Hull City Council
Inspection report

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Information about Hull City Council

1.   Hull Skills and Employability is part of Hull City Council's (HCC) Children's & Young People's Service. It consists of two main components, Hull Training (HT) and Hull Adult Education Service (HAES), which are led by separate strategic managers and administrative staff.

2.   HT offers apprenticeship and Entry to Employment (E2E) training for young people from seven main training centres, providing a diverse range of occupational activities within the Humber region.

3.   HAES has four main learning centres, with 100 subsidiary community and outreach venues. It offers a wide range of courses including National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), family learning, Skills for Life, information and communication technology (ICT) and a range of recreational provision under adult safeguarded funding.

4.   At the inspection of adult and community learning provision in 2005, HCC's overall effectiveness, leadership and management and equality of opportunity were satisfactory. Quality improvement was inadequate. ICT provision was good. Health, public services and care; arts, media and publishing; languages, literature and culture; education and training; preparation for life and work; and family learning were all satisfactory. Leisure, travel and tourism was inadequate and was reinspected in 2006 when it was good.

5.   At the inspection of work-based learning provision in November 2006 the overall effectiveness of HCC was good. Leadership and management were good as was the provider's arrangement for quality improvement. Equality of opportunity was outstanding. Provision was good in engineering and manufacturing technologies, in ICT, in preparation for life and work and in business administration and law.

6.   In September 2006, work-based learning and adult education were brought together within HCC's Children and Young People's Services directorate. This coincided with a restructuring of the directorate which was completed in October 2008. Humberside Skills Funding Agency fund the provision. Around 2% of all business is non-government funded.

7.   In 2001 a high proportion of Hull residents at 41.2% held no qualifications compared to 28.9% for England. Educational attainment at Key Stage 2 is below average. Although improving rapidly the proportion of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C in Hull, including English and mathematics, remains significantly below the English average. Hull is ranked 149th of 150 most deprived cities in England.

8.   Hull has undergone significant changes in recent years in terms of its ethnic diversity. Latest estimates are that residents from black and minority ethnic

communities now make up over 7% of the population compared to the 2001 census figure of 2.3%.

9.   The following organisations provide training on behalf of Hull City Council:
     ■ Step into Care (preparation for life and work)

     ■ Quality Personnel Development (preparation for life and work)

Type of provision	Number of learners in (previous year)
Young learner provision: Further education (16 to 18)	5 full-time equivalent (FTE) learners 139 part-time learners
Foundation learning including: Entry to Employment	451 learners
Adult learner provision: Learning for qualifications	67 FTE learners 2,333 part-time learners
Learning for social and personal development	3,722 part–time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	765 learners 886 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2

Capacity to improve	Grade 2

	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2

Learning for qualifications in employment	Grade
Engineering and manufacturing technologies	2

Learning for qualifications	Grade
Information and communication technology	2
Preparation for life and work	2

Learning for social and personal development	Grade
Family learning	2

Overall effectiveness

10. The overall effectiveness of HCC's provision is good. Outcomes for learners, quality of provision and leadership and management are all good. Arrangements for the safeguarding of young people and vulnerable learners and for equality and diversity are good.

11. Learners across the provision progress well, despite beginning their programmes from often low starting points. They learn good skills, particularly for employment, and become well involved in a range of community projects.

12. Teaching and learning are good, with inspirational and motivating tutors and trainers who plan varied and exciting sessions. The range of provision is good,

including both the community-based programmes and a wide range of vocational provision; HCC works well with partners to improve and extend this range.

Main findings

- Learners across the provision enjoy their learning experiences highly and make good progress in relation to their previous levels of attainment. HCC recruits more than half of all learners from the four most deprived wards in the city. Learners improve their economic and social well-being well through learning and development. They gain friends and learn good skills to access employment.

- Overall success rates are satisfactory. Learners on apprenticeship programmes have good overall success rates with satisfactory timely rates. Learners on adult safeguarded courses have good retention and achievement. Success rates for learners on learner responsive certificated programmes are low but improving and the provider has significantly narrowed the gap between national benchmarks in 2008/09 compared with the previous year.

- Many learners have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and use safe working practices well. In addition, their contribution to the community is good. In family learning and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), learners are active in parent-teacher groups, influencing how the school works within the community. Engineering learners are actively involved in fabricating gates and decorative fences for the community.

- The quality of teaching and learning is good with particularly inspirational and enthusiastic tutors and trainers. They use a variety of methods and materials to motivate and stimulate learners. The observation of teaching and learning process accurately identifies strengths and areas for development and HCC uses it well to improve quality. However, tutors do not always sufficiently incorporate equality and diversity themes into plans.

- Provision to meet the needs and interests of users is good. HCC uses its range of funding well to give provision across a good variety of subject areas, and at different levels. It uses its good range of partnerships to benefit the people of the area. HCC has long and close relationships with schools, employers and wider partners and plans provision well.

- Arrangements for support and guidance of learners across the provision are satisfactory. Induction and advice for apprentices are good with a well-designed, friendly process. In adult education, learners have access to some impartial careers guidance but on an insufficiently systematic basis. HCC satisfactorily identifies literacy and numeracy support needs but uses data insufficiently to understand the scale of need or effectiveness of support.

- Strategic leadership is strong and is supported well by a clear strategic direction for a service with priorities strongly allied to local council priorities. The service plans well to meet local and government priorities. The management of the

provision is good. Operational managers from both HAES and HT collaborate on the development of common systems, and share practice well.

■   Arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adult learners are good. HCC gives safeguarding a high priority and procedures are good, especially in work-based learning. A development plan for both young and adult learners contains clear action points. The service has well-trained, designated safeguarding officers in local centres and good contact is maintained with regional safeguarding agencies.

■   The provider has good arrangements to manage the promotion of equality and diversity among staff, learners, employers and partners. Staff pay good attention to equality issues in workplace reviews. Learners with limited mobility have good access to accommodation and specialist facilities. More than half of all learners are from the four most disadvantaged areas in Hull.

■   HCC engages well with users to promote improvement. HT links well with employers to support and promote improvement with well-established employer groups that contribute effectively to learners' reviews and programmes. HCC is highly responsive to feedback from employers about the programmes of learning. The service uses a wide range of methods to collect learners' views through questionnaires, interactive screens on which learners can display ideas and learner groups.

■   Arrangements to improve the quality of provision are satisfactory. The provider has systems that are increasingly effective for tackling areas for further development. However, the service is making insufficient progress in improving the success rates in adult and community learning on accredited programmes and their arrangements to monitor and follow up non-attendance are insufficiently rigorous.

■   The self-assessment process is inclusive and successfully identifies most of the strengths and areas for improvement in subject areas; however, at times judgements do not take sufficient account of low success rates. In some cases national averages used as benchmarks are insufficiently challenging.

■   The service has thorough systems for budgetary control and financial probity. HCC gives monthly reports to the City Treasurer to verify financial trends. Operational managers now have delegated budgets, giving them more flexibility and autonomy over the use of funds.

What does Hull City Council need to do to improve further?

■   Extend the use of data beyond the management group. Revise systems as quickly as possible to ensure quick identification of issues such as low success rates and attendance monitoring and implement actions to improve.

■   Continue to share practice across provision, particularly on developing even better arrangements for collecting learners' feedback from adult learners and in further embedding key cross-service themes like safeguarding.

- Continue to improve the work begun on evaluating identification of support issues and further develop a more systematic approach to providing information, advice and guidance for adult learners.

- Further develop the promotion of equality and diversity in teaching and learning sessions by more actively using observation processes and staff training to share good practice.

- Develop more incisive targets in order to set more challenging targets for service improvement, and use more appropriate national benchmarks in a more objective way.

- Review arrangements for self-assessment to ensure that data and key quality improvement processes more accurately inform the end report, especially in terms of making more explicit summary messages and key challenges.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the helpful, patient, knowledgeable and above all, friendly tutors and assessors

- learning skills to become more employable

- the good practical training sessions

- meeting new people and getting out of the house

- learning new skills to keep fit and well

- the good range of vocational options that help learners really understand what kind of work they will enjoy most

- the range of venues that are easy to access across the city

- the welcoming, relaxed atmosphere

- getting qualifications that are valued by employers

- getting involved in lots of activities outside of the courses

- being more confident in talking to their children's teachers at school

- the regular, helpful workplace assessments

- being able to learn at work rather than having to go to a college

- the fact that the provision is completely different from previous experiences of learning at school

- being welcomed and valued no matter what age or culture.

What learners would like to see improved:

- more access to careers guidance for adult learners

- tools and resources on some apprenticeship programmes

- a minority of apprentices would like more regular assessments

- some adult learners would like to be more involved in learner panels

■ many ESOL learners would like more classes, particularly in speaking and listening.

Summary of the views of employers and partners as confirmed by inspectors

What employers and partners like:

■ the highly responsive and flexible approach

■ being able to trust that HCC will do what it says

■ the many successful ventures that partners and HCC have developed together

■ employers particularly value the bespoke training packages that HCC creates specifically for their needs

■ the emphasis on high quality in everything HCC does

■ the helpful and resourceful staff at all levels of the organisation

■ the highly inclusive approach that HCC has with a high priority on meeting the needs of the most vulnerable in society

■ the range of provision that meets partners' and employers' needs very well.

What employers and partners would like to see improved:

■ a minority of employers would like more involvement in learners' reviews

■ some employers would like to have more information on the off-the-job learning

■ some employers would like more regular assessments.

Main inspection findings

Capacity to make and sustain improvement   Grade 2

13. HCC's capacity to improve is good. Overall success rates for adult learner responsive certificated provision have improved steadily from 56% in 2006/07 to 67% in 2008/09. There are variations in subject areas but rates have improved considerably on Skills for Life programmes. Outcomes on non-accredited course are good and on the new Train to Gain provision they are satisfactory. Overall success rates for apprentices are good and timely success rates are satisfactory.

14. Since the last inspection the service has made further improvements to its good provision in work-based learning. It has made further progress in improving its adult and community learning since the monitoring visit of 2009. The service has made progress in all areas but recognises the need to extend its use of management information and data and to implement more extensively some aspects of quality improvement.

15. The provider has a clear strategy to sustain improvement through the strengthened management structure and the clear allocation of responsibility for quality improvement to lead and operational managers. The self-assessment process is inclusive and largely accurate in the strengths and areas for improvement identified. Management of all curriculum areas is good. The service takes good account of the views of employers and partners to develop provision. It is extending its mechanisms to gather the views of adult learners.

Outcomes for learners   Grade 2

16. Learners across the provision enjoy their learning experiences highly, develop good personal and social skills and make good progress in relation to their previous levels of attainment. Of all learners on learner responsive provision in 2008/09, 68% came into provision with either entry level or level 1 starting points; most have low aspirations. A small minority of apprentices enrolling at the provider have achieved GCSEs at grades A* to C in English and mathematics. HCC recruits more than half of all learners from the four most deprived wards in the city.

17. Overall success rates are satisfactory. Learners on apprenticeship programmes have good overall success rates with satisfactory timely rates. Overall success rates for engineers are good with satisfactory timely rates. Overall rates for business administration learners are good with very good timely rates. Both overall and timely success rates across Train to Gain programmes are satisfactory, with those in Skills for Life being very good.

18. Learners on adult safeguarded courses have good retention and achievement. Achievement rates in 2008/09 were good or better on most courses, and most

programmes show a consistent three-year improvement trend. The processes for recognising and recording progress and achievement are appropriate though their application across all subject areas is inconsistent.

19.   Overall success rates for learners on learner responsive certificated programmes are low but improving and the provider has significantly narrowed the gap between their success rates and national benchmarks in 2008/09 compared with the previous year. E2E learners' progression rates are satisfactory; however, their qualification success rate is good.

20.   Attendance and retention rates, while improved, are still low in a minority of areas. Monitoring arrangements are insufficiently effective.

21.   Learners improve their economic and social well-being well through learning and development. Learners gain friends and networks of support. Older learners in ICT gain a solid support structure through increased communication with the outside world. Younger learners in ICT, Skills for Life and wider programmes learn good skills that help them access employment. Many on family learning programmes enter employment as teaching assistants or in related fields. Learners on wider adult education programmes gain good mental and physical health benefits. Apprentices develop good workplace skills, work in challenging environments and work well on their own initiative.

22.   Many learners have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and use safe working practices. Family learning learners speak eloquently of how they use their knowledge of safeguarding measures to protect themselves and their children. Learners on teaching assistant, childcare and parenting courses all have a high awareness of measures to protect both themselves and children. All learners show at least a satisfactory awareness of health and safety measures with learners in engineering and E2E programmes having a high awareness.

23.   Learners are able to make suitably informed choices about their own health and well-being. HCC has begun giving good additional courses to apprentices on drugs awareness, sexual health and exercise. Catering and hospitality learners cook healthy food. In family learning, there are appropriate projects to encourage parents and families to become more active. Learners across the certificated programmes are not always sufficiently aware of options.

24.   Learners' contribution to the community is good. In family learning and ESOL, learners are active in parent-teacher groups, influencing how the school works within the community. Many are active in raising funds for various charitable initiatives. Many learners are active in a range of voluntary work, both in supporting other learners and in wider community projects such as a consultation with the community on regeneration of the city. Engineering learners are actively involved in fabricating gates and decorative fences for the community. E2E learners complete projects to raise money for charities.

The quality of provision   Grade 2

25.   The quality of teaching and learning is good. Tutors and trainers are particularly inspirational, committed and enthusiastic. They are excellent role models, using a variety of methods and materials to motivate and stimulate learners. They are particularly good at handling a range of learners with multiple barriers to life and learning. They actively foster an atmosphere of acceptance and welcome in sessions. The observation of teaching and learning process accurately identifies strengths and areas for development. HCC is using it well to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

26.   Planning of learning is generally satisfactory with improving use of planning to incorporate safeguarding issues. However, tutors do not always sufficiently incorporate equality and diversity themes.

27.   Initial assessment and induction processes are generally satisfactory and in apprenticeships are good. The provider satisfactorily identifies literacy and numeracy support needs; however, HCC does not sufficiently use data to understand the scale of need or effectiveness of support. Once staff identify a need, effective support is quickly organised.

28.   Provision to meet the needs and interests of users is good. HCC uses its range of funding well to give provision across a good range of subject areas, and at different levels. It is now targeting provision well to reflect its priority to reach the most vulnerable in society. The amalgamated provision reflects learners' interest in both vocational and leisure provision.

29.   HCC responds very well to requests for provision or changes in courses by both learners and partners. Across all provision, staff are flexible in meeting needs with courses at different times of day, evening and weekends. In courses for employers staff are particularly flexible in working around demanding shift patterns.

30.   The provider uses employer forums well to collect their views on training needs and amend both the content of programmes and the subject area. The provider responded well, for instance, to the needs of employers in the caravan manufacturing industry, constructing bespoke training modules for the industry that better matches both employers' and employees' needs.

31.   HCC has a good range of partnerships that actively benefits the people of the area. They have a long and close relationship with schools and children's centres and plan provision that genuinely meets learners' needs.

32.   The service works very well with the regeneration department of the council and employers to deliver very effective provision to identify where potential employment is coming into the city and to work with new and existing employers to ensure that training specifically meets their needs.

33.   The provider has a very good partnership with the National Health Service (NHS) to give a range of courses for learners already in the service and those wishing to apply for a job. The provision is very successful in attracting adult apprentices and HCC is developing it within the NHS as a model of good practice.

34.   Arrangements for support and guidance of learners across provision are satisfactory with support generally being good. HCC uses its partners well to give additional support for learners. Tutors and assessors are highly supportive of learners, giving extra time and resources. In HAES learners have access to a small team of additional support tutors who have a good range of skills and training. Needs are identified through the enrolment and initial assessment processes. Where staff identify a support need, HCC quickly puts appropriate measures in place both in adult provision and for apprentices. However, the process does not always sufficiently identify issues.

35.   HCC has appropriate arrangements for information, advice and guidance, having gained the MATRIX standard across provision. Individual tutors and assessors give good advice and most give information to learners about the full range of partners' provision. Induction and advice for apprentices are good with a well-designed, friendly process. Learners have good access to impartial guidance through strong links with Connexions. In adult education, learners have access to impartial careers guidance but on a very limited basis. Where learners receive this service the guidance is good. However, the process is insufficiently systematic and too few learners access this resource.

Leadership and management   Grade 2

36.   Strategic leadership is strong and is supported by a clear strategic direction for the service with priorities strongly allied to local council priorities. The service plans well to meet local and government priorities and the management structure is coherent. The service collaborates well with other parts of the council, particularly in areas such as economic development and regeneration. Close working with schools, communities and different parts of the council enable the service to respond well to the needs of learners and employers. Strong partnerships with local organisations including voluntary and community organisations enhance the learners' experience well.

37.   The assistant head of service reports regularly to directors and cabinet portfolio holders on the performance of the service. This results in sound oversight and appropriate challenge.

38.   The amalgamation of adult education and work-based learning structures has enhanced opportunities for the sharing of expertise and knowledge between the two groups of staff well. For example, adult learning programmes have benefited from the expertise in HT in responding to the needs of employers. Conversely, HT is gaining considerably from the Skills for Life section in adult learning regarding their development of functional skills. Learning environments and accommodation are of a good standard in most centres. HCC carefully

analyses information on learners' and employers' needs and uses this effectively to plan and review the service. The service meets most recruitment targets.

39. The management of the provision is coherent and managers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Operational managers from both HAES and HT collaborate on the development of common systems, and share information and practice well. Centre, curriculum and programme management are good. The service meets most of the financial and performance targets set by the funding bodies and the council. The service seeks to be inclusive and to take all learners whatever their prior qualifications.

40. Arrangements for safeguarding young people and vulnerable adult learners are good. HCC gives safeguarding a high priority and procedures are good, especially in work-based learning. A development plan for both young and adult learners contains clear action points and HCC stores Criminal Records Bureau checks on all staff appropriately on a central record. Staff carry out regular health and safety audits. All staff complete training in safeguarding with some trained in the protection of vulnerable adults. All staff are trained to recognise signs of abuse or bullying. The service has well-trained, designated safeguarding officers in local centres and good contact is maintained with regional safeguarding agencies. Learners feel highly supported and are confident in reporting concerns to the appropriate agencies quickly.

41. HCC places a particularly strong emphasis on personal safety and safe working practices. Learners feel safe and secure. They are well informed and confident enough to raise concerns. A significant minority of adult 'at-risk' learners have come forward with personal and domestic problems and have good support. Staff and learners are strongly aware of healthy and safe working. Employer safety checks are thorough. Arrangements for e-learning safeguarding are satisfactory.

42. The provider has good arrangements to manage the promotion of equality and diversity among staff, learners, employers and partners. The service implements HCC policies and its own service plan makes explicit the roles of staff for implementing policies internally. Managers disseminate guidance and information to all teachers and trainers well. A few staff attend specialist training in mental health first aid and in working with hearing impaired learners. Staff pay good attention to equality issues in workplace reviews. A review of practice showed that the service had failed to celebrate diversity sufficiently and the service is taking effective actions to address this. Learners with limited mobility have good access to accommodation and specialist facilities. More than half of all learners are from the four most disadvantaged areas in Hull.

43. HCC has a section on equality and diversity on the template for session observation but most observers' comments focus on support for individual learners rather than active promotion of equality. The provider appropriately monitors achievement by particular target groups. The service has recognised the small gaps in success rates between adult and community learning overall and those from particular groups such as learners aged under 19 in family

learning and workforce development. The service targets the recruitment of learners not traditionally involved in learning well, particularly from disadvantaged areas, and 60% of learners in 2009/10 are new to adult education. Data to monitor participation are available but not sufficiently widely used by staff. Learners' understanding of equality and diversity is mostly satisfactory or better for adult learners and good for work-based learners.

44. HCC engages well with users to promote improvement. HT engages well with employers to support and promote improvement with well-established employer groups that contribute effectively to learners' reviews and programmes. The service gives employers good information on developments through a newsletter and through regular contact with trainers and assessors. Programmes are highly responsive to feedback from employers. Good partnerships have resulted in successful developments such as the Job Shop at the BBC to address recruitment problems identified by the NHS.

45. The service uses a wider range of methods to collect learners' views through questionnaires and the 'talking wall', an open board on which learners can display their ideas and those of learner groups. An increasing number of adult learners are responding to these. HCC consults learners well on the design of the council's 'community zone' website and uses it increasingly to provide information and to address concerns. Tutors support learners well and take issues they raise seriously. HCC analyses learners' evaluations and uses them to inform course and programme reviews.

46. Arrangements to improve the quality of provision are satisfactory. The provider has systems that are increasingly effective for tackling areas for further development. HCC is making significant improvements to the quality of provision in curriculum areas in adult and community learning, in arrangements to assure the quality of teaching and learning and to maintaining the good quality of work-based learning. However, the service is making insufficient progress in improving the success rates in adult and community learning on accredited programmes that are improving but remain below national averages in 2008/09.

47. The arrangements to monitor and follow up non-attendance in adult and community learning are insufficiently rigorous. The new management information system makes it easier to monitor learners' progress and performance. However, the provider recognises the need for more extensive use of timely management information to support curriculum planning and performance monitoring by lead tutors and some staff.

48. The self-assessment process includes the views of staff, partners, learners and employers. Judgements in the report do not address the criteria of the latest inspection framework. The report is evaluative and detailed. Inspectors largely agreed with the grades awarded and most of the judgements. However, in places judgements do not take sufficient account of low success rates. In some cases national averages used as benchmarks are not sufficiently challenging.

49.   The service has thorough systems for budgetary control and financial probity. HCC gives monthly reports to the City Treasurer to verify financial trends. Operational managers now have delegated budgets, giving them more flexibility and autonomy over the use of funds. The quality and availability of resources and accommodation are good. Staff are suitably qualified and many attend professional development activities. Some have advanced specialist qualifications in areas such as Skills for Life. HCC is making increasing use of technology to support learning. Most learners are becoming more confident and develop good skills. Most with few prior qualifications make significant progress in the development of skills and knowledge.

Learning for qualifications in employment

Other learning for qualifications in employment provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: health and social care; horticulture and forestry; ICT; construction, planning and the built environment; hospitality and catering; preparation for life and work; business, administration and law.

Engineering and manufacturing technologies   Grade 2

Context

50. HCC offers apprenticeships in engineering, signwork, motor vehicle trades and transport at intermediate and advanced levels, in addition to Train to Gain intermediate level programmes in engineering. Of the 350 learners currently enrolled 227 are aged 16 to 18 and 123 are adults. There are 192 learners on advanced apprenticeships, 99 learners attending level 2 programmes and 23 Train to Gain learners.

Key findings

■ Overall and timely framework success rates on apprenticeships are good at 75% and 60% respectively. The Train to Gain programmes have 100% retention. Portfolios are of a high standard and learners enjoy their studies. They progress well from low starting points, with only 20% of learners beginning provision with GCSE English or maths at grades A* to C. Attendance is low in some classes.

■ Learners develop good workplace skills and work well in positions of responsibility where they use their own initiative well. HCC also provides a wide range of extra training and short courses for apprentices during induction including a supportive residential team-building activity to enhance employability skills. Some advanced apprentices progress well to study at level 4.

■ Learners feel very safe and have a high awareness of both safeguarding measures and health and safety. HCC places a strong emphasis on safety with all learners wearing appropriate personal protective equipment during practical sessions with regular reference to safe working practices in lessons and at work. Staff reinforce safeguarding well during workplace reviews. Apprentices benefit from a safe driving workshop.

■ Teaching and learning are good with a variety of stimulating activities that promote learners' interest. All tutors and assessors are well qualified vocationally and are good role models. Internal verification processes in the workplace ensure good consistency and accuracy. However, HCC completes too much internal verification at the end of the programme and workplace assessments are limited by tutor availability.

- HCC uses information and learning technologies (ILT) well for teaching and learning. Most classrooms have either digital projectors or smartboards, or both, that staff use to good effect to support delivery and stimulate learners' interest and interaction.

- The provision meets the needs and interests of users well with a good range of levels of provision and variety of training. Provision is highly flexible to meet employers' and partners' needs. Training is well matched to the needs of both individual learners and employers.

- Partnerships are strong and benefit learners well. In partnership with local schools and employers, HCC developed an innovative enterprise scheme. Learners design high quality items, some of which become commercial products. A good partnership with employers in the caravan manufacturing industry is creating bespoke apprenticeship programmes that help learners to develop a good range of skills to sustain employment in a difficult industry.

- Care, guidance and support are good with apprentices benefiting from a highly effective extended recruitment and induction process that involves both employers and parents well. Staff skilfully lead learners to make realistic career and programme choices. Staff are highly supportive and learners take part in regular and effective reviews. Train to Gain learners do not always have sufficient access to appropriate guidance materials.

- Leadership and management are good with staff having a clear and shared view of strategic development. The revised management structure allows sharing of good practice between departments and the observation of teaching and learning process actively promotes better practice. The self-assessment report accurately identifies strengths and areas for improvement. HCC promotes equality and diversity and safeguarding well.

- Employer groups are highly effective in discussing curriculum developments and initiatives that result in bespoke apprenticeship programmes. A good student council forum enables HCC to record learners' views and take appropriate actions to address issues quickly. Staff use annual learner survey comments well to evaluate and improve quality.

- HCC manages resources for engineering training satisfactorily with access to ILT for supporting delivery in all classrooms. Practical workshop space is limited, particularly in the joinery workshop. The range of tools and equipment is adequate.

What does Hull City Council need to do to improve further?

- Develop systems that monitor and improve learners' attendance more rigorously by identifying existing patterns and pinpointing areas of concern and targeting actions.

- Improve the use of more systematic internal verification that is implemented throughout the programme rather than weighted at the year's end.

- Increase workplace assessments, for example, through the use of more workplace assessors.

- Review practical workshop accommodation and re-allocate resources as budget priorities allow to incrementally improve provision.

Learning for qualifications

Other learning for qualifications provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: health public services and care; retail and commercial enterprise; leisure travel and tourism; arts media and publishing; languages, literature and culture; education and training; business, administration and law.

Information and communication technology   Grade 2

Context

51. A full-time curriculum manager, 1 full-time and 10 part-time teachers and a part-time support worker support 335 learners in ICT. Subjects offered include using common ICT programs and the internet, preparing business documents, web-page design, digital imagery, and rebuilding computers. They range from beginners' courses to advanced level. Learners attend one of the four main learning centres or one of the four community venues. Most learners are women, 94% are white British and 27% are aged 60 or more.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. While success rates themselves are satisfactory, a high proportion of learners make good progress from very low starting points. Of all learners, 65% live in very deprived areas, traditionally disengaged from education. In addition, 91% of all learners have no qualifications, or are below foundation level on starting. Attendance and retention are satisfactory.

- Learners enhance their employability well by obtaining well-regarded qualifications. They gain jobs because of their good skills or are able to stay in jobs that otherwise would be beyond their skills. Other learners enhance their quality of life by using computers and the internet socially for shopping and communicating with distant family and friends.

- Teaching and learning are good with bright and welcoming rooms and tutors who successfully create a relaxed atmosphere. Learners appreciate the lack of pressure and greatly enjoy their sessions. Lesson plans are clear and tutors explain lesson aims well. Tutors use questions skilfully to help learners relate new skills to previous learning and they build their skills well.

- The best practice is not adopted consistently. Some tutors use a variety of activities to maintain pace and learners in these sessions benefit from work that relates closely to their interests and personal learning goals. However, not all learners benefit from these better practices; HCC does not sufficiently promote the sharing of good practice.

- The programme meets the needs and interests of users well with a wide range of courses that provides clear progression routes from foundation to advanced level. HCC offers sessions at different times during the day, evening and at

weekends. The emphasis on computer literacy meets the local 'employability' strategy. However, some longer courses are unsuitable for the employment needs of the target group.

■ The service uses partnerships well, locating courses in organisations that share the service's aims and using visiting speakers to give sessions on practical matters like job search. The partners encourage learners to participate in activities that benefit their understanding of community initiatives. HCC works successfully with groups to attract disadvantaged learners including those with mental health difficulties, teenage mothers and disaffected young people.

■ Support and advice for current learners is good. HCC effectively identifies support needs at induction and uses this information well at any subsequent enrolment for learners. This cuts down on the duplication of both paperwork and initial assessment activities.

■ Monitoring of support for absentee learners is insufficiently effective. Most tutors contact learners only after they have been absent for three weeks. Lead tutors wait a further one or two weeks before following up. They make every effort to offer support for learners to return, such as arranging extra sessions, but are rarely successful.

■ Leadership and management are good with HCC implementing both local and national priorities well. New teachers benefit from supportive observations and development programmes. Staff development is good and has contributed to the success of recent initiatives to improve information advice and guidance, and support for English and mathematics. Managers use data well to support decisions and plan the curriculum.

■ HCC promotes equality and diversity well, with learners having a good knowledge of their rights and responsibilities. The provider reaches people with the most needs well, targeting those in areas of high deprivation, learners with low previous educational attainment, learners with mental health difficulties and disaffected young people. HCC takes action on differences in outcomes for different groups of learners appropriately.

What does Hull City Council need to do to improve further?

■ Improve support for attendance by planning how learners will catch up if they miss sessions, including by use of the new virtual learning environment and by transferring to workshop sessions. Contact absentees as soon as possible after each unexpected absence, to offer support for their return and catch up. Raise the importance of regular attendance at induction.

■ Improve the personalisation of learning by emphasising the relevance of ICT skills to learners' lives. Establish learners' personal aims in the first few weeks of courses, and negotiate assessable outcomes and target dates related to these. Negotiate intermediate targets for longer courses, such as unit completion.

Preparation for life and work   Grade 2

Context

52. Currently 694 learners are enrolled on Skills for Life literacy, numeracy and personal progress courses ranging from pre-entry to intermediate level. The majority of courses are accredited and delivered in four main centres plus libraries, community venues, schools, the probation service and workplaces. The team consists of a Skills for Life manager, two development officers, five full-time tutors, and 16 sessional tutors. In addition to community-based provision, 196 learners are on E2E programmes with separate staffing arrangements. Around 35% of learners are men and 5% are from minority ethnic communities.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Learners progress well from very low starting points although overall success rates are satisfactory. In 2008/09 success rates at intermediate level in literacy and numeracy were high. However, retention rates on the entry level programmes were low. Progression rates for E2E learners are satisfactory at 55%.

- Learners make good progress with their standard of work demonstrating good individual progress. Around two thirds of all learners come from the four most deprived wards in the city with the majority having no qualifications on starting. Many learners on the E2E programmes achieve a good range of work-related qualifications in subjects such as first aid and health and safety.

- Learners enjoy their learning programmes and increase their self-confidence and self-esteem in using mathematics and writing complex sentences well. Learners are well motivated and make good progress against their personal learning goals. They develop good literacy and numeracy skills that improve their employability prospects well. Many gain in confidence and skills to progress to further education. However, the provider does not monitor learners' progression sufficiently.

- HCC provides a particularly welcoming and friendly learning environment at the centres. Learners feel safe and have a good understanding of safety and security practices. They feel valued and respected by staff and their peers.

- Learners on E2E and personal progress courses gain a good understanding about health and well-being such as personal hygiene, parenting and cooking healthy food. Learners take part in interesting activities that benefit the wider community, for example, fundraising and voluntary work.

- Teaching and learning are good. Tutors provide very good support in lessons and inspire learners to succeed. The better sessions have good pace; tutors use a good variety of interesting activities and methods, and plan effectively to meet individual needs. Some lesson plans have insufficient detail regarding individual learning and tutors do not plan adequately to use support workers efficiently.

- Resources are satisfactory overall. Many tutors use a good range of imaginative games and well-prepared interactive materials. Worksheets and workbooks are good quality providing learners with topical, interesting and varied materials. However, in some sessions worksheets are over-used. Most tutors do not use ILT sufficiently and they have not developed enough materials that learners can access remotely.

- Learners benefit from a thorough initial and diagnostic assessment process that informs well on targets on individual learning plans. Most learners benefit from good progress records. They are clear about what they have achieved and what they need to do to progress. However, tutors do not apply this consistently across the provision and individual targets do not routinely inform lesson planning.

- The provision is highly responsive and meets the needs of learners well. HCC provides a good choice of courses at various levels and in a variety of locations. Learners value the convenience and informality of the local centres. E2E learners have a good range of vocational options from which to choose.

- Partnership working is good with HCC working effectively with statutory and voluntary agencies. This co-operative working has clear benefits for learners and the wider community. Many partnerships specifically promote social inclusion. Other successful partnerships with health services help learners extend their understanding of health issues. Staff have highly effective arrangements with local organisations to help learners progress.

- Learners benefit from particularly effective support, and advice and guidance is good. Tutors provide good individual support in classes and learners are positive about the impact in promoting their achievement. Support is particularly good for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The support workers and volunteers make a valuable contribution in the classes. Learners' induction is satisfactory.

- Curriculum management is good. Communication is good and all staff attend the regular and productive team meetings. Team-work is good and staff are well supported and informed. Tutors are well qualified with the majority holding a level 5 literacy or numeracy qualification. Arrangements for safeguarding of learners are good; the management of equality and diversity is satisfactory.

- Managers and lead tutors make much better use of data to monitor performance since the previous inspection. However, staff do not yet use data sufficiently to make improvements and do not have systems to fully engage with users to improve quality. Self-assessment and the evaluation of teaching and learning are accurate.

What does Hull City Council need to do to improve further?

- Improve monitoring of retention on entry level courses and identify retention 'hotspots' more rigorously. Establish and further develop support mechanisms to improve retention on these courses.

- Make better and more regular use of the management information system to analyse data to monitor learners' performance to further improve success rates. Establish a process to effectively collect and analyse progression data, and use it to monitor learners' destinations to make improvements to the effectiveness of the provision.

- Develop more outstanding teaching and learning that provide sufficient challenge to all learners. Plan more effectively for different learners' needs, ensuring that there is a match between individual learning targets and the lesson objectives, and planning more effectively for in-class support workers and volunteers.

- Make better and more consistent use of ILT and interactive learning materials in teaching and learning to make lessons more visual, interesting and varied, and develop virtual learning materials.

Learning for social and personal development

Other social and personal development learning provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: agriculture, horticulture and animal care; leisure, travel and tourism; arts, media and publishing; history, philosophy and theology; languages and culture; business administration and law.

Family learning   Grade 2

Context

53.   The service offers family literacy, language and numeracy programmes (FLLN), wider family learning (WFL) and family learning impact fund (FLIF) programmes in partnership with schools and children's centres. Of the 281 learners enrolled at the time of inspection 174 are on FLLN, programmes, 9 on WFL and 98 on FLIF. Most learners are women, with 5% being men, 93% are white British and most are in the 21 to 42 age group.

Key findings

■   Outcomes for learners are good overall with success rates on accredited courses being satisfactory and on non-accredited programmes being good. They achieve their personal learning goals well and develop good levels of confidence. Learners make very good progress from low starting points, with the majority of learners having no previous qualifications. A good and increasing number achieve literacy or numeracy qualifications.

■   Learners enjoy learning and develop their knowledge and skills effectively. They increase their understanding of how their children learn and how families can improve their quality of life. Learners feel very safe in learning venues and have a good knowledge of safeguarding issues. They improve their interpersonal and communication skills and interact confidently with their children's teachers and in the community.

■   Teaching and learning are good with tutors having a good knowledge of the adult and children's curriculum and using this to plan learning well. Tutors are enthusiastic, caring and are good role models for learners. Learners enjoy their sessions and use their knowledge well to support their children. Sessions are fun with a good range of teaching and learning methods.

■   Initial assessment of literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory. For learners on non-accredited provision, the recognition and recording of progress and achievement is thorough and effective. However, assessment does not always identify learning difficulties like dyslexia. The service insufficiently measures children's progress although it is planning to improve this aspect.

■   Partnerships are good with the team working closely with a wide range of schools, children's centres and voluntary organisations. They consult partners

well to ensure they design provision to match users' needs. The schools' programme is particularly good and has a good impact on the local community with many of the learners becoming volunteers in schools and children's centres.

■   The service provides satisfactory information, advice and guidance service to help learners decide their next steps. However, some learners benefit from talks with the information, advice and guidance worker only towards the end of their programme. Some learners are not aware of all the opportunities available to them.

■   Leadership and management are good. Managers have a clear expectation of high quality, responsive and learner-centred provision. The observation of teaching and learning process is thorough and managers use it well to improve the quality of provision. The team also make good use of action plans to improve quality.

■   Safeguarding arrangements are good with dedicated safeguarding officers based at all centres. Staff respond quickly and appropriately to resolve any issues. The team promotes safeguarding very well with learners and ensures all learning environments are safe. All staff are well trained in safeguarding matters. Schemes of work and lesson plans incorporate planning to ensure tutors promote safeguarding wherever possible.

■   Arrangements for promoting equality and diversity are good; the team successfully targets disadvantaged groups. Staff monitor data on outcomes for different groups of learners and take good actions to redress differences. Tutors use dual language books and actively include examples of children's rhyme from a good variety of cultures. The service's strategies to recruit men into provision, however, are currently ineffective.

■   Staff use management information well to monitor performance. Self-assessment is accurate and managers use actions plans effectively to drive performance. The team use data well to evaluate trends in achievement to improve delivery.

What does Hull City Council need to do to improve further?

■   Develop a systematic approach to initial assessment that enables tutors to identify learning difficulties at an early stage.

■   Develop a process that effectively tracks the progress of children whose parents have attended FLLN and WFL courses to determine the impact the learning has had on them.

■   Review resources, the range of provision and targeting strategies to better attract male learners.

Information about the inspection

54. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and five additional inspectors, assisted by Hull City Council's Assistant Head of Service as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding bodies, the previous inspection reports, reports from the inspectorate's monitoring visit and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.

55. Inspectors used group, individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gather the views of learners. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had completed on behalf of Hull City Council. They also visited learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subjects the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Hull City Council

Learning types: 14-16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; 16-18 Learner responsive: FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; 19+ responsive: FE full- and part-time courses; Employer responsive: Train to Gain, apprenticeships. Social and personal development: all adult safeguarded provision

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Employer responsive	Social and personal development
Approximate number of enrolled learners					
Full-time learners	2237	0	0	2237	0
Part-time learners	6447	585	2050	0	3812
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2	2	2
Capacity to improve	2				
A. Outcomes for learners	2	2	2	2	2
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2				
A1.a) How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3				
A1.b) How well do learners progress?	2				
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2				
A3. Do learners feel safe?	2				
A4. Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*	3				
A5. How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*	2				
B. Quality of provision	2	2	2	2	2
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2				
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2				
B3. How well do partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2				
B4. How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3				
C. Leadership and management	2	2	2	2	2
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2				
C2. How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*	2				
C3. How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2				
C4. How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2				
C5. How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2				
C6. How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3				
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2				

*where applicable to the type of provision