

Lincolnshire County Council

Reinspection report

Reinspection date

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Reinspection number

331989

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Background information

Reinspection 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 reinspection 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 reinspection

In deciding the scope of the reinspection, inspectors consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorate's reinspection monitoring visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection. Inspectors also 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.

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 reinspection focused on:

- Adult and community learning and work-based learning
 - Sport, leisure and recreation
 - Preparation for life and work - Entry to Employment
 - Family learning

Inspectors also sampled the subcontracted provision in information and communication technology and arts, media and publishing but did not report on it separately.

Following the previous inspection, all direct delivery of non-accredited personal and community development learning transferred to subcontracted arrangements with local external institutions. These include Boston College, Grantham College, Stamford College, Lincoln College, Robert Pattinson School, Ambergate School, CG Partnership, Newlink, Rutland County Council, Tayloritex, and VAEL. Family learning and Entry to Employment (E2E) remain in direct delivery.

Description of the provider

1. Lincolnshire County Council (the council) has a contract with Lincolnshire and Rutland Learning and Skills Council to provide adult and community learning and work-based learning. Lincolnshire Life Long Learning Service (LLLS) manages the contract which covers Personal and Community Development Learning, First Steps, family learning, and family literacy, language and numeracy. LLLS provides programmes in 14 sector subject areas across the county. At the time of inspection, there were 3,435 learners on personal and community development learning programmes and 672 in family learning. The Children's Services Directorate manages the contract for E2E. At the time of the inspection, there were 37 learners.
2. A learning manager, in practice a job-share, has the responsibility for adult and community learning and reports to the head of Libraries, Learning and Inclusion. A work-based learning manager is responsible for E2E and reports to Teenage Services within the Children's Services Directorate.
3. At the previous inspection, achievement and standards, quality of provision and equality of opportunity were satisfactory. Leadership and management and effectiveness of provision were inadequate for adult and community learning but good for work-based learning. All but two of the sector subject areas were satisfactory; these were sport, leisure and recreation and preparation for life and work which were inadequate. LLLS no longer has a contract for Skills for Life.
4. Lincolnshire is a large and diverse rural county with high levels of deprivation on the east coast. In 2008, unemployment in Lincolnshire was at the national average. The 2001 census indicates 97% of Lincolnshire's population were White British. Since then, there has been a significant increase in the number of migrant, predominantly eastern European, workers and their families.

Summary of grades awarded at previous inspection

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

Summary of grades awarded at reinspection

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Adult and community learning	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Adult and community learning	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 2
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	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Adult and community learning	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject areas

Sport, leisure and recreation	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Preparation for life and work	Good: Grade 2
Family learning	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Adult and community learning
Work-based learning (E2E)

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision, which was inadequate at the previous inspection, is now satisfactory. The overall effectiveness of work-based learning is good. Achievement and standards were satisfactory at the previous inspection and are now good. The quality of provision overall is satisfactory and good in E2E. Leadership and management were inadequate at the previous inspection and are now satisfactory and operational management is good. The contributory area of equality of opportunity remains satisfactory with strong aspects of social inclusion. Family learning has improved from satisfactory to good. Sport, leisure and recreation, which was inadequate at the previous inspection, is now satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

6. The provider has a good capacity to improve. The council was judged to be 'improving well' by the audit commission at the time of the last comprehensive performance assessment. Very good progress has been made in addressing weaknesses since the previous inspection. Inspection grades have improved. The previous monitoring visit reported significant progress in arrangements for monitoring the subcontracted provision and quality improvement. Quality improvement and performance arrangements have been strengthened and are good. These improvements have been achieved while successfully changing to a new delivery model. The capacity to improve further is significantly enhanced by the range of partnerships and contracting arrangements that increase stakeholders' involvement in adult learning. The service and subcontractors receive good corporate support, for example, on health and safety matters and with data collection. Learning champions and the access team provide additional capacity to attract new learners. The council has secured £600,000 over two years in additional resources by exceeding local public service agreement targets. Managers know well the strengths and areas for improvement of the provision and are working effectively to tackle these. The self-assessment process is good. It is inclusive and development plans are focused and effective.

Key strengths

- Good outcomes for learners
- Clear strategic direction and partnership working
- Good progress to address areas for improvement
- Good operational management
- Very good support for learners

Key areas for improvement

- Inconsistencies in teaching and learning
- Inconsistencies in the use of data for improvement

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

Adult and community learning
Work-based learning (E2E)

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

7. Achievement and standards overall are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. In work-based learning, achievement and standards are very good.
8. Learners on work-based learning and adult and community learning programmes develop good personal skills, knowledge, confidence and self-esteem. Learners' progression rates into education, employment or training remain high on E2E and they develop good communication skills, self-esteem, aspiration and motivation. A high proportion of learners gain additional qualifications. Learners on the sport, leisure and recreation courses develop good knowledge and understanding of the links between exercise and health-related benefits. In family learning, many learners achieve their personal goals and become more involved with, and better able to support, their own children. They gain confidence in their parenting skills and in applying their learning outside of the classroom. Over the past year, many have successfully gained additional qualifications in literacy and numeracy and a third have progressed into paid employment or volunteer work. Retention is good in family learning. Attendance is good for work-based learning and satisfactory for personal and community development learning.
9. The rigour in defining and collecting data for recognising and recording progress and achievement in non-accredited learning is much improved. Good data are collected on the performance of different groups but it is not yet routinely analysed and used to improve the provision.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Adult and community learning
Work-based learning (E2E)

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

10. The quality of provision overall is satisfactory and in work-based learning it is good. This is recognised in the self-assessment report.
11. Teaching and learning overall is satisfactory, as recognised in the self-assessment. The quality of teaching and learning has significantly improved in sport, leisure and recreation since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. In the better sessions, tutors effectively incorporate differentiated learning activities into their lessons and successfully engage learners in challenging and stimulating learning activities. The weaker lessons lack sufficient personalisation

of learning and challenge. Learners make good use of the family learning diary and family activity days to develop their learning and parenting skills. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Facilities and resources are satisfactory overall with very good accommodation and resources in E2E.

12. The identification and recording of learners' progress and achievement was an area for improvement at the previous inspection for adult and community learning and, although it has improved significantly, further refinements are still to be made in setting learning outcomes suitable to the sector subject areas and the length of programme. The service has recognised this in the self-assessment report.
13. The extent to which programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners is satisfactory overall and good in E2E and family learning. Recent initiatives to widen participation in sport, leisure and recreation have been effective but the recruitment of men remains low in this area. The E2E programme is responsive to local needs; it works well with partners to support learners' progression and provides learners with highly motivational enrichment activities. Family learning works effectively with a wide range of public service, community and voluntary sector partners. Work with a local charity and prison has been effective in recruiting fathers. LLLS is developing further strategic partnerships to provide a wider curriculum offer across the county. *Every Child Matters* outcomes are established in family learning. E2E programmes and sport, leisure and recreation have good health and safety practices.
14. Care, guidance and support for learners overall are good. Support is particularly strong in E2E where learners receive excellent personal and pastoral support. Those in family learning receive good support to promote their personal development. A weakness at the previous inspection about pre-enrolment information, advice and guidance has improved in adult and community learning and is now satisfactory. Course information is available through a wide range of community organisations, public services and online via the world wide web. Tutors are sensitive to the personal difficulties and barriers learners face, adopt an advocate role when required, and provide good practical help and support. Specialist agencies are used effectively to support learners' issues and concerns. Learners' access to literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages is satisfactory overall.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

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

15. Leadership and management overall are satisfactory, as recognised in self-assessment. Leadership and management of family learning and E2E is good
16. The council provides good strategic direction. Much change has taken place since the previous inspection. The council's goals, however, remain closely aligned to local and national priorities. A clear strategic direction for the adult and community learning and E2E supports the targeting of provision to reach priority communities and groups. Senior managers are effectively involved in service development and have a sound understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. The strategic goals support learners to achieve well. In the best examples, their learning and development is significant, barriers to their progress are overcome and they are successfully supported into employment and other learning.
17. Strategic partnerships are good. They include colleges, schools, children's centres, and voluntary and community organisations. The partnerships enable the service to reach those learners who most need it, including those who have a previously negative experience of learning. The range of partnerships ensures that provision is well placed to engage target groups. The proportion of learners who are unemployed and those who are lone parents has significantly increased and a third of learners are new to adult learning this year.
18. The service has made good progress in addressing areas for improvement. At the time of the previous inspection, the service had recently undergone a significant restructuring and a number of weaknesses were identified. These included poor internal communication, quality improvement processes and procedures, curriculum management, ineffective recognising and recording progress and achievement arrangements and a lack of coherence in increasing access for priority groups. Self-assessment was not sufficiently inclusive. The subsequent monitoring visit identified that progress was being made in all key areas and that significant progress was being made in establishing quality improvement arrangements and in operational management. There is good accountability within the council and the quality improvement plan is thoroughly monitored by the performance monitoring board. Senior managers and members are directly involved in monitoring and know the strengths and weaknesses of the provision well. Appropriate and decisive action has been taken where contractors fail to deliver contractual requirements.
19. Since the previous inspection, further significant change has taken place and subcontracting arrangements have been enhanced. Thirteen providers now

deliver approximately 80% of the work. E2E and family learning are the only strands of provision now directly delivered by the council. Sound strategic thinking has underpinned decisions as to how the service is now organised.

20. Operational management is good. Contracting out the personal and community development learning provision has presented a number of major challenges to the service. A wide range of organisations are now central to the success of the service. These include the four colleges of further education, social enterprises and community organisations. The service works well to support smaller subcontractors developing their capacity through, for example, the provision of training, direct support for health and safety, policy development and data collection. Good working relationships exist between the council and subcontractors who regard the team highly. Lessons have been learnt from the initial commissioning process and this year, a more efficient process has been developed. In managing the contracts, the council has struck a good balance between monitoring compliance and being flexible and receptive to feedback from providers. Directly employed staff receive good support and training.
21. Self-assessment is good. It is inclusive and partners and staff are sufficiently involved in its development. Senior managers are now involved and view the self-assessment process as a tool for service development and improvement. The self-assessment report captures the key strengths and areas for improvement accurately although the presentation of evidence for the subcontracted provision is too general.
22. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. Staff are appropriately vetted and are aware of the safeguarding policies. Appropriate training takes place. Safeguarding does feature in contract monitoring processes although greater rigour is needed in checking that contractors have appropriate staff vetting procedures in place and that safeguarding policies are fit for purpose.
23. Equality of opportunity and the promotion of diversity are satisfactory. The council's response to race, gender and disability legislation is satisfactory and is outlined in the single equality scheme. The council has good arrangements to promote equality and diversity awareness. An equality and diversity steering group monitors equality and diversity impact measures. LLLS's quality standards for equality and diversity outline learners' entitlements. They effectively monitor them across both directly delivered and subcontracted provision. Subcontractors are required to have an equality and diversity policy in place and monitoring meetings focus on equality and diversity issues. Funding has been used well to support vulnerable groups, for example, in supporting adults with a disability to use ICT in their homes and for organisations working in deprived communities. Widening participation is a key theme underpinning the commissioning process. Family learning and E2E provide good examples of staff successfully addressing equality and diversity through the curriculum. Good outcomes are achieved across the provision by learners, many of whom have had poor experiences of education, live in deprived communities or who are vulnerable. Much good work

is undertaken to widen participation and reach priority groups. However, there is insufficient evaluation of data and the impact that policies have on provision.

24. LLLS has inconsistencies in teaching and learning. Observations are in place and overall judgements and grading are broadly accurate and confirm inspection findings. In E2E, however, the process does not focus sufficiently on learning. The service has limited capacity to undertake observations although more staff are being trained. Paired observations are not yet routinely carried out with partners and there is insufficient sharing of good practice. While learners receive good support, the recording of their progress and achievement lacks clarity in some areas.
25. The service's use of data for improvement purposes is insufficiently consistent. Management information is systematically collected across the provision and good data are available to assist the service to reflect on its performance. While there are examples of where data has been used effectively, it is not yet built routinely into performance reviews.

What learners like:

- Getting qualifications
- The friendly and supportive staff
- The excellent personal support
- 'Staff listen to what you say and I think they manage bullying well'
- The leisure activities and trips out
- 'I like learning how to cook'
- The location and timing of classes in rural towns and villages that are accessible
- The opportunity to meet others with similar interests
- The practical and team building activities
- 'The crèche is essential I couldn't manage to do this without it'
- 'This is the first time I have ever read my kids a story'
- 'This way of learning is fun, for us, for the children'
- 'I feel better, am more mobile and sleep better'
- 'I feel taller and more confident as a result of doing this class'
- 'I wasted nearly 20 years of my life but now I know where I am going and what I am doing and enjoy my work as a volunteer'
- The opportunity to have focused time with one child
- 'I've developed enough confidence now to do more courses to help me get back into work'

What learners think could be improved:

- 'I would like the course to run for longer'
- Some sessions, they are boring
- 'I'd like a placement – nothing has happened about this'
- The diary, it is repetitive
- The amount of form filling we have to complete
- The seating arrangements for family sessions

Sector subject areas

Sport, leisure and recreation

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

26. LLLS offers 24 courses in five different subject areas, yoga, golf, pilates and a variety of fitness and exercise classes. Beginners, intermediate and advanced level courses are provided at different times of the day, evenings and weekends in community venues throughout the county. At the time of inspection, 199 learners were enrolled on sport and leisure programmes of whom, 85% were women, 2% were from a minority ethnic group and 5% had a declared learning difficulty and/or disability. Provision is subcontracted to four partner providers. Most courses are for 10 weeks duration. There are no accredited courses.

Strengths

- Good development of learners' knowledge, skills and confidence
- Good health benefits for learners
- Responsive curriculum management

Areas for Improvement

- Insufficient identification and recording of learners' progress and achievement
- Low recruitment of men
- Insufficient opportunities for the identification and sharing of good practice

Achievement and standards

27. Achievement and standards are good, as identified in self-assessment. Learners develop good levels of personal confidence and practical skills. They demonstrate an understanding of the history and philosophy of yoga and breathing techniques and how to perform exercises safely. In nutrition and fitness classes, learners demonstrate good knowledge of how to use specialist fitness training equipment safely and develop personalised programmes. They use their understanding of safe exercise and good diet effectively to develop their personal fitness, health and wellbeing. Learners in advanced classes perform complex exercises proficiently and independently.

28. Health and social benefits for learners and those with medical conditions are good. Older learners particularly, report significant improvements to their muscular skeletal conditions and benefits to their physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing. They report improvements in cardiovascular fitness, alleviated injuries and relief from medically diagnosed conditions such as arthritis. Learners experience greater mobility, a reduction in stress levels and improved sleep

patterns. They develop better balance, coordination, strength, flexibility and timing which impacts on raising the quality of their everyday life.

29. Retention and attendance levels are satisfactory and have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Quality of Provision

30. The quality of provision is satisfactory, as recognised in self-assessment. The quality of teaching and learning has significantly improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. In the better sessions, tutors effectively incorporate differentiated learning activities into their lessons to accommodate the range of individual ability levels. Tutors plan their learning programmes well and effectively engage learners in challenging and stimulating learning activities. Good individual support and attention is given to refining learners' techniques and checking their understanding. They receive supplementary information to further support their understanding and independent practice. In the weaker lessons, there is insufficient differentiation and personalisation of learning.

31. The identification and recording of learners' progress and achievement, an area for improvement at the previous inspection, is insufficiently developed. This is recognised in the self-assessment report and development plans. Tutors, partners and managers' knowledge and awareness of recognising and recording progress and achievement has improved significantly through training. However, recognising and recording progress and achievement documentation is not yet used effectively to evaluate and record learners' progress against group or individualised learning goals. Learning outcomes are often too vague, lack specificity and are difficult to measure. The quality of tutors' feedback in the documentation is insufficiently informative and there is an over reliance on learners self-evaluation. Interim and final evaluations to identify specific progress and to revise or set new learning goals are not used sufficiently.

32. Programmes and activities satisfactorily meet the needs and interests of learners. The range of provision is satisfactory. Courses are located in a variety of venues in different parts of the county. Venues used are fit for purpose and locally accessible to learners. The size and scale of provision is small but is better targeted at engaging disadvantaged groups. Good recent initiatives have been undertaken with one of the subcontracted partners to widen participation by providing courses for priority groups in areas of deprivation.

33. Care, information, advice, guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Pre-enrolment course information, a weakness at the previous inspection, is now satisfactory. Course information is sent out to homes in the local community and community centres, libraries, jobcentres, post offices, health centres and is available online via the service and partners' websites. Staff in centres respond to further specific requests for information. Partner providers organise taster days and special events to attract new learners. Learner health screening questionnaires are routinely used on all practical exercise classes. Initial

assessment of learners' literacy, numeracy or language needs and additional support is available on request from LLLS and from partners.

Leadership and management

34. Leadership and management, an area for improvement in the previous inspection, are satisfactory as recognised in self-assessment. Curriculum management is responsive. The transition to subcontracted provision has been well managed and operational management has improved. The LLLS curriculum management team provides good management and support for individual partners, managers and staff. They work flexibly with partners and are sensitive to their individual needs, interests and circumstances. The LLLS contract managers meet regularly with partners to effectively monitor the quality of provision, and to identify support needs. Individual support for partners has improved specific aspects of management such as data collection, safeguarding and the observations of teaching and learning. LLLS thoroughly checks health and safety risk assessments of all venues and activities to ensure the safety of learners. All partners require their tutors to have Criminal Records Bureau checks before starting work.
35. Self-assessment is satisfactory. It is broadly accurate and partners and learners' views are sought to inform the self-assessment report and identify areas for improvement.
36. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. LLLS checks that equality and diversity policies and procedures are in place at the centres and monitors differentiation through the observation process. An increased focus on curriculum planning and targeting of priority groups has resulted in 18 new courses in 2008/09. However, the recruitment of men remains low since the previous inspection and 85% of learners are female. This is recognised in the self-assessment report and service managers are working with partners to address this issue.
37. LLLS does not provide sufficient opportunities for the identification and sharing of good practice and the development of collaborative working between partners. Opportunities to use the combined resources of all partners are missed. The use of data is not sufficiently shared or analysed to identify common areas for improvement. Curriculum subject specific staff have too few opportunities to share good practice.

Preparation for life and work – Entry to Employment

Good: Grade 2

Context

38. Lincolnshire County Council's Children's Services Directorate manages the E2E contract. At the time of the inspection, there were 37 learners, 20 were male and 17 were female. One learner was from a minority ethnic background and 27 learners were under the age of 18. A senior youth development worker manages the provision and is supported by an E2E team leader, an assistant team leader, three specialist workers and three programme support workers. Administrative support is available at the main site in Grantham and the satellite office in Sleaford.

Strengths

- Very good progression and achievement
- Good development of confidence, self-esteem and aspiration
- Very good accommodation and resources
- Highly motivational enrichment activities
- Excellent personal and pastoral support for learners
- Highly effective team work

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient opportunities for work-placements
- Insufficiently individualised learning programmes
- Insufficient focus on the quality of learning

Achievement and standards

39. Achievement and standards are very good as identified in self-assessment. Learners' progression from the programme to education, employment or training is very good with 79% and 77% of learners progressing in 2006/07 and 2007/08 respectively. In 2007/08, 24% of learners progressed into full-time education and 53% into employment. This is better than the performance of other providers in the region.

40. Learners' progress and the development of their confidence, motivation, communication skills, self-esteem and aspiration are good. Learners who have previously been out of education, employment and training improve their attendance and motivation to gain qualifications and to progress to other learning or employment. They are articulate and enjoy achieving certificates and qualifications. Celebrations of success are effective in developing positive self-esteem. There is good achievement of literacy and numeracy qualifications and relevant additional vocational certificates to enhance learners' employability skills. Of the 82 learners who started the programme in 2007/08, 64 achieved a literacy

qualification, 46 a numeracy qualification, 51 a first aid certificate and 33 a health and safety certificate.

Quality of provision

41. The quality of provision overall is good as identified in the self-assessment report. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Accommodation and resources are very good at the well equipped youth centre. The extensive accommodation is spacious with good e-learning resources. Learners' have access to very good facilities for arts and craft, horticulture, sports and recreation, cooking and cleaning. The recording of initial assessment of individuals' needs, goals and targets in learners' passports is satisfactory. Reviews of learners' achievements are satisfactory.
42. Learners' programmes are insufficiently individualised to meet their identified needs. This was not identified in the self-assessment report. Insufficient use is made of initial assessment to plan personalised and meaningful individual learning in sessions. Learners do not have a detailed personal weekly timetable and mostly follow the same taught programme regardless of their stage of development or time on the programme. Subsequently, sessions do not always sufficiently challenge some learners. In literacy and numeracy sessions, there is insufficient planning of small steps of learning. Too much emphasis is placed on achievement through practice tests and insufficient time is given to the development of understanding and skills.
43. The extent to which programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of learners is good. They benefit from the provision of motivational enrichment and personal development activities. Learners enjoy outdoor activities, sports and visits which engage and motivate them. They enjoy growing vegetables in the garden and cooking lunch for the group which contributes to their knowledge of eating healthily. The programme is responsive to local needs and works well with partners and other agencies. It provides a progression route for young people to prevent them leaving education or becoming unemployed. The provider has good links and maintains close contact with a small number of employers who provide work-placement opportunities but too few learners have a work-placement. However, plans are in place to address the lack of available work-placements.
44. Care, guidance and support for learners' personal and social needs is excellent. Tutors are sensitive and empathetic to the personal difficulties learners face and perform an advocate role when needed. Learners have a good understanding of issues that affect their lives and are able to share issues and concerns with their tutors. Learners increase their understanding to stay safe and healthy through advice and information on sexual health, substance and alcohol misuse. Tutors direct learners to specialist help as appropriate and have good links with external providers and support agencies. Learners are supported if they are homeless and teenage mothers are guided to Sure Start to access baby equipment and support. Staff undertake home visits and accompany diffident learners to interviews.

Learners receive good practical help to resolve personal issues. Information, advice and career guidance are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

45. Leadership and management are good, as identified in self-assessment. Managers set a clear strategic direction to raise standards and achievement, provide integrated services to learners and respond to local and national initiatives. Programme outcomes are monitored closely at all levels of management.
46. Teamwork is highly effective amongst the staff team of very skilled and experienced youth workers and their managers. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and the team support each other's sessions, team-teach and work well together to provide seamless support for learners. The twice daily, learner-focused, team meetings enable staff to evaluate individual progress and performance, discuss issues and share ideas. The high staff numbers ensure strong support and enable good relationships and trust to be developed that supports learners' personal development and positive self-image.
47. Equality and diversity is effectively promoted. Learners feel safe at the youth centre and understand their rights and responsibilities. Tutors promote positive behaviour in sessions and act promptly to eradicate bullying and anti-social behaviour. Strong links with partners help widen participation and support and engage young people from disadvantaged communities, raising their expectations and improving their chances of economic wellbeing. Staff have completed safeguarding training and have a good understanding of their responsibilities.
48. Observations of teaching and learning do not sufficiently focus on learning and do not identify areas for improvement. They lack appropriate moderation. Grades awarded are higher than that found on inspection. There are insufficient systematic checks of learners' records and files to ensure individual weekly learning programmes and learning in sessions match learners identified needs and targets.
49. The self-assessment process involves staff contributions and learners' views are regularly sought through formal and informal processes. The report identifies all of the strengths found on inspection but does not identify the areas for improvement.

Family learning

Good: Grade 2

Context

50. At the time of inspection, 194 learners were enrolled on family learning programmes. Most of these are women, 4% are from a minority ethnic background, 6% have a declared disability, 23% are lone parents, 12% are unemployed and 51% are new learners. Most provision is non-accredited and offered during the day. Programmes are delivered in venues including schools, community centres, children's centres and Lincoln Prison. Courses range in length from short 12-hour courses to 30-hour courses. Taster sessions and workshops are also offered. Courses include literacy, numeracy, wider family learning and subjects such as healthy living and learning through play. The provision is managed by a direct delivery manager and supported by three direct delivery officers and a team of 20 part-time tutors.

Strengths

- Good development of learners' personal skills and confidence
- Good retention on longer courses
- Effective use of the learning diary to promote learning
- Very good support
- Good partnerships to engage hard to reach learners
- Good curriculum management

Area for improvement

- Insufficiently precise target-setting

Achievement and standards

51. Achievement and standards are good, as identified in self-assessment. The development of learners' personal skills and confidence are good. They develop and improve their parenting skills and gain confidence in learning and in applying these outside the classroom. They develop skills in literacy and numeracy and use these to support their children's learning. They make significant gains in confidence and feel better able to support their children's learning through play activities, storytelling and homework activities. They demonstrate good use of knowledge and skills from other courses such as healthy living and financial literacy. Some learners gain qualifications in literacy and numeracy or complete other accredited qualifications. A significant number of learners progress onto other courses or into paid employment and voluntary work. On longer courses, retention is good at 91%.

Quality of provision

52. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, as recognised in self-assessment. Learners make good use of their learning diary to reflect on what they have achieved. They also plan and record in their diaries how they will apply their learning outside the classroom. Learners' lives are often transformed. They learn to improve their relationships and attitudes towards their children. For example, many fathers in prison develop closer relationships with their children and spend more time reading and learning with them. Family days promote learning. Overall, learners develop a more positive view of learning. However, target-setting for learners is insufficiently precise. Systems are in place to recognise and record progress and achievement but target-setting is often too general. The recording of learners' progress and what they need to do to improve their learning is insufficiently developed.
53. Programmes and activities meet the interests and needs of learners well. The service has good partnerships to engage hard to reach learners and is responsive to community and learners' needs. The staff team works effectively with partners and schools to deliver programmes to meet local needs and priorities. For example, good links with library services nationally and fathers in prison have improved family relationships and enabled a high percentage of fathers to progress onto literacy and numeracy programmes. A partnership with a local charity has been effective in recruiting fathers onto programmes. One group of fathers has continued to meet as a self-sustaining group. Programmes incorporate *Every Child Matters* outcomes. Enrichment opportunities, such as visits to museums, farms, activity centres, libraries and shopping centres are used effectively to promote informal learning.
54. Care, guidance and support are good. Personal support from tutors is good and sensitive to learners' needs. They have a good understanding of the challenges learners face in returning to learning and provide good support to promote learning and personal development. Managers and tutors use effective and practical strategies to reduce barriers to learning. Learners in rural communities are given practical help with transport to travel to venues. Those in prison receive good support to achieve their personal goals. Good access to childcare support and crèche provision enables learners to spend more focused time with an individual child. The service provides each family with a starter pack of stationery, pens, aprons, and story books. Good support is provided for those with additional support needs such as dyslexia or language support. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. External guidance officers provides information about further learning opportunities.

Leadership and management

55. Leadership and management are good as identified in self-assessment. Curriculum management is good and there is good communication within the team, an area for improvement at the previous inspection. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Tutors are very well supported. Comprehensive resource packs support teaching and learning and a dedicated tutor website provides easy access to resources and policies. The packs include schemes of work, sample session plans and ideas for activities. Tutors use these well to prepare and plan sessions. A mentoring system works effectively to support new tutors. Mentors are trained and offer both personal and practical support to tutors. Clear strategies are in place to improve the quality of provision and develop wider partnerships. Performance and compliance with procedures are regularly reviewed through quality monitoring visits and observations of teaching and learning.
56. The self-assessment process is inclusive and broadly accurate. There has been a prompt response to areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection and good progress is made in addressing these. Observations of teaching and learning are satisfactory as recognised in self-assessment. The recording of some observations lack sufficient evidence to support judgements made.
57. Promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learning materials are available in different languages and partnership arrangements are effective in widening participation and promoting social inclusion. Promotional literature reflects staff and learners' representation. A regular newsletter is produced to communicate news about family learning and to promote good practice. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory.