

# Isle of Wight Council

## Adult and Community Learning

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Inspection date

14 May 2009

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Inspection number

332725

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## Background information

### Inspection judgements

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

#### Key for inspection grades

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

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)), reports from the inspectorates' monitoring 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:

- Arts, media and publishing
- Family learning

## Description of the provider

1. Community and Family Learning (the service) sits within the Cultural and Leisure Services department of the Isle of Wight Council. The service contracts with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide family literacy, language and numeracy programmes, together with neighbourhood learning in deprived community (NLDC) programmes. The service sees the arts as an important route to achieving its aims. The service has developed a wide reputation as a centre for carnival arts and in 2008 opened the Carnival Learning Centre in Ryde. In 2007/08 1,356 learners took arts, crafts and performing arts courses while 549 were engaged in family learning courses. These two areas were the focus of the inspection, representing 82% of the service's provision. Other provision, largely in information and communications technology (ICT) was not inspected. A service manager leads the service, supported by managers for business and quality, business information, carnival learning centre development and the community learning curriculum development.
2. The Office for National Statistics reports that, in 2007, the Isle of Wight had a resident population of 139,500, of whom 51% were female. The proportion of black and minority ethnic residents is low at less than 2%. Approximately 26% of residents are of pensionable age compared with 19% in the south east. Of those economically active in September 2008, 72% were employed, compared with 79% in the south east. Traditionally, levels of educational aims and attainment have been low. Many young people who leave the island to study at higher education level do not return.

## Summary of grades awarded

|                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Effectiveness of provision | Good: Grade 2                     |
| Capacity to improve        | Good: Grade 2                     |
| Achievement and standards  | Outstanding: Grade 1              |
| Quality of provision       | Good: Grade 2                     |
| Leadership and management  | Good: Grade 2                     |
| Equality of opportunity    | Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2 |

## Sector subject areas

|                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Arts, media and publishing | Good: Grade 2        |
| Family learning            | Outstanding: Grade 1 |

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

3. The overall effectiveness of the Isle of Wight Council's adult and community learning is good. Visual and performing arts are good. Family learning is outstanding. Achievement and standards are outstanding. Teaching and learning and the matching of programmes to meet the interests and needs of learners are good. Guidance and support for learners is good. Leadership and management are good, as is equality of opportunity.

### Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

4. The service's capacity to improve is good. Most of the identified areas for improvement at the previous inspection in 2005 have been successfully resolved. The grade awarded to visual and performing arts has improved from satisfactory to good and family learning remains outstanding. Success and achievement rates are very high and the service has developed excellent working relationships with many partners to benefit learners. The self-assessment process is sound and the service makes good use of learner, staff and partner feedback. The self-assessment report closely reflected the judgements in the inspection and has provided a good basis for an appropriate action plan. Strategies are already in place to rectify those aspects of quality assurance which require improvement.

### Key strengths

- Outstanding achievement of learners and standards of work
- Good teaching and learning
- Innovative and particularly responsive programmes
- Good leadership
- Good operational management
- Excellent partnership working
- Good promotion of equality and diversity

### Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning for individual learning
- Insufficient quality assurance in a few aspects of the provision

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

Outstanding: Grade 1

5. Achievement and standards are outstanding. In 2007/08 success rates were 99% on accredited wider family learning programmes and 100% on the remainder of accredited learning programmes. Achievement on non-accredited programmes averaged 94%. Retention on these programmes was outstanding, at 99% in wider family learning and very high at an average of 94% in the arts. Little variation is apparent between the achievement and retention rates of different gender, age and ethnic groups.
6. The standard of learners' work is at least high, and in many cases, excellent. The development of learners' skills is excellent. In family learning the level of personal, social, educational and economic skills developed by parents and grandparents to help their children is excellent. In the arts, learners develop high standards of professional skills in producing, for instance, carnival costumes and quilting. Regular high profile awards ceremonies enhance learners' confidence to continue to further study or employment.

### Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

7. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. Inspectors' judgements on the quality of teaching and learning closely match those of the service. In the more successful sessions, tutors plan well and provide learners with a wide range of learning activities well suited to their needs. In carnival arts, tutors with international experience are augmented by visiting specialist lecturers. Less successful sessions, however, are slow paced with limited scope for learner discussion and insufficient use of support staff.
8. Resources are good overall. The newly opened Carnival Learning Centre provides excellent accommodation and resources while other more remote community venues provide satisfactory facilities for learning. Assessment and the recognition and recording of learners' achievements are effective. Inspectors had confidence in the accuracy of the service's achievement data in non-accredited learning. The quality of progress reviews is satisfactory. Individual learning plans are generally used effectively with meaningful and supportive comments. Some individual learning plans, however, do not sufficiently detail targets or tutor feedback.
9. The matching of programmes and activities to the needs of learners is good. Innovative and responsive programmes are well targeted at personal and community needs. Learners in carnival arts enjoy a particularly rich learning experience. Family learning programmes provide an excellent response to the

needs of learners in areas of deprivation and to the needs of children through their parents.

10. Guidance and support are good. Tutors take appropriate time to prepare learners for the courses they are to undertake. The support in classes is good with additional learning needs being effectively identified and supported. Childcare provision in family learning is good and well used. The service is particularly successful in providing motivation and advice to match programmes to individuals. Retention rates on all courses are high. Appropriate advice is available on progression within and beyond learners' current experience.

## Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

11. Leadership and management are good. Leadership is good in developing the service for local communities. The service has clear objectives to maximise the contribution that adult and community learning makes to the economic and social regeneration of the island. Objectives are clearly aligned to the council's key priorities, as well as the island's strategic partnership strategy. Key targets support improved social cohesion and increased participation from under-represented learners. The service has successfully moved provision away from traditional personal development programmes to better meet these priorities. The five Every Child Matters outcomes are recognised through all aspects of provision.
12. Partnership working is outstanding, as identified in the service's self-assessment report. The service has developed excellent relationships with a wide range of local partners. Very good links with community groups successfully promote the service to targeted local communities. The service offers highly valued support and brings innovation to the work of many local partnerships, including the neighbourhood and extended schools partnerships and a local museum with its activity centre. Partners understand the service's aims and targets.
13. Operational management within the service is good. The service sets clear performance targets for specific areas of work and these are understood and monitored effectively by staff and managers. Staff are enthusiastic and very committed to the success of their learners. Staff development is managed well with appropriate appraisal systems and good opportunities for professional development which are regularly taken up. Appropriate training is offered through the Council and through external providers. For example, training in the recognition and recording of progress and achievement (RARPA) is now in place and effective across the whole provision.
14. Staff value the good communication and open management style within the service. Arrangements for meetings are appropriate for a small team. Data management has improved since the previous inspection and is now good, with the capacity to produce an extensive range of useful management reports.



Accommodation and learning resources are managed well. Curriculum management is at least good and course planning reflects a good knowledge of local requirements. The service has increased the range of provision appropriately and progression routes are well planned. The service successfully bid for a new Train to Gain contract. While it is too early to judge the effectiveness of this provision, provisional data indicates potentially high success rates.

15. The provision of information, advice and guidance is well managed. Learners receive good information about courses and are advised on the most appropriate progression opportunities. Tutors are well aware of the limits of their expertise. Good arrangements are in place to refer learners to suitably qualified partners, who provide a wide range of specific support and guidance.
16. Arrangements to support learners who have additional literacy, numeracy and language needs are satisfactory. The service has developed a strategy for literacy, numeracy and language support for council staff which is developing to reflect the needs of all learners. The current action plan satisfactorily addresses the needs of the wider community. The service supports well learners who require additional learning support. Not all subject tutors, however, make the most effective use of learning assistants.
17. The service's procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. All established tutors, learning assistants, managers and administrators have been subject to appropriate Criminal Records' Bureau (CRB) checks. A group of 15 very recently appointed tutors are awaiting the results of checks. In two cases, where these tutors have begun work, appropriate supervision arrangements have been put in place. A well maintained database effectively records the dates and outcomes of checks. Awareness raising amongst staff of safeguarding matters is adequate. Useful guidelines and details of the council's reporting arrangements are included in the staff handbook. Specific safeguarding training was provided for family learning tutors in 2006. The service is aware, however, that systematic training for all staff is appropriate and arrangements are being put in place through the council's human resources dept to provide this.
18. Quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. The service has implemented significant improvements since the previous inspection which have benefited learners. Effective systems for sharing good practice are now in place, including a virtual learning environment accessible to all staff, well attended meetings for tutors to discuss teaching and productive links with mainland organisations to develop quality. The analysis and use of data has improved and is now good in most areas. The service has implemented an improved system of observation of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. The profile accurately reflects that found at inspection. The emphasis, however, is often on the teaching, with not enough weight given to learning. The service is aware of this area for improvement and has introduced additional training for observers. Staff collect good informal feedback through a wide range of meetings with partners and community groups. The elected members and senior officers discharge their

responsibilities effectively and receive appropriate weekly reports on service performance.

19. In a few aspects, however, quality assurance is insufficient. The service has not fully resolved all recognised deficiencies and had failed to identify two noted at inspection. Internal verification sampling plans are not in place for some courses and monitoring arrangements are not always effective. Too little monitoring of individual learning plans takes place on some craft courses. Other areas for improvement recognised by the service, but not yet fully resolved, include the need to improve the integration of Skills for Life provision into all courses.
20. Equality of opportunity is good, as recognised in the service's self-assessment report. Equal opportunity and diversity policies are well considered and widely available to staff and learners. The service responds appropriately to current equalities legislation through the Isle of Wight Council's Diversity Board chaired by the chief executive. Suitable race, gender and disability equality schemes are in place. The schemes are being reviewed in 2009 as a new single equalities scheme is developed. The involvement of appropriate stakeholders in developing and monitoring the schemes is satisfactory. The service's adult learning plan of 2009 has recently been subject to an equalities' impact assessment in line with the council's policy.
21. The promotion of equality and diversity in learning is good. Learners with declared learning difficulties or disabilities are well integrated with classes. Diversity is celebrated particularly well through carnival activities which draw on traditions from around the world. Staff and learners demonstrate a clear commitment to mutual respect and shared experience. The celebration of learners' achievement is widespread including public performance, exhibitions and awards ceremonies. Learners gain self-confidence from these events, regardless of their personal circumstances. The promotion of adult and family learning to the island's residents is vigorous, well targeted and effective. The service has made particularly good use of its experience in carnival crafts to engage hard to reach potential learners. Networking with organisations throughout the island is extensive. The service is imaginative and resourceful in providing 'taster' experiences at events throughout the island. Promotional material is varied, well designed and resourced.
22. The use of data to monitor and develop equality and diversity in the provision is good. Appropriate data is collected and well used in reports which help develop equality and diversity planning. The service has recognised a recent increase in the small number of residents from minority ethnic and faith groups and is using this information in planning the provision. Appropriate analysis has been undertaken of the relative retention and achievement of different groups. No significant differences in performance have been noted.
23. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to manage complaints and general learner feedback. Information is provided in the learner entitlement document issued to all learners and is suitably reinforced during course inductions. While learners

know how to respond if they have concerns, matters are generally resolved informally at a course or service level.

24. Access to learning is satisfactory for those with limited mobility. Where centres are new or have been updated, accommodation is welcoming with appropriate access and resources. Some centres reflect a compromise between ideal access and the provision of courses in less favoured locations. In some cases the signage of venues is insufficient. The service is fully aware of the need to continue its venue improvement programme.

### What learners like:

- 'I now understand the new teaching methods and can be more confident when helping my child'
- 'I now know how to ensure my family has a healthy lifestyle'
- 'We like the regular celebrations of achievement. It is the first time this has happened to us'
- 'I was never read to as a child and I really enjoy reading to my son and seeing his face light up'
- 'It is special time with my grandson that I would not normally have'
- 'The children have improved their grades in lessons and in national tests'

### What learners think could improve:

- 'The time with our children in the class is too short'
- 'Provide a crèche - I could not get childcare to do one course'
- 'Some carnival courses for teenagers'
- 'Short courses are all at the same level – I need advanced'
- Provide advanced sewing skills

## Sector subject areas

### Visual and performing arts

Good: Grade 2

#### Context

25. The service's arts, crafts and performing arts programmes had 129 learners during the week of inspection on two accredited and 17 non-accredited courses. In 2007/08, 992 learners were on non-accredited courses with a further 24 learners on accredited courses. Classes include carnival skills, digital photography, watercolour painting, mosaics, ceramics, textiles, jewellery, guitar and African drumming. Courses are offered at 10 outreach venues including community centres and schools. A curriculum manager and carnival development officer manage the provision, supported by three area co-ordinators. Currently 33 part time tutors and a range of specialist visiting tutors are employed.

#### Strengths

- Excellent success rates on accredited courses
- High achievement on non-accredited courses
- High standard of learners' work
- Good teaching and learning
- Particularly rich learning experience in Carnival Arts
- Good progression in Carnival Arts

#### Areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning for individual learning

#### Achievement and standards

26. Achievement and standards are outstanding. Success rates are excellent on accredited courses. In 2007/08 retention and success rates on the two NCFE creative craft courses, in carnival crafts and pottery, were 100%. Achievement on non-accredited courses was high at 95%. Current in-year retention is high, at an average of 95%. Little variation in achievement occurs between different gender, age and social groups. Learning outcomes on some courses are not, however, sufficiently challenging for returning learners.

27. The standard of learners' work is high and this is recognised in the self-assessment report. Carnival costumes designed and produced by the learners are highly inventive and ambitious. A high standard of professional skills extends the scale and scope of the work. Learners make detailed production plans to use their time wisely in the studio during classes. The portfolios of learners in quilting include inventive use of stitching and dyeing. Peer learning takes place as more experienced learners share their own experiences. Learners on a three-session silver jewellery course quickly develop technical skills. In watercolour painting,

learners effectively use photographs they have taken for homework to discuss composition. Learners enjoy their classes and grow in confidence and self-esteem. For some, this will be their first recognised qualification.

28. Progression is good in carnival arts. Learners react positively to their learning experience and a growing number now engage with more formal accredited learning. Former learners have progressed from family learning to carnival workshops and into community projects as volunteers. Others have taken a traditional route into visual arts education and plan to become secondary school teachers. Three learners have become self-employed, exhibiting and selling their work, or selling fabric and related materials for carnival arts production.

### Quality of provision

29. Teaching and learning are good. The profile of teaching observations by inspectors largely matches that of the service in the self-assessment report. The best learning sessions are particularly well planned and include teaching strategies to support the identified individual needs of learners. Tutors apply their good subject and communication skills well to motivate and support learners. Inspiring examples of previous learners' work and other visual stimuli often support the learning. Appropriate schemes of work, lesson plans and individual learning plans are in place. The less effective learning sessions move at a slow pace. Explanations are overlong and limit discussion and practical activity time.
30. Learners in carnival arts enjoy a particularly rich learning experience. The newly established Carnival Learning Centre provides spacious and well resourced workshop facilities with a good range of specialist materials available. Computer facilities are particularly good. Tutors have international experience in carnival arts and maintain many links with regional and national groups. Cultural diversity and equal opportunity are particularly well established in all aspects of the programme. Learners extend their carnival performance and costume making skills in workshops given by visiting specialists. Health and safety is appropriately considered and tutors frequently remind learners of potential risks in the studios and on location.
31. Planning for individual learning is insufficient. In the best cases, individual learning plans are used effectively to reflect on personal progress with meaningful, supportive comments added by the teacher. In some programmes, however, the potential for learners to take appropriate responsibility for the direction and pace of their own learning has not been fully achieved. Individual learning plans are completed but the information is insufficiently used to plan teaching strategies for mixed ability groups.
32. The matching of courses to the needs and aspirations of learners is good. Programmes are particularly responsive to local need and this is recognised in the self-assessment report. Good curriculum planning ensures that a range of arts and crafts activities rotate around the various centres on the island enabling diverse communities to access the provision.

33. Guidance and support are good. Induction is effective with clear guidelines for the commitment required for the accredited courses. Staff provide good support in class and often use their own creative practice to extend the learning. Initial advice and guidance is good. Progression advice is good and effectively used in many cases.

#### Leadership and management

34. Leadership and management are good. The successful establishment of the Carnival Learning Centre has been a significant focus during the last year and this is recognised in the self-assessment report. Good arrangements are in place to recruit new tutors. Prospective tutors are required to demonstrate their teaching skills at interview. Staff are appropriately experienced and hold suitable teaching qualifications or are working towards them. Satisfactory safeguarding arrangements are in place.

35. Accommodation and resources are good overall. The specialist workshops and resources in the Carnival Learning Centre are excellent. Resources at the community venues are more restricted and at times limit the scale and ambition of work. ICT is insufficiently used on non-accredited courses and some learners have no access to ICT resources. Tutors often provide specialist resources for the learners.

36. Self-assessment is satisfactory. The service's observation of teaching and learning grades largely match those of inspectors. The self-assessment report is accurate in its judgements, but the work of general art and craft courses is insufficiently recognised. Part-time tutors were insufficiently involved in developing the latest self-assessment report. Quality assurance arrangements are not fully effective. The monitoring of schemes of work and lesson plans is not systematically undertaken. Where lesson plans are good and reflect planned individual learning outcomes, good practice is insufficiently shared.

## Family Learning

Outstanding: Grade 1

### Context

37. At the time of the inspection, 68 learners were attending family learning courses. Of these, 60 attended Family Literacy Language and Numeracy (FLLN) and the remainder attended Wider Family Learning (WFL). Some 52 were working towards a qualification and the remainder were following non-accredited learning programmes. In 2007/08 a total of 236 learners attended FLLN courses and 313 WFL courses. The delivery of courses is in schools, children centres, libraries, and community venues. Courses usually run from one to 21 weeks. The service manager, supported by curriculum leads, manage a staff of three full-time and one part-time tutor and three learning support assistants.

### Strengths

#### Key Strengths

- Outstanding retention, attendance and achievement
- Excellent development of learners' skills
- Good teaching and learning
- Innovative and very responsive programmes
- Excellent operational management
- Excellent partnership working to encourage learning in targeted communities

#### Areas for improvement

- None identified

#### Achievement and standards

38. Achievement and standards are outstanding, as identified in the self-assessment report. In 2007/08 the success rate was 100% for accredited level 1 WFL and 99% for level 1 family learning. In the same year on non-accredited family learning courses, retention was 93%. In non-accredited WFL, retention was 99%. All these learners achieved. Average attendance was very high at 94%. Learners work is excellent. They develop a particularly good understanding of parenting skills. The way their children are taught in schools is now understood by all parents. All groups of learners demonstrate excellent progression in relation to their initial starting point.

39. Learners develop an excellent level of personal, social, educational and economic skills needed to help their children or grandchildren learn. Many learners are confident to share the ideas, thoughts and strategies which they have learnt from working alongside their children. They develop a good understanding of healthy living and ways in which to improve their child's lifestyle. One learner developed



confidence and the skills needed to dramatically help her improve her home and work environment. All learners gain much from the regular award ceremonies and for many this is the first time they have achieved any type of recognition. Progression into paid employment, voluntary work and further education is good. Some learners have become school governors.

## Quality of provision

40. Teaching and learning are good. Most tutors plan learning sessions well and provide learners with a very good range of learning activities well related to the outcomes from initial assessment. Accommodation is satisfactory. Tutors make good use of learning materials and ICT to encourage learner involvement. Learners and children produce very good quality literacy and numeracy resources to support the learning process. In many cases children have improved their grades in lessons and in national tests. In some learning sessions, however, insufficient planning takes place for individual learning and some learning plans do not contain specific information related to targets, monitoring and evaluative feedback. While additional learning needs are effectively identified, support staff are not always used effectively.
41. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. Programmes are innovative and very responsive. The service offers an excellent response to community needs, particularly in areas of deprivation. In one area the service has delivered a bespoke law and order course at the request of local residents. One learner is now in a voluntary post at a local police station. An 'art of literacy' introductory course attracted many learners of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and other learners who needed to develop reading, writing and speaking skills. Imaginative ways to encourage families to be involved in storytelling are exceptionally effective. Participants receive a personal compact disc and book of their work. Many of the targeted courses are particularly effective in encouraging male participants. Enrichment activities contribute successfully to course outcomes.
42. Guidance and support are excellent. Information advice and guidance is particularly good. Learners attend a very informative and motivating one or two hour workshop before their chosen course starts. Learners receive regular and supportive guidance as to the next step in their learning path. Childcare provision is good and learners use this provision well. A good range of marketing materials are available at all venues. Learners who need additional learning support are effectively identified and supported.

## Leadership and management

43. Leadership and management are outstanding, as identified in the self-assessment report. Operational management is excellent. The community and family learning manager has developed a very clear direction and vision which enables staff to respond exceptionally well to community learning needs. Family learning offers an excellent response to the council's extended service provision and all staff understand their role in achieving its vision. Curriculum leads and tutors work

particularly well as a team and understand clearly the targets that have been set for improvement and growth. Tutors work very effectively to develop new initiatives. Timely team meetings cover operational and planning matters well. Sharing of good practice is very effective. Staff are well qualified and make good use of staff development opportunities. Resources are well employed.

44. Partnership working to encourage learning in 'targeted' deprived communities is excellent. The service has very productive working partnerships and service level agreements with work-based learning providers, schools, the Isle of Wight learning network and a national organisation supporting parents. Increased participation has been marked in family learning, celebration days and in improving reading and writing skills in school settings. Equality and diversity are well managed. Effective marketing and promotion of courses encourages a particularly good take up from men, grandparents, young mothers and people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Materials and images used in programme delivery are good and encourage learners to fully explore equality and diversity. The Every Child Matters agenda is well managed.
45. The recognition and recording of learner's achievement is good. Staff have received appropriate training and the arrangements in place are effectively used.
46. The Skills for Life strategy is satisfactory. The integration of literacy, numeracy, language and ICT is, however, insufficient in some learning plans.
47. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. Regular course reviews are completed effectively using learner and staff evaluations. Documentation is appropriately standardised. All staff are involved in the production of the self-assessment report which is largely accurate although some key questions are insufficiently considered. Some aspects of assessment documentation and standardisation are insufficiently developed. The observation of teaching and learning focuses too much on teaching.