

South Tyneside Council

Inspection date

15 May 2009

Inspection number

333318

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Background information

Inspection judgements

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

Key for inspection grades

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

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

Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report (www.ofsted.gov.uk), reports from the inspectorates' 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:

- Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- Community learning
- Employability training

The service subcontracts most of its remaining provision to other providers funded by the LSC. The subcontracted provision is not included in this inspection. Sector subject areas not inspected on this occasion include health, public services and care; information and communication technology (ICT); and arts, media and publishing.

Description of the provider

1. South Tyneside Council Adult and Community Learning Service (the service) is part of the **Transition and Wellbeing Service of the Children and Young Peoples Directorate**. The council restructured many of its departments in 2007/08 to better align them with key government priorities. Following this restructure, the service also restructured its adult and community learning provision in April 2008.
2. South Tyneside is part of the Tyne and Wear conurbation, on the coast next to the River Tyne. Created in 1974 under local government reorganisation, it covers 64 square kilometres with six community area forums: South Shields, Jarrow, Hebburn, Whitburn, Boldon and Cleadon. The more recent history of the borough is characterised by heavy industries such as shipbuilding, coal mining and engineering. South Tyneside suffered industrial decline in the 1970s and 1980s with severe social and economic consequences. As a result, deprivation is widespread in South Tyneside.
3. Until recently, the borough's population has been falling. Most of the South Tyneside population is White British with 5.6% of the total population from minority ethnic backgrounds. Some 6.7% of children and young people under the age of 18 are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly Indian and Bangladeshi. Six out of ten residents live in neighbourhoods ranked in the 25% most deprived in England. Unemployment is rising in the borough with a significant number of job losses. Local small and medium enterprises continue to be at risk during the economic downturn.

Summary of grades awarded

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

Sector subject area

Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	Good: Grade 2
Community learning	Good: Grade 2
Employability training	Good: Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Achievement and standards, the quality of provision and leadership and management are good. Equality of opportunity is also good. Provision in literacy, numeracy and ESOL, in community learning and in employability training is good.

Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

5. The service has a good capacity to improve. Since the previous inspection the service has undergone a radical restructure. Success rates on accredited provision have improved from 66% to 83%. Provision in literacy, numeracy and ESOL has improved from inadequate to good, and the achievement of national tests in this area is now good. Work-based learning programmes, although subcontracted to local colleges, also show improved success rates year on year, and overall success rates are now significantly above the national averages. Learners develop a wide range of social and personal skills on the programmes. Programmes are effective in raising learners' esteem and improving possible job outcomes. All relevant areas for improvement, identified at the reinspection, have been resolved effectively.
6. Self-assessment is fully inclusive and involves all staff, partners and other stakeholders. The report is largely accurate and evaluative. A detailed action and development plan is used effectively, and progress in tackling key development issues is monitored.

Key strengths

- High success rates at level 1 on accredited provision
- Good development of learners' skills
- Good teaching and learning
- Extremely effective partnerships used to develop provision to meet learners' needs
- Good management of sector subject areas
- Good leadership and management of change
- Very well managed commissioning procedures
- Particularly effective promotion of equality, diversity and inclusive practices

Key areas for improvement

- Insufficiently systematic processes to record and analyse learners' progression to further training or employment
- Inconsistent use of clear and measurable targets for some learners
- Insufficient integration of Skills for Life in community provision

- Inconsistent assessment and recording of learners' progress and achievement in all aspects non-accredited provision
- Incomplete implementation of quality procedures in some areas

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

7. Achievement and standards are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. The service has taken very effective actions to improve retention rates on all programmes. Retention rates have improved and they are consistently high at 93% or more for all programmes. Success rates on accredited provision have improved and are now good. Success rates on long level 1 programmes have improved each year and are now good at 77% for 2007/08. This is 7% above the national average for the previous year. So far in 2008/09, success rates are at 83%. Long level 2 success rates were below the national average in 2006/07, but improved in 2007/08 to a satisfactory level. To date in 2008/09, success rates for long level 2 programmes have improved significantly to 87%. Success rates claimed for non-accredited provision are high, but the assessment of achievement is insufficiently thorough in some areas of this provision. The service does not systematically monitor success rates of different groups of learners.
8. Learners develop a wide range of social and personal skills from the programmes. These include activities to raise confidence and self-esteem, as well as social, community and vocational skills.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

9. The quality of provision is good, as identified in the self-assessment report. In particular, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Tutors are well qualified and are keen to provide courses in the communities targeted by the service. They plan sessions well and include a good range of teaching strategies to engage and maintain learners' attention. Tutors manage learning activities well. They use good quality handouts and other resources well to support teaching and learning in sessions. Assessment on accredited programmes is good with very effective initial assessment and the development of good individual learning plans. The use of initial assessment, individual planning and assessment, and recording of progress and achievement on non-accredited programmes are less consistent, particularly in community learning provision. Tutors offer appropriate support for learners with additional learning needs.
10. Observations of teaching and learning are thorough and provide a clear indication of the quality of teaching. Regular and effective moderation panel meetings check the judgements in observation reports. Frequent team meetings provide good opportunities for sharing and standardisation of tutors' practice.
11. The extent to which programmes meet learners' needs is good, as stated in the self-assessment report. The service focuses strongly on providing good quality programmes for learners from priority groups and neighbourhoods. The strategy for curriculum planning and development is clear and based on a good knowledge

of local needs. The service tailors the provision carefully to meet particular needs. It offers programmes in accessible local venues through a wide range of partnerships. Some 62% of learners come from the most deprived wards in the borough. The service responds well to meeting the priorities of the LSC and the council. Careful mapping of the provision offered, including that offered by all partners, ensures that the range of provision is adequate and avoids duplication.

12. Educational and social inclusion is good. Development workers play a key role in assessing local needs and supporting development of the provision. Through effective partnerships with around 70 external partners, the service is able to build on the existing local networks. Progression opportunities for most learners are good.
13. Learners receive good support and guidance, as identified in the self-assessment report. A good range of additional learning support resources is available to learners on a loan basis. The service promotes these effectively in a brochure that illustrates the equipment available. A hardship fund provides excellent support to learners for a range of needs including clothing, travel and equipment purchases to enable access to learning and/or work opportunities. Advice and guidance are effective in helping most learners to choose suitable courses, and identify career and progression opportunities.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

14. Leadership and management are good. The service has made good improvements since its previous inspection and the leadership and management of change have been good. Its strategic direction and priorities for development are clearly stated. It has managed the transition from a directly delivered to a largely commissioned service very well. Strong links with colleagues and external partners contribute to planning curriculum initiatives to the benefit of learners, especially in areas such as parenting, health and basic skills. Managers support staff in adapting to changes and staff morale is high. The management of the sector subject areas in literacy, numeracy and ESOL, in community learning and in employability training is good. Communication between managers, staff and partners is very good and all staff are able to share ideas and good practice. Commissioning arrangements, including with those partners from the community and voluntary sector, are thorough, fair and transparent.
15. The service has made considerable improvements to its quality framework and many improvements to its quality assurance processes. For example, it has revised its paperwork and carries out good monitoring of subcontractor arrangements including the observation of teaching and learning. These improved arrangements have contributed to a more systematic approach to quality improvement. Observations of teaching and learning focus appropriately on learning. Audit checks ensure the consistent use of standardised documents and

practice. Staff use data more confidently and increasingly use it to support monitoring. Managers have resolved most areas for improvement since the previous inspection.

16. The implementation of quality procedures is inconsistent and, in a few areas, insufficient. The quality of individual learning plans varies and some learners' targets are not sufficiently specific and measurable. The service has identified the need to improve the recording of learners' progress and monitoring of learners' progression. Managers make insufficient use of targets to evaluate the effect of strategy and policy on the delivery of the service. Not all progress reports indicate the contribution that improvements are making to meeting targets. Targets to measure learners' participation are well developed but this is not replicated in other aspects of the learners' experience. Stakeholders contribute well to the development of targets through innovation days. The directorate management team and the chief executive monitor performance through regular reports. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. The process is inclusive and takes account of partners' and learners' views. Arrangements to moderate findings are good.
17. Equality of opportunity is good. The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusive practice is good. The service gives priority to families, communities, and individuals with no or low-level qualifications and those who have multiple disadvantages. It seeks to resolve the barriers to successful participation that many of these learners face. A steering group raises the profile of equality matters across the provision. Staff are able to explore their attitudes, prejudices and actions through training sessions, and to increase their ability to identify adults who need additional literacy or numeracy support. A recent audit of equality practice showed that staff met nearly all the assessment criteria.
18. The learner handbook informs learners of their rights and responsibilities. The service makes good use of publicity in other languages, local community networks and translators to attract learners from minority ethnic backgrounds. Crèche support is good and a wide range of specialist equipment and learning aids is available. The service has developed several imaginative initiatives to attract particular groups of learners. For example, family learning activities, targeted at male learners, blend football with the development of literacy and numeracy. Tutors offer good support for the particular needs of individual learners. The observation scheme invites comments on how well learning materials reflect equality but not all tutors make the exploration of equality issues sufficiently explicit. Learners show respect and tolerance for others. A well-established and regularly reviewed action plan supports the Skills for Life strategy. The service has identified the need for further integration of literacy, numeracy and ESOL training in some parts of the provision.
19. Arrangements to safeguard learners and children are good. The service carries out suitable background checks and provides appropriate and relevant training for all staff. The management of health and safety for staff and learners is thorough.

What learners like:

- 'It is not like other courses I have been on because the staff listen to you'
- 'I know it gives me a better chance of a job'
- 'The programme has helped me to get a part-time job'
- 'I get to do things I have always wanted to do'
- 'It is good not to be lonely at home'
- 'The tutor makes it fun and makes you relaxed'
- 'It is laid back and relaxed but you learn'
- The access to the crèche – 'Without it I would not be here'
- 'It is important that the course is free'
- Being able to borrow books for the course
- Gaining the confidence to speak in front of others
- Making new friends
- 'It is good to be able to laugh with the group after the life experiences I have had – I never thought it was possible'

What learners think could improve:

- More advertising so more people can benefit from the courses
- More courses
- Certificates for the good tutors
- More time and more sessions each week

Sector subject areas

Literacy, numeracy and ESOL

Good: Grade 2

Context

20. Currently 72 learners have enrolled on 14 ESOL courses, 135 learners on 24 literacy courses and 178 learners on 23 numeracy courses. Only one of the 62 programmes running is non-accredited. The non-accredited provision consists of a single three-hour written communications course. A crèche is available for 18 of the programmes. The Skills for Life team comprises a curriculum manager, a co-ordinator, four full-time tutors, two part-time tutors and six additional tutors.

Strengths

- Good achievement of national tests
- Effective pre-enrolment and initial assessment systems
- Particularly effective partnerships to develop responsive programmes
- Strong management of the provision

Areas for improvement

- Incomplete systems for monitoring progression

Achievement and standards

21. Achievement and standards are good. Achievement of national tests is good, and shows a trend of improvement against previous years' figures. Overall literacy pass rates are 91%, and pass rates for numeracy are 96%. So far this year, 182 learners have passed national tests. Learners develop good language, literacy and numeracy skills.

22. Learners' attendance has improved and strategies are in place for following up non-attendance. Standards of learners' work are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

23. Teaching and learning are good. Pre-enrolment and initial assessment procedures are effective, as identified in the self-assessment report. A computerised initial interview calendar system, accessible to staff across the provision, enables potential learners to enquire about courses and quickly allocates them to a local initial interview. Tutors use the initial assessment materials effectively to plan provision and enable learners to work at an appropriate level. The service has created a contextualised initial assessment for learning assistants on the preparing to teach in the lifelong learning sector certificate.

24. All tutors provide good individual tuition and support within sessions. Small group sizes maximise tutor support. In the better sessions, good use is made of a range

of teaching and learning strategies and differentiation of learning is carried out skilfully. In the weaker sessions, whole group teaching is sometimes rushed and not always matched appropriately to the needs of all learners. In a minority of sessions, worksheets are relied on excessively. Tutors are respectful and responsive to individual learners and have a good understanding of learners' needs and interests.

25. The use of individual learning plans is satisfactory. The better plans show clear links between identified targets, planning and teaching. Weaker plans contain few learner comments and insufficient recording of progress.
26. Resources are satisfactory. Many centres are well equipped with a wide range of teaching and learning resources including interactive whiteboards and networked computers. However, in some of the community centres information technology facilities and resources are insufficient. Adoption of the Skills Pledge and close liaison with the training and development team has resulted in much greater awareness of Skills for Life amongst staff. Fast track drop-in sessions provide flexible provision for learners, many of whom are staff, who wish to achieve level 2 literacy and numeracy qualifications. This experience of achieving the national tests has enabled staff to advise potential learners by talking about their own experience.
27. The extent to which courses meet learners' and employers' needs and interests is good. Courses are held in accessible centres, such as schools, libraries, community centres, children's centres, training providers and the workplace. Provision is socially inclusive. Sessions are available at times to suit learners. The service has developed effective 'ESOL within a citizenship context' courses to assist learners in attaining citizenship and support social cohesion.
28. Programmes are responsive to community needs. Particularly effective partnerships support the development of responsive programmes. This is identified in the self-assessment report. On the non-accredited provision, good examples exist of responsive and sensitive working with employers and other partners. For example, a short three-hour programme focused on written communications has been developed in collaboration with a major local employer to enable staff to develop work-based written communication skills. Staff and union officials collaborated in the design of the course and the contextualisation of all course materials to the workplace. The service targets the accredited provision to meet employers' and learners' needs. Many of the partner organisations have direct, well-established links with priority groups. The service uses this expertise well to support community groups and learners. Good use of local and community venues ensures learning takes place where a need is identified.
29. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Crèches are available on some courses, and resources such as course book, dictionaries and spell checkers are on loan for the duration of programmes. In some parts of the borough, free travel vouchers are also available. As part of a process to raise awareness, all teaching staff have completed level 2 qualifications in support for learners with dyslexia.

Leadership and management

30. Leadership and management are good. Management of the provision is strong, as identified in the self-assessment report. The service has made considerable progress since the previous inspection in staff training and the team shares a strong commitment to bringing about improvement. Quality monitoring of teaching and learning is effective. The service has established a system of lesson observations by external, subject specialist consultants. Additionally, the sector subject area manager and Skills for Life co-ordinator carry out termly quality monitoring visits to each tutor. Lesson plans, individual learning plans and paperwork are checked and they interview all learners to find out about their experience and their views of the programmes. Tutors have appropriate qualifications and are members of the Institute for Learning. Systems for continuing professional development are in place.
31. Equality and diversity are satisfactory. In a few sessions, the tutor incorporates the learners' background and interests effectively and reflects these in the resources used. The self-assessment process is comprehensive and the report is accurate. It broadly reflects most of the strengths and areas for improvement found at inspection. All staff contribute to writing the self-assessment report.
32. Monitoring of progression is incomplete and the collection and use of data on learners' progression to other courses is insufficient.

Community learning

Good: Grade 2

Context

33. Community learning provision targets adults who have not been involved in formal education and training since leaving school and have low skills levels. It also targets socially excluded adults and those who have social, economic or personal barriers to effective involvement in their community or work. Community development workers plan the provision in areas with high levels of social and economic disadvantage. Tutors provide courses in a range of community-based centres. In 2007/08, 2,864 learners started on courses. Of these, 77% were female, 45% were unemployed, 17% had learning difficulties, 18% had a disability, 6% came from minority ethnic backgrounds and 60% were from the most deprived areas of South Tyneside. In the current year, 1,915 learners have enrolled on programmes. A family and neighbourhood learning manager, a working neighbourhood co-ordinator and six development workers manage the provision.

Strengths

- Very good attainment of life and employment skills
- Good teaching and learning
- Particularly effective processes to identify and meet learners' needs
- Very good sector subject area management

Areas for improvement

- Insufficiently thorough assessment and monitoring of progress and achievement in non-accredited provision
- No systematic recording and analysis of progression

Achievement and standards

34. Achievement and standards are good. Learners attain very good life and employment skills, as identified in the self-assessment report. Young parents develop effective skills for behaviour management. Vulnerable women develop listening and conflict resolution skills as well as self-esteem and the confidence to establish their rights. Older learners attain a good level of photographic skills. They use these skills with their families and voluntary and community groups with which they are involved. Unemployed people develop plastering skills effectively as a first step to a vocational qualification.

Quality of provision

35. Teaching and learning are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Tutors engage with learners effectively and plan interactive activities to support participation and motivation. They ensure that course content is relevant and they balance practical activities with theoretical discussion to enhance learning. In

most sessions, tutors check learning effectively. Tutors create a non-threatening learning environment for nervous learners. Learners develop communication and team working skills through appropriate activities planned by tutors. Learners clearly identify their learning and the difference it makes in their lives.

36. The provision of Skills for Life support is satisfactory. Tutors refer many learners to the Skills for Life team for literacy and numeracy support. They effectively integrate literacy and numeracy into the plastering course to reflect the needs of learners who want to work in that trade. Some tutors draw the attention of learners to the opportunity for detailed assessment of literacy, numeracy and language needs. However, tutors rely too heavily on learners identifying their own needs and seeking help.
37. Learners make progress but the assessment and monitoring of progress and achievement in non-accredited provision is inconsistent. The service did not identify this in the self-assessment report. Tutors do not thoroughly and consistently record prior knowledge and achievement in the initial assessment documentation. They do not always identify the starting point clearly for learners so that progress can be measured. Tutors do not make enough formal assessments of learners' progress. Learners often state what they have done rather than what they have learned in their learning diaries. The service does not have a policy or implementation plan to moderate and validate the process for recognising and recording progress and achievement.
38. The extent to which programmes meet learners' needs and interests is good. The processes used to identify and meet the needs of the target communities are particularly effective, as identified in the self-assessment report. The service targets and delivers provision in areas of high levels of social and economic disadvantage and low skills. Community development workers negotiate with community partners to ensure that provision meets educational needs. Partners design courses specifically to meet the needs of local people. Development workers build relationships with these partners effectively to ensure the relevance of the provision and its ownership by the communities themselves, and to meet the needs and interests of non-traditional adult learners. Vulnerable and socially excluded people engage in learning and develop skills that are significant to them. Staff ensure that provision is located in local and accessible venues.
39. Guidance and support are satisfactory. The service provides a very attractive brochure to all learners that identifies the additional support that is available. Crèche provision is available in some centres and some learners have their travel expenses reimbursed. Tutors refer learners to other services like counselling and debt advice.

Leadership and management

40. Leadership and management are good. Management of the provision is very good. The service did not identify this as a key strength in the self-assessment report. Communication with staff is effective and managers are accessible and responsive. Managers offer staff development opportunities to staff to improve their job-related skills. Annual personal development planning meetings are

effective at identifying staff development needs. Staff meet regularly, team meeting minutes record outcomes and actions and the team works effectively. Staff and partners are involved in the self-assessment process, and development workers support tutors and partners in developing the skills of self-assessment and of bidding for funding. Development workers monitor the quality of the partners' work regularly. They operate an 'at risk' register to ensure support for those who are at risk of failing to reach quality standards. The observation of teaching and learning is very thorough. Observers identify action points arising from observations and record and monitor these well.

41. The service does not systematically record and analyse progression. Staff record progression on some courses but rely too heavily on anecdotal evidence. Many partners keep detailed records of progression. However, it is not a requirement of the service level agreement to submit this data to adult and community learning staff. The service does not set targets for progression. It has identified this as an area for improvement in the self-assessment report and has planned actions for improvement.
42. Equality, diversity and inclusiveness form a key role in planning provision but tutors do not routinely embed these in lesson planning or schemes of work. Staff treat all learners with respect. The service appropriately ensures the safeguarding of all learners.

Employability training

Good: Grade 2

Context

43. The service provides employability training to 25 learners who were previously not in education, employment or training (NEET), and eight learners on an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme. The service locates this provision in a local youth community centre in an area of high social and economic deprivation. Provision includes accredited courses in literacy, numeracy, key skills, employability skills, youth achievement and Duke of Edinburgh awards. In addition, the programmes offer learners other basic courses in first aid, health and safety and food hygiene. Part of each programme includes sports and activities to develop personal and social skills and vocational tasters or work-placements.

Strengths

- Good development of skills
- Good teaching and learning
- Wide range of choices and options to interest and motivate learners
- Good guidance and support for learners
- Good programme management

Areas for improvement

- Some insufficiently specific and measurable targets

Achievement and standards

44. Achievement and standards are good. Learners develop good levels of personal, social and employability skills, as identified in the self-assessment report. Learners gain significantly in confidence, self-reliance, self-esteem, independence and reliability. They work well in teams, demonstrating the ability to analyse and evaluate information. Learners' communication skills are good. They also develop and improve their literacy, numeracy and the key skill of communication. Programmes prepare learners well for the world of work and they have a good attitude to their roles and responsibilities. They work well with others and develop good working practices.

45. Progression rates and the achievement of accredited learning goals are good. Over two-thirds of the 58 NEET learners who enrolled in 2007/08 have progressed to further education, training or jobs.

46. Of the 34 learners who started E2E programmes in 2007/08, 11 have progressed into employment and an additional 12 into further education and training.

47. Learners on both programmes have successfully gained qualifications in food hygiene, first aid, health and safety, employability skills, communication, literacy and numeracy.
48. A wide range of progression routes include the council's Guaranteed Apprenticeship Programme and Youth Work Apprenticeships, Youth Choice for looked after young people, other training providers and local colleges. Work-placements have led successfully to jobs at an environmental training provider, in the steel industry and in a printing company.
49. Learners' attendance and timekeeping are good. All learners who started the programme when NEET have successfully completed the course and progressed, or are still on programme. Most learners arrive early at the centre and attend for extra sessions without prompting. Attendance at sessions is also good.

Quality of provision

50. Teaching and learning are good. However, the service judged these an area for improvement in the self-assessment report. Well-planned sessions meet learners' needs well. Session plans include reference to the Every Learner Matters themes, and equality and diversity. Sessions include many practical activities and are lively, varied and interesting. Learners are actively engaged in sessions and take part enthusiastically in discussions, sometimes on very sensitive and emotive subjects such as child abuse. Learners work well in groups and in pairs, often helping each other and supporting less able learners or new starters, Tutors have a very good knowledge of each learner's individual barriers and deal with these sensitively. They encourage and motivate learners well.
51. Tutors have access to a wide range of good quality resources at the centre and at other venues across the borough, including outdoor education centres. The accommodation at the Simonside centre is very good, including ICT equipment in classrooms. Learners benefit from a social area for breaks and lunchtimes, a canteen and kitchen, changing rooms, showers and a washing machine. Staff are well qualified and skilled when working with young people who have been disengaged from learning.
52. Initial assessment of learning needs and individual barriers to learning is satisfactory. Tutors monitor learners' progress in literacy, numeracy, key skills, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network and Duke of Edinburgh awards closely. Progress reviews are thorough and detail progress in all parts of the programme. However, some targets are too broad and insufficiently specific or measurable.
53. Arrangements to meet learners' needs and interests are good. This was not identified in the self-assessment report. The range of choices and options to interest learners is wide and diverse. The service plans the experiences to motivate, encourage and challenge learners to attempt new things. Learners regularly take part in cookery, which includes researching the country, culture and language as well as preparing the food. Learners visit colleges, other training providers, employers and work-placements. Learners undertake community

projects enthusiastically. Risk assessments are in place for all activities. Highly qualified and experienced instructors from outdoor education are on hand for all activities. Learners develop trust in instructors and each other, and a mutual respect for staff, instructors and learners.

54. Guidance and support are good. The service did not identify this as a separate strength. Learners attend regular support sessions on smoking, drugs, alcohol and solvent misuse, conflict management and sexual health. Learners are encouraged to eat healthily. Staff work very closely with other agencies such as the Family Intervention Project (FIP) to give coherent support. For example, the NEET team work with a learner while the FIP team work with a parent or carer.

Leadership and management

55. Leadership and management are good, as noted in the self-assessment report. A co-ordinator and a team of tutors/youth workers manage the programmes very well. Partnership work is particularly effective in developing the programmes and targeting disengaged learners. This includes other providers, the youth service, the outdoor education team, the youth offending team and local employers who are members of the Manufacturers Forum. Partners hold regular meetings to share ideas and good practice. Recent restructuring within adult and community learning has led to the NEET and E2E provision working from the Simonside youth community centre which is at the centre of one of the local areas of high social and economic deprivation.
56. Systems to observe teaching and learning are thorough and effective. The self-assessment report is mostly accurate and informative. However, the breakdown of data for individual groups of learners was insufficient. Learners' knowledge of equality and diversity is satisfactory. The service takes effective actions to promote equality and diversity at every opportunity.