

# North Tyneside Council Adult Learning Alliance

## Local authority

<b>Inspection dates</b>		13–17 May 2013
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	<b>Good-2</b>
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

## Summary of key findings for learners

### This provider is good because:

- Learners are very successful in achieving their learning aims, especially in adult literacy and numeracy and GCSE English and mathematics. Many learners are achieving for the first time and from a low starting point.
- Learners develop a good range of useful skills that enable them to become more confident in English and mathematics, communicating and working with others and to become more effective in the workplace.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Tutors are well-qualified and passionate about their subject. They know their learners well and plan interesting and varied sessions that allow learners to produce high quality work and make good progress.
- The quality of initial assessment and assessment of learners' work is good. Tutors assess accurately learners' starting points and learners have a good awareness of the progress they make.
- Strategies to attract learners from disadvantaged backgrounds are effective. Learners from disadvantaged areas are able to attend a wide range of local and accessible courses provided by North Tyneside Council Adult Learning Alliance (NTCALA) to meet community needs.

### This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- Not enough teaching and learning is outstanding.
- The procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment do not cover learning and assessment activities outside the classroom.
- Tutors do not always effectively moderate all non-accredited courses.

## Full report

### What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Further increase the proportion of learners who successfully achieve, particularly learners who achieve within agreed timescales, by continuing to implement the quality improvement strategy.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding lessons by:
  - sharing good practice from outstanding sessions
  - ensuring that teaching, learning and assessment are well matched to individual needs and learning targets
  - increasing the use of information and learning technology (ILT) resources across the provision to broaden the range of teaching, learning and assessment activities available to all learners.
- Widen the procedures for the observation of teaching, learning and assessment to include non-classroom based learning and assessment.
- Implement internal moderation of non-accredited provision.

### Inspection judgements

<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	Good
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- Learners make good progress. Progress on some programmes is outstanding. Learners with learning disabilities and/or difficulties make excellent progress in their communication, listening and speaking skills. Tutors stretch and challenge learners effectively in most classroom sessions. Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds with little previous experience of education enjoy their learning, progress well and achieve successfully, many for the first time.
- Success rates for apprentices, family learning, modern languages and information and communication technology (ICT) are good. In adult literacy and numeracy and GCSE English and mathematics, success rates are very high and have remained high for the last three years. Success rates for workplace learners are also very high.
- Learners' work is of a high standard. Construction apprentices quickly develop a high standard of hand skills to construct doors and frames. Customer care apprentices deal with complex insurance inquiries and learners in language courses quickly acquire correct grammar and authentic pronunciation.
- Learners develop good personal, social and employability skills. This is particularly strong in family learning where the use of 'mind maps' helps learners to improve their interviewing and presentation skills. A learner with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on a works skills group has recently set up her own business. Comprehensive initial assessment helps to identify and develop learners' English and mathematical skills and many learners demonstrate the ability to work independently and in groups. Care apprentices learn the importance of becoming reflective practitioners to monitor their own performance and development.
- NTCALA focuses well on the achievement of different groups of learners and has found no significant differences in outcomes for the vast majority of learners. The 'reading and counting together' courses allows parents from hard to reach groups whose children require support, to develop their own skills so that they can help their child to make better progress in school.
- NTCALA has a good awareness of learners' progression within and between programmes of learning and has some good examples of individual progression. The service has recently appointed one of its former construction learners to a teaching post. Adults in family learning courses who achieve English and mathematics and teaching assistant qualifications become volunteers and work part-time in schools. The service has recently introduced initiatives to

further improve the collection and analysis of data. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of these developments.

### The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, with outstanding features. This correlates well with the good outcomes for learners. The service is strongly committed to promoting high standards in teaching, learning and assessment.
- The vast majority of lessons are good. In these, tutors plan a good range of activities to engage and motivate learners. They skilfully use questioning techniques to stretch and challenge learners. On construction courses, they make good use of industry standard resources to enhance the quality of learners' experience to prepare them for the workplace.
- Tutors are well qualified for their roles and understand the barriers faced by learners. They are sensitive to their needs and use effective strategies to build confidence. In mathematics sessions, tutors reinforce learning by using illustrations and examples that are familiar to learners' life experiences. In family learning, they use games innovatively to promote learning that benefits parents and children.
- Tutors plan their sessions well. This ensures a good match between teaching and learners' individual needs. In the better sessions, tutors make good use of learners' individual targets to plan learning that is specific to their needs and levels of ability. This ensures learners remain motivated during sessions and learn at a pace that is appropriate for them.
- In mathematics, modern languages and ICT sessions, tutors are particularly skilled at using a range of strategies to reduce learners' fears and anxieties. In the weaker sessions, however, tutors do not focus sufficiently on meeting individual needs.
- Learning is of a high quality. In the best sessions, tutors use a wide range of learning methods to ensure sessions are well paced and engaging. They routinely check and assess learners' understanding and progress and give constructive feedback. They also promote self- and peer-assessment to encourage learners to take responsibility for monitoring their own progress.
- Independent learning and living tutors use ILT resources well to promote interactive learning. In ICT, they use online resources effectively to support teaching and learning about health and safety. However, tutors do not use ILT sufficiently in some curriculum areas, often because resources such as interactive whiteboards are not available. The integration of mathematics and English within programmes is good in most areas.
- Learners produce high quality work during sessions and make good progress. For example, learners on English courses gain the confidence to speak in front of others and give presentations as a result of their learning. In modern languages, learners make good progress in using correct, authentic pronunciations and intonation when using their target languages.
- Learners in care reflect well on their learning. In some curriculum areas learners use learning logs effectively to review the learning and to identify gaps in their knowledge and skills.
- The overall quality of initial assessment is good. For example, in English and mathematics, tutors organise group assessment sessions which accurately identify learners' starting points, goals and interests. However, in some areas such as ICT, tutors do not always receive the results of initial assessment. This limits their ability to plan learning or organise support to meet learners' needs.
- The quality of assessment of learners' work and verbal feedback about their progress is good. Learners can articulate the progress they have made since starting their course. Tutors provide good verbal feedback to learners, which helps them to improve their learning.
- The recording of learners' achievement is broadly satisfactory. In some areas, such as modern foreign languages, tutors keep detailed records and make excellent use of individual learning plans. In other areas, such as ICT, learners on higher-level courses are not always clear about what tutors expect of them in order to achieve. The recording of progress made against specific

targets is not clear in family learning. In other areas, tutors do not always record what precisely learners need to do to improve their learning.

- Arrangements for appropriately trained staff to provide information, advice and guidance are good. Through effective partnership work with a local college, the service provides a joint prospectus for learners. This describes progression routes from non-accredited provision within the service to higher-level courses at the college. Learners also receive good guidance about self-employment and employment opportunities.
- The service promotes inclusion well. Managers and staff promote a culture of mutual respect and an environment that is free from discrimination. In some sessions, tutors maximise opportunities to promote equality and celebrate diversity. However, not enough tutors incorporate equality and diversity promotion into their lesson planning.

## ICT for users

### Community learning

#### Select from drop down list

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, which reflects the good outcomes for learners. Most teaching is at least good, and some is outstanding. Learners with little experience of computers gain greatly in confidence, learn new skills and improve the quality of understanding of an increasingly technology-based world. A very small minority of learners on higher-level courses do not make such good progress.
- Tutors provide good support and are highly sensitive to the age and anxiety levels of learners. Thorough and careful explanation of basic concepts reassures apprehensive beginners that the course is appropriate for those with no pre-existing ICT skills or knowledge. Learners learn effectively how to configure the mouse and screen so they can use the computer comfortably. Learners are highly motivated, attend whenever they can and progress well, learning how to use common desktop programs. They make good gains in confidence and consolidate learning independently, using their new skills at home, at work and in community organisations.
- Many tutors have relevant ICT related industrial experience which they use well to provide learners with high quality learning experiences. Tutors provide clear, individual short-term learning targets aligned well with both qualifications and learners' personal goals. In drop-in computer workshop sessions, tutors are aware that learners will have individual learning goals and they plan appropriate and challenging learning activities. However, in a minority of cases, on higher-level courses learners are not always clear about what tutors expect of them to achieve.
- Learners feel well supported by the constructive verbal and written feedback following assessments of their new skills development. Tutors also provide good feedback in classes, praising learners and their work and ensuring skills gained are relevant to learners' goals.
- The review of learners' progress is generally satisfactory. Managers and tutors review learners' progress systematically and have a good awareness of the progress that learners are making. However, on higher-level courses insufficient use is made of interim target dates to identify slow progress, which leads to late actions to minimise under achievement.
- Information advice and guidance is good; all learners confirmed their courses are appropriate. Initial assessment of learners is satisfactory. Learners complete an appropriate ICT skills scan assessment and declare existing qualifications, or complete literacy and numeracy diagnostic assessments to establish their individual learning needs. However, the service does not routinely communicate the results of these to tutors and a very small number of learners did not have appropriate English, or the literacy levels to use the learning resources provided, effectively.
- Learning environments are good. Computer workstations are generally appropriate though in one desks are too high for learners to work comfortably. Access to ICT courses is good with many classrooms located in areas in order to attract the hard-to-reach learners. Tutors promote

equality and diversity well through curriculum materials that challenge stereotypes, and by differentiated learning that meets individuals' needs.

**Modern foreign languages**  
**Community learning**  
**Learning programmes for 19+**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, reflecting outcomes for learners, which are also good. Teaching is good, and a significant minority is outstanding. Tutors show exemplary care and engagement when planning courses. Learners achieve good standards of spoken language. They seek and provide information and share ideas; some express themselves with real flair. Tutors in beginners' language classes emphasise correct pronunciation and intonation, and all tutors demand commitment and application from learners. However, a minority of learners find it difficult to use the target language meaningfully.
- Tutors are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and skilfully support learners in developing language competence; for example, encouraging them to use their existing knowledge and to work out new language. An Italian 'language café' brings together learners of varying abilities, who engage in lively conversation within a carefully structured framework, and in a British sign language lesson, the tutor gave an excellent range of interpretations of key signs. Tutors demonstrate excellent use of target languages, including British sign language, for classroom management and interaction.
- Lessons are lively and tutors employ a good range of strategies to ensure active participation by learners. They use resources imaginatively to enhance their teaching. However, most do not make effective use of technology to support learning, and there are missed opportunities to develop independent learning. Tutors share good practice effectively; individuals deliver training to colleagues and tutors take part in peer observations, shadowing and one-to-one coaching, which they value.
- Tutors know learners well and tailor learning to meet individual needs; they take pride in learners' achievements and celebrate their success. Learners speak appreciatively of tutors' enthusiasm, commitment and support. They enjoy learning, and are highly-motivated and keen to do well. They generally feel they are making good progress, and many progress to higher-level courses within the subject area. Procedures for evaluating learning throughout, and at the end of, a course are not the same for all programmes. However, tutors and managers standardise course aims and content to ensure comparability of provision in, for example, intermediate courses in different languages.
- All non-accredited courses include initial diagnostic assessment and tutors use this, together with learners' identified individual aims, to plan learning which meets individual needs. Tutors assess progress regularly and keep detailed records, and some make excellent use of individual learning plans to set and monitor targets, to review these targets and to involve learners in evaluating their own progress. However, this is inconsistent. Tutors give very good verbal feedback, encouragement and advice in lessons to help learners improve, although the quality of feedback on written work varies, and is not always helpful to learners.
- Pre-enrolment information is comprehensive and detailed, and enrolment staff receive a careful briefing, but advice and guidance are ineffective in a small minority of cases; subject tutors are not always involved in the process, and some learners enrol on inappropriate courses. However, end-of-course reviews are effective in enabling tutors and learners to plan suitable progression routes.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Tutors and managers use imaginative strategies to engage learners in the community and to extend learning to non-traditional groups. Examples include outreach language classes in children's centres and sheltered housing for the elderly. The use of sign language interpreters in meetings allows all tutors to participate fully. Tutors actively promote knowledge and appreciation of other countries and cultures, and encourage learners to look beyond traditional stereotypes.

**Independent living and leisure skills**  
**Foundation English and mathematics**  
**Community learning**  
**Learning programmes for 16-18**  
**Learning programmes for 19+**  
**Employability**

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, as reflected in the good outcomes for learners on English, mathematics and independent living and learning courses. Success rates on the majority of literacy and numeracy courses are well above national rates. Learners are highly motivated, attendance is good and learners receive good support to help them progress into further education, training and employment; one works skills learner has recently set up their own business.
- In the best sessions, tutors plan well and use their skills effectively to encourage learners to develop good independent learning skills. They use a good range of varied activities to promote learning and to meet the individual needs of learners. Good use is made of volunteers to support ICT skills. Most learners, who have little or no computer skills, are able to complete pie charts with inserted images chosen from the internet and change backgrounds to match the segments of the chart.
- During lively and active sessions, tutors challenge and motivate learners and build on their existing skills. Highly effective use of skilful questioning by tutors promotes and assesses learning well. Tutors use a good range of interactive and stimulating activities with well-presented resources and have high expectations of learners. For example, in a creative art class learners enjoyed improving their communication and listening skills through the effective breaking down of words into short, more manageable sounds.
- Initial assessment is a thorough process which accurately identifies learners' starting points, interests and personal goals. On English and mathematics courses tutors use the results of initial assessment productively to plan sessions and organise effective group assessment sessions. However, in a minority of independent living and learning courses, tutors do not accurately assess learners' learning goals and aims.
- Tutors routinely monitor the progress of learners and have a good knowledge of their needs. During sessions, they use a good range of strategies such as questioning and observations to assess progress. Learners are encouraged to self-assess their progress and learning. On independent living and learning courses, tutors skilfully use ILT resources to enhance learning. However, on mathematics and English courses, the use of these resources is less successful.
- Tutors provide constructive feedback to learners about their progress; learners understand what they need to do to improve their learning. Tutors generally record specific and measurable targets well in individual learning plans. These relate well to learners' personal goals. However, tutors do not sufficiently capture and record the extent of learners' progress against their targets. Individual learning plans on independent living and learning courses are not always appropriate to the learners' level of understanding.
- Learners develop good communication skills by participating in practical workshops. Learners who have impaired motor and dexterity skills, as a consequence of illness, also gain the confidence to learn how to use those skills again. In workshop settings, tutors rigorously promote health and safety. Learners develop good English, mathematics and functional skills in most classes and at a range of levels linked well to initial learning goals.
- The quality of information, advice and guidance is good. The service works productively with external organisations to provide good quality information and guidance on progression to further education, training and employment.
- Tutors promote inclusion well and learners feel supported and valued. They integrate equality and diversity learning successfully in practical workshops. For example, learners on a pottery course compared methods of producing pots in the class with processes used in small African



villages. However, tutors sometimes miss opportunities to promote equality and diversity in sessions.

## Family learning Community learning

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good, which reflects good outcomes for learners. Tutors plan lessons well to meet the needs of learners, including many who are hard to engage. Learners gain a good understanding of how their children learn English and mathematics, and how they, as parents, can help them make progress. Learners describe the boost to their confidence and self-esteem and the considerable impact that learning has had on their family. Courses to improve English and mathematics for parents whose children were below their achievement milestones have led to children making significant improvements.
- Tutors use varied and often innovative approaches to engage learners, stimulate hard work and encourage mutual support and collaborative working. Tutors introduce games which combine active learning with enjoyable activities, increasing opportunities to learn at home and improving motivation. Learners describe good acquisition of skills for themselves and their children, including social skills. In one family class, learners used word games to model considerate behaviour and consistent parenting approaches. The best tutors assess individual progress well and learners have a good understanding of targets for improvement; tutors do not record these fully in some individual learning plans.
- Tutors encourage learners to work together, promoting peer assessment and support for each other. Inspirational teaching encourages independent learning and many learners describe their excitement by topics that tutors guide them towards using web-based resources. Many learners are surprised that they can tackle topics and skills which they did not feel they could. Learners describe well how the better teaching stretches and supports them. Tutors identify many enrichment activities, including opportunities for families to attend free story-telling sessions, museum and the theatre. Individual needs and preferences are well recognised and tutors plan differentiated activities to suit aptitudes and abilities. In one course, to encourage families to share reading, parents and older siblings created particularly attractive story books built around the child's interests and images of friends and favourite items.
- Tutors and learners discuss progress and participation regularly, and agree challenging goals, although tutors do not always write these as precise targets. Tutors make good use of praise and written feedback so that learners are strongly motivated to build on progress made.
- Courses provide many varied opportunities for learners to reflect on their English, mathematics and functional skills while developing a good understanding of their children's learning. Tutors are very encouraging and signpost learners well to opportunities for progression. Additional specialist information, guidance and advice are available to learners.
- Learners appreciate good support and care from the service, schools and children's centres that enables them to overcome the many barriers to engaging with learning and then maintain regular attendance. Induction sessions and tailored initial assessments help identify individual needs for support.
- Tutors are well qualified and bring a wide range of experiences to family learning. Sessions use resources which are well chosen and well used. Many resources are adapted everyday objects which learners can copy for use at home.
- Tutors promote equality and diversity well. Learners are encouraged to respect differences and support each other very well. In a course to create reading resources, learners studied tales from different cultures and examples of books in different languages and scripts.

**The effectiveness of leadership and management****Good**

- NTCALA has developed a robust procedure that directly links the observation of teaching and learning to performance management. The service supports staff through excellent coaching opportunities. Managers agree appropriate development plans, coaching methods and re-assessment timescales and allocate a peer or manager learning coach. The service can successfully demonstrate that these positive interventions have led to clear improvements in performance.
- Learning outside the classroom, including those on the work based learning programmes and apprenticeships, which have recently moved to NTCALA, do not benefit from the robust observation process in place across the majority of the provision.
- The provider is aware that the monitoring of learners' progression is in need of improvement. It has recently introduced initiatives to improve the collection and analysis of data. However, it is too soon to judge the impact of these developments.
- The service has a rigorous self-assessment process, which involves faculty teams at all levels and takes account of the views of learners and employers. The self-assessment report is accurate. Faculty managers and their teams produce appropriate quality improvement plans that they link well to the self-assessment report and use these very effectively to drive improvement.
- The council's strategic director challenges the self-assessment process appropriately. Improvements driven through comprehensive quality improvement plans have a positive effect on the development of the provision. Scrutiny is evident through faculty meeting minutes and actions closed down as appropriate.
- On non-accredited provision, the recognising and recording of progress and achievement paperwork is comprehensive and used as part of the observation of teaching, learning and assessment process, and during course reviews. However, inconsistencies exist in the setting of challenging targets on some courses and the recording of achievements.
- NTCALA's action to provide programmes for particular groups is excellent. Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and deprived areas of the borough are able to access courses suitable for their needs which helps boost confidence and academic levels. Availability of provision is good, with a variety of learning venues based across the borough. The service reviews regularly the performance of different groups. Managers have identified that success rates for Black minority ethnic learners is low and review these regularly to ensure that the gap in attainment is closing.
- The provider promotes equality and diversity well. The service targets under-represented groups successfully. Learners from a minority ethnic background on family learning courses achieve above the level of their peers nationally. Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds achieve well.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements for all learners. The council has good arrangements for safeguarding and staff have received the appropriate training.



## Record of Main Findings (RMF)

North Tyneside Council Adult Learning Alliance							
<b>Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance:</b>  1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	<b>Overall</b>	16-18 Learning programmes	19+ Learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Other work-based learning	Employability	Community learning
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Outcomes for learners</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>The quality of teaching, learning and assessment</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
<b>ICT for users</b>	2
<b>Modern foreign languages</b>	2
<b>Independent living and leisure skills</b>	2
<b>Foundation English and mathematics</b>	2
<b>Family Learning</b>	2

## Provider details

<b>North Tyneside Council Adult Learning Alliance</b>	
<b>Type of provider</b>	Local authority
<b>Age range of learners</b>	16-18 and 19+
<b>Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year</b>	Full-time: 0
	Part-time: 6,489
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	G Haywood
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	February 2008
<b>Website address</b>	www.northtyneside.gov.uk/ala

<b>Provider information at the time of the inspection</b>								
<b>Main course or learning programme level</b>	<b>Level 1 or below</b>		<b>Level 2</b>		<b>Level 3</b>		<b>Level 4 and above</b>	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
<b>Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)</b>	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
<b>Full-time</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Part-time</b>	131	4,429	58	457	N/A	96	N/A	38
<b>Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>		<b>Advanced</b>		<b>Higher</b>			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	110	10	6	47	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Number of learners aged 14-16</b>	N/A							
<b>Number of community learners</b>	2,659							
<b>Number of employability learners</b>	727							
<b>Funding received from</b>	Skills Funding Agency (SFA) Education Funding Agency (EFA)							
<b>At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Age UK North Tyneside</li> <li>■ Connexions Tyne and Wear</li> <li>■ Justice Prince(Community Interest Company)</li> <li>■ North of England Refugee service</li> <li>■ The Real Apprenticeship Company</li> </ul>							

## Additional socio-economic information

North Tyneside ranks as the 113th most deprived area out of the 354 English local authorities; some 6% of residents live in areas considered to be among the most deprived 10% in England, while 23% live in parts considered to be among the most deprived 20%. In 2011/12 89% of school leavers achieved five or more GCSEs at A\* to C, which is slightly higher than the rate for the north east at 82% and from England at 83%. In the borough, 78% of the population are economically active compared with a Great Britain rate of 77%. Records indicate that only 4.9% of the population are from a minority ethnic group compared with the national figure of 20.2%.

## Information about this inspection

**Lead inspector**

Robert Hamp HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and six additional inspectors, assisted by the senior manager for adult learning and skills as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all of the provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across most of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012>

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