality of provision broadly match the findings of the inspection team. However, there is a marked difference in the strengths and areas for improvement identified in only one area inspected on this occasion and a few of the grades awarded by inspectors were different. Development plans prioritise those areas of provision most in need of improvement. These are detailed and monitored regularly.

Key strengths

- Good strategic management of change
- Good standard of learners work
- Good development of learners skills
- Good teaching and learning
- Responsive provision to meet needs in remote communities
- Good partnership working to benefit under-represented groups

Key areas for improvement

- Achievement and success rates
- Identification of learners' support needs
- Resources
- Quality improvement procedures

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

8. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall, as identified in the self-assessment report. Achievement is good in PCDL provision but some sector subject areas have shown a small but not significant decrease in the success rates, such as in counselling and languages. Success rates are satisfactory overall in further education. For those that remain on course, achievement rates are high for most learners. Improvement has been demonstrated in most sector subject areas.
9. Achievement in ICT is good overall. Learners achieve a high standard of work and develop good practical skills. Retention is good. Success rates have improved although they are low on the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) course at level 2. Achievement is improving in the skills for life provision and is now approaching national benchmarks. Achievement in the health, public services and care provision is good. Analysis of achievement data does not reveal any significant differences in performance related to learners' age, gender or ethnicity.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

10. The quality of provision is good overall. Teaching and learning in most sector subject areas with large numbers of learners are good. The process for observing teaching and learning is effective in raising standards. Inspection findings closely match those of DACL. Evaluation of areas for improvement for tutors is good. Most teaching is at least satisfactory.
11. Teaching and learning in family learning and in arts, media and publishing is good, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. For example, effective teaching in family learning classes inspires and equips parents to help their children learn. Good teaching in arts and crafts by experienced tutors motivates learners to gain confidence and skills in a wide range of techniques. And learners produce a very good standard of work.
12. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and learning in skills for life has improved, though it remains satisfactory. DACL has restructured this provision and has succeeded in increasing the participation of its target learner groups.
13. DACL has achieved a significant rise in achievement for those learners who complete their courses. Learning sessions in ICT and health, public services and care are good. Tutors provide a range of interesting learning activities and good individual coaching. Learning sessions are well planned. However, the provider has identified that in some cases there is insufficient differentiation, and target-setting is ineffective. The recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) process is comprehensive and increasingly established. Assessment and internal verification arrangements are satisfactory. The standard of accommodation and resources is not consistent, and resources in skills for life, some ICT and arts and craft courses are unsatisfactory.
14. Arrangements to provide programmes and activities to meet learners' needs are good. Courses are provided in an increasing number of venues across the region, many of which

are being provided in the more remote communities. Currently half of literacy and numeracy learners are new to formal education. DACL works effectively to meet the needs of employers and its partners. Enrichment is good in many courses. Learner numbers for PCDL courses dropped in 2005/2006 but rose again in 2006/2007 and DACL is on track to reach comparable recruitment to 2006/2007 in the current year. In some curriculum areas insufficient opportunities are available to learners to progress to accredited courses.

15. Arrangements to provide guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Good pre-course advice is provided and in some cases progression routes are clearly indicated. DACL is aware that the quality of information, advice and guidance is not consistent in more remote locations. Significant action has been taken to improve support. Specialist learning support co-ordinators identify need and additional support workers are effective. The self-assessment report identifies that support is not always sufficiently timely. A good range of assistive technology is available including hearing loops and visual aids. Tutors across the provision are supportive and approachable and individual support in learning sessions is good.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

16. The strategic management of change is good, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. DACL has linked its key targets to those key targets of DCC and produced common objectives to ensure good collaborative working. Clear strategic direction is now in place and understood by managers and most tutors.
17. Staff are well used and managed well. Management deploys staff well, making good use of their skills. Key roles such as the learning support co-ordinators and the equality champions have been filled with staff who are particularly experienced. Curriculum development planning involves team managers, key managers and partners, working together to meet learner needs and increase learning opportunities available within their local communities.
18. The promotion and monitoring of equality and diversity is good, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. DACL has produced an effective and thoughtfully planned equality and diversity strategy. An inclusion and engagement manager has been in post since Sep 2007. The monitoring role is already well established with equality and diversity impact measure targets set for the coming year and learners' surveys are now analysed by curriculum area and course. Auditing of current practices and knowledge/experience of equal opportunities across the organisation is insufficient. DACL has developed its own equality and diversity policy from the existing DCC policy. This policy fully documents the responsibilities that staff have to monitor equality and diversity. DACL has appointed seven equality champions to help and support staff in this task. Complaints are sorted out swiftly and feedback from learners attended to and responded to. Some aspects of the current publicity material and brochures are not accessible to all learners.
19. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. A named person is responsible for safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Policies are in place to meet all equality legislative requirements.

20. A wide range of partnership links are monitored well. Very detailed and thoroughly executed set of partnership agreements, policies and monitoring mechanisms are in place to manage a number of co-delivery and financially supported partnerships throughout the county. DACL actively looks for other DCC partners and organisations which deliver provision eligible for LSC funding. Many of the local partnerships are very well established and DACL facilitates their staff development and self-assessment processes with observations of their teaching and learning and training in quality improvement activities. Communications are good within the staff team and between staff and learners.
21. Procedures are in place to improve the quality of the provision although it is too early to judge their effectiveness. The new monitoring system, however, is already very effective in identifying deficits and leading to significant improvement. Managers do not always implement actions from feedback sufficiently swiftly. Management information is able to supply accurate and timely data and more specific reports are being developed. Course documentation is not of a consistent standard.

What learners like:

- Having fun while learning
- ‘Very good tutors’
- ‘I am now understood by my English friends as my pronunciation has improved’
- Gaining confidence and self-esteem
- Being able to help their children with their homework
- ‘Time to think as I am always so busy at work’
- ‘Gaining knowledge – I feel so much more confident to speak out at meetings’
- ‘Support from tutors outside classes’
- ‘We really appreciate the childcare facilities available that make daytime classes possible’

What learners think could improve:

- ‘Fees have risen and we now have to pay for ESOL provision’
- Car parking costs
- Standard of equipment in some centres

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care

Good: Grade 2

Context

22. Devon adult and community learning offers a wide range of courses in childcare, playwork, health and social care and counselling. In addition a new national vocational qualification (NVQ) is provided for youth service employees. Courses are also offered in partnership with employers and specialist agencies. Programmes are held in adult education centres and other venues across Devon. Currently 139 learners are on health and social care courses and 287 learners on early years courses including NVQs at levels 2 and 3. Thirty learners are on counselling courses at level 2 and a further 25 learners are on courses for volunteers and those working with victims of domestic abuse. Most learners are aged between 19 and 65 with 5% aged 16-18 and 0.2% aged over 65. Overall, 89% of learners are female, 1.4% are from Black and minority ethnic groups and 3.8% declared a disability or learning difficulty.

Strengths

- High success rates on early years and health and social care NVQs
- Good development of practical and personal skills
- High standard of learners' work
- Good teaching and learning
- Good curriculum management

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient initial attention to additional support needs of some learners

Achievement and standards

23. Achievement and standards are good. As identified in the self-assessment report, success rates are high on NVQ courses. In 2006/07 success rates on the health and social care NVQ at level 2 courses were 88% and on level 3 85%. For the same year on early years NVQs at level 2 success rates are 87%, and on level 3, 83%.
24. Development of learners' practical and personal skills is good. All learners improve their confidence and self-esteem. They are well motivated and enjoy learning. On counselling courses learners develop good practical skills enabling them to carry out challenging exercises where they practice their counselling with confidence. They learn to work in groups and develop trust in other class members. All learners develop good communication skills that enable them to work sensitively with others.
25. The standard of learners work is high. Learners' portfolios on all NVQ and counselling courses are well organised and presented. They clearly demonstrate the good progress made by learners in understanding theory and developing practical skills. NVQ portfolios have clearly referenced evidence with many practical examples. On counselling courses much of the work is self-reflective and often shows a sensitivity to issues and problems surrounding counselling practice. On all courses feedback by tutors and NVQ assessors is

clearly given and very supportive in motivating learners to develop evidence to meet awarding body requirements.

Quality of provision

26. Teaching and learning is good. Tutors and assessors provide good support to learners in the classroom and the workplace. Tutors set challenging tasks and successfully encourage learners to reflect on their experiences. Many classes are very practically based with tutors using their expertise and knowledge to guide and support learners in developing their practical skills. Tasks are well designed to ensure that learners are able to integrate theory and practice keeping their interest fully engaged. For example, in one early years group the tutor used a practical activity with a dummy skeleton to enable learners to understand the practical functioning of bones and muscles. Assessment of accredited learning is good. Assignment work is fully explained within the context of the qualification requirements and learners are able to cross-reference their work against the standards for that level. On counselling courses peer evaluation is used effectively. This helps learners to have a better understanding of assessment criteria, and also promotes self-confidence. Learning sessions are well planned with appropriate resources being used. There is good use of ILT in early years work. Learners speak very highly of the courses and the tutors and attend regularly. They can clearly identify the knowledge and skills acquired and are able to see the difference this is making to their lifestyle and future employment prospects. Tutors are well qualified and hold relevant academic and professional qualifications.
27. A satisfactory range of programmes is provided to meet the needs of learners and employers. New courses are designed in response to local priorities. Courses are held across a number of venues to enable easier access for local communities.
28. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Pre-course information gives specific details about course requirements. All NVQ candidates receive induction sessions and course packs. This was identified in the self-assessment report. Advice about progression opportunities is insufficient for some level 2 learners on counselling courses. Insufficient initial attention is given to the additional support needs of some learners. Not all learners complete a full initial assessment. On some courses learners have to self-identify their needs in the first weeks of the course. Some learners' literacy needs are not always identified quickly enough to enable learners to meet the written requirements of the course. Specialist equipment and assistance are used very effectively to support learners with disabilities.

Leadership and management

29. Management of the curriculum is good. Processes for quality assurance and assessment are particularly effective. Observations of staff are carried out regularly on all courses. On counselling courses observations are carried out by the senior practitioner and action plans are produced and monitored against stated targets. Counselling tutors are encouraged to reflect and share their practice during team meetings and on well attended training days. On all courses learner feedback is systematically collected to provide evidence of course performance. Assessment internal verification processes are thorough. Standardisation of assessment practices on all courses is good. Counselling staff attend awarding body standardisation training. The staff teams for NVQs are highly effective in managing the provision. Good partnerships have been developed for NVQ workforce training and with

other specialist organisations for training staff and volunteers working with children, families and young people.

30. The promotion of equality and diversity is good and learners are sensitive to cultural, religious and lifestyle issues in their practical work. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and the self-assessment report broadly reflects the findings of the inspection team.

Information and communication technology

Good: Grade 2

Context

31. Overall 763 learners are enrolled on 95 ICT courses. Courses range from one to 20 weeks with learning sessions lasting from two to six hours. Taster sessions are available for many courses including digital photography, internet, email, and family history. Courses are held during week days and evenings and on some weekends. Approximately a fifth of the provision is not accredited provision. Accredited courses at entry level, level 1, and level 2 are provided and include the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and an e-Digital Competence Certificate (eDCC). Level 3 courses are provided on demand. Courses are offered across 14 learning centres comprising seven schools, one library and other local venues including community centres and village halls, using fixed and portable IT equipment. Two on-line ICT programmes are delivered by partners offering ECDL qualifications at levels 1 and 2.

Strengths

- High retention rates on most programmes
- Good teaching and learning
- Good self-evaluation by learners
- Good monitoring of learners' progress

Areas for improvement

- Inadequate management of distance learning programmes
- Poor resources at some locations

Achievement and standards

32. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners are highly motivated and are very proud of the skills they develop. They make good progress towards achieving their personal goals that are agreed with the tutor at the start of the programme. Learners produce a good standard of work in most learning sessions, develop good practical ICT skills and gain in self-confidence. They are encouraged to self-assess their own work and this develops enthusiasm and a strong commitment to the programme.

33. Retention on programmes is good at 90% with many programmes achieving 100%. This was not identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. Success rates for further education courses have improved from 2005/06. Achievement by learners on most level 1 qualifications is satisfactory for the year 2006/07. Success rates for ECDL level 1 is 71%. Success rates for level 2 qualifications over one year are low with ECDL Level 2 at 51%. Some learners have completed the qualification and are awaiting the award. The success rate of the on-line ECDL provision at level 2 is low with an overall success rate of 49%.

Quality of provision

34. Teaching and learning are good. Learning session plans are very effective and contain detailed learner outcomes. Most learning sessions consist of formal teaching and good individual instruction. Tutor explanations are clear and concise. Good use is made of data

projectors and smart boards. Learning sessions are stimulating and assignments in ICT and computer-based projects are used well. Learners participate well in discussions, can work independently and are encouraged to self-evaluate their own work. The good standard of self-evaluation was not identified as a strength in the self-assessment report. Learners benefit from good support given in the sessions which focuses on curriculum help and personal guidance. Learners can access tutors outside class times. Contact is by telephone or email.

35. Induction arrangements are satisfactory. The self-assessment report correctly identifies changes in the initial assessment arrangements. It identifies learners' skill levels and determines their suitability for CLAIT and ECDL programmes. Initial assessment results contribute positively to the planning of learners' individual learning. Learners carefully identify their own personal goals as well as course goals. Learners benefit from good target-setting and a highly effective monitoring system. At the end of most learning sessions, learners complete a self-evaluation of the learning session identifying the skills they learned and the degree of confidence they would have to take those skills forward. Monitoring sheets are maintained for each learner. Where work has been marked or graded, either paper based or on-line all result scores are kept on monitoring sheets and this is regularly monitored. Good monitoring was not identified as a strength in the self-assessment report.
36. A good range of courses effectively meets the needs and interests of learners. Learners benefit from short entry level courses including those requiring very basic instruction. However, many of the courses have small numbers despite extensive advertising. Initial advice and guidance for learners who want to enrol on accredited courses is good. They receive appropriate levels of advice with tutors ensuring they have the necessary information on availability of childcare facilities, access funds and support available to them during their courses. Improvements in course information were correctly identified in the self-assessment report.
37. Resources at the main centres are satisfactory. However, these centres are often located in old buildings where the class layout is not adequate. Centres are equipped with data projectors. A good range of adaptive equipment is available for the use of learners with physical or learning disabilities. Additional equipment can be purchased when required. At some non-centre locations the equipment standard is determined by the host organisation which does not always meet the same standards set in the providers own centres. At one major school location the equipment serviceability is poor and the internet connectivity is weak.

Leadership and management

38. Leadership and management are good. There have been significant improvements in the management of the provision in the past year. Internal communications are effective. Meetings are held regularly and agreed actions are implemented quickly. Course reviews result in improvements being made. Arrangements for collecting the views from learners are good and they views are taken into account in the planning of the provision. The culture within the ICT courses is to value diversity. Good practice is effectively shared.
39. Tutors are well qualified for the subjects they teach. All have ICT specific qualifications and have or are working towards teacher training qualifications. Tutors keep their ICT skills up to date through their personal development programme. Team leaders observe tutors during class teaching and actions are agreed. Records of the outcomes from teaching observations are maintained and checked to ensure appropriate action is taken to tackle any issues identified. Staff training is a priority and well planned. Management of the subcontracted provision is inadequate with insufficient monitoring of performance. This is especially important as one of the subcontractors has a very low success rate. The self-assessment report correctly identified many improvements in the provision since the previous inspection. These were confirmed by inspectors. Equality of opportunity and diversity are promoted within the provision.

Preparation for life and work

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

40. At the time of inspection 1208 learners were on part-time programmes comprising 865 learners on literacy and numeracy and 343 on English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Programmes are offered from entry to level 2. Most learners are women. Learners from a range of minority ethnic groups account for 8% of the total. Daytime, evening and Saturday classes take place across the county including main learning centres, libraries, community organisations, employers' premises and partner organisations.

Strengths

- Good development of skills
- Good range of programmes
- Effective team working to drive improvement

Areas for improvement

- Poor success rates in literacy
- Insufficient use of information learning technology
- Inadequate literacy and numeracy resources

Achievement and standards

41. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Literacy and numeracy constitutes about three quarters of the provision in this area. Success rates are low across the area at entry level. At level 1 in literacy and numeracy success rates are low but improving. Between 2005/06 and 2006/07, success rates in numeracy rose from 44% to 78% and in literacy from 37% to 49% with pass rates currently at 65%. Success rates are satisfactory in ESOL at level 1 but retention is low on long courses. At level 2 success rates are high in numeracy at 88% and satisfactory in literacy and ESOL.

42. Learners develop a good range of skills across all areas. ESOL learners build their language skills and improve vocabulary and fluency well. Literacy and numeracy learners develop the confidence and skills they need to sit national tests and progress to GCSE courses. Literacy learners apply themselves confidently to writing tasks and also develop particularly good discussion skills. Numeracy learners increase their knowledge of basic numeracy concepts.

Quality of provision

43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best literacy sessions tutors make good use of real artefacts and authentic printed materials. Good use is made of collaborative activities to provide speaking and listening opportunities. Tutors broaden learners' language development and foster a love of language, going beyond the narrow requirements of preparing for national tests. In numeracy, practical activities are used effectively to solve problems in estimating and measuring linked to everyday situations. Very good emphasis is given to correct pronunciation and intonation in ESOL learning sessions. Learners enjoy the wide range of activities in these learning sessions, building on

previous skills and becoming confident in the use of new vocabulary. Tutors effectively link topics to learners' own experience at work or everyday life. In weaker sessions across the area there is poor planning for individual learners' needs, the tutor is too dominant and there is insufficient checking of learner's understanding.

44. Literacy and numeracy resources are inadequate. Tutors provide interesting resources for the topics they have planned, but are not equipped with sufficient books, materials and equipment to enhance and consolidate learning. Numeracy classes are over reliant on worksheets and there is little practical equipment as standard. Rooms are often dreary or bland, with few displays of learners' work. The layout of furniture is often inflexible, restricting the range of activities within sessions. Some rooms do not have whiteboards that are large enough for effective use. Reference materials for learners are sparse. In ESOL, learning materials and resources are satisfactory and there is good access to, and effective use of, audio equipment.
45. Insufficient use is made of ILT in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Access to computers is generally poor and dependent on location. Where computers are available in nearby suites or singly within classrooms, they are often used unimaginatively. Little use is made by tutors of electronic learning materials to enhance teaching. Learners rarely use digital technologies for original research and collaborative projects. ESOL tutors use email effectively to communicate with learners.
46. Learners have access to a good range of programmes. The geographical spread of classes is good with up to 28 venues each for literacy, numeracy and ESOL across 47 locations. Learners can enrol at classes at levels to suit their needs from pre-entry to level 2. There is a strong commitment to ensuring that classes are available to local communities; however, in some locations numbers are small and levels are combined. In a few instances, these combined classes reduce the effectiveness of the teaching and learning.
47. Initial and diagnostic assessment is satisfactory. Learning support co-ordinators have an effective approach to the initial assessment process, often meeting learners in outreach locations. A limited range of tools is available, with learning support co-ordinators relying heavily on paper-based screening tests that are unsuitable for learners above level 1. However, they are currently piloting two computer-based initial assessment tools. Literacy tutors make effective use of free writing as a tool for diagnostic assessment. In literacy classes, teaching assistants are often used effectively to support learners with additional support needs. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory, with particularly effective use of individual learning plans in ESOL

Leadership and management

48. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Effective team work drives improvement. The three team leaders for literacy, numeracy and ESOL provide strong leadership and have developed effective systems within their teams, using email, telephone calls and newsletters to communicate with their widely dispersed part-time staff. This has led to positive improvements in quality, including the requirements of examining bodies which are now met. Tutor handbooks are thorough and comprehensive. In ESOL, substantial improvement has been made in recording learner progress. In all areas there is an upward trend in retention and achievement with particular improvement in in-year retention in ESOL and in achievement in numeracy. Teams are actively involved in planning and implementing improvements. Tutors are suitably qualified and all tutors are observed and appraised. Staff development is satisfactory with opportunities for tutors to share good practice. The promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity is satisfactory.