

Sheffield City Council

Local authority

Inspection dates

13–16 June 2017

Overall effectiveness			Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good	16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good	Adult learning programmes	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good	Apprenticeships	Good
Outcomes for learners	Good	Provision for learners with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Good

Summary of key findings

This is a good provider

- Sheffield City Council (SCC) provides a wide range of programmes which successfully engages learners facing the greatest challenges to participating in learning, including those from areas of the city with high levels of disadvantage.
- Learners on family learning and preparation for employment courses develop good personal skills and are prepared very effectively for their next steps in learning and employment.
- Tutors and assessors use a good range of activities which ensure that learners remain enthusiastic about their learning and make good progress.
- Support to ensure that all learners succeed is very effective, particularly for those facing multiple barriers to learning such as illness, disability, low self-esteem and deprivation.
- Specialist courses for learners with high needs are very well planned and highly effective.
- Leaders and managers ensure that partnerships with other organisations are highly effective, resulting in excellent work experience placements and good outcomes for learners.
- Leaders and managers do not do enough to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve.
- Staff do not provide learners and apprentices with consistently high levels of challenge to develop their skills effectively.
- Attendance and achievement rates on study programmes, including on English and mathematics courses, are too low.
- Governance arrangements do not include sufficiently broad membership to ensure a good level of scrutiny.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Sheffield Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities is part of the Children, Young People and Families service of Sheffield City Council. The population of the area is 569,737; 66% of residents are of working age. The employment rate is below that of Yorkshire and Humber and is the second lowest in South Yorkshire. School pupils' achievement of five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics is below the national average.
- Learning takes place in over 100 different community venues, including schools, children's centres and community buildings. The provision consists of adult skills, community learning, family learning, traineeships, 16 to 19 study programmes, courses for learners with high needs, and apprenticeships. At the time of the inspection there were no learners on the traineeship programme.
- The provider is involved in the delivery of the Skills Made Easy apprenticeships pilot programme. This provision was not in scope for inspection.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve by:
 - implementing rigorous checks on the precision of assessment of learners' progress and achievements
 - giving more helpful feedback to learners and apprentices so that they have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work
 - adopting a sharper focus during formal lesson observations on the progress made by learners.
- Make better use of initial assessment results to set challenging targets for all learners, particularly those on study programmes and adult learning courses.
- Improve the outcomes for learners on study programmes by increasing attendance in lessons, including on functional skills courses, and supporting learners to improve the accuracy of their writing.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by increasing the number of board members who are independent of the local authority, and by introducing more direct scrutiny of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers are relentless in their ambition to develop high-quality training that tackles inequalities, promotes better health and well-being, helps build a strong local and national economy, and supports communities to flourish. They are highly committed, through the provision of directly delivered and subcontracted training programmes, to ensuring that young people, adults and families have the knowledge, skills and understanding that they require to be successful.
- Managers have a very strong focus on widening participation in learning by identifying and meeting the learning needs of the most vulnerable young people and adults in the city. Learners who have not fulfilled their learning potential at school have good opportunities, through what is often described as the city's 'second chance' provision, to do so. Managers and tutors review the provision regularly to ensure that it is relevant to and fulfils the needs of learners.
- Managers provide good routes to employment for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable learners. Training centres and subcontracted providers are located in areas where provision is needed most. For example, the Sheaf training centre is located in the north-east of the city where skills levels and employment rates are low, GCSE results are the poorest in the city, and the number of young people not in education, employment or training is highest.
- Self-assessment and quality improvement planning are thorough and effective. Managers make full use of learners' views together with other relevant sources of evidence to identify strengths and areas for improvement accurately. Subcontractors receive good support and challenge which enable them to compile accurate self-assessment reports and implement effective quality improvement actions.
- Management of subcontractors is good. The commissioning process is thorough. Subcontractors' performance is monitored rigorously and reviewed each term. Partnership working with community organisations, employers, schools and other providers of post-16 education and training is strong.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. This results in tutors and learners working together successfully to prevent any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. There is zero tolerance of bullying, harassment and unfair treatment. Staff promote British values actively, and learners, including those who have arrived recently in the country, become increasingly knowledgeable about life in modern Britain.
- Managers are committed to improving the provision so that all learners have access to high-quality programmes. They ensure that staff continue to improve their effectiveness through thorough annual appraisals of their performance. However, they do not pay sufficient attention to making sure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continually improves. They give insufficient attention when observing lessons on identifying how much progress learners make.
- The process for checking the rigour of assessment of learners' progress on non-accredited courses is not robust enough. As a result, managers cannot evaluate accurately the quality of assessment or the extent to which individual learners' needs are met.

The governance of the provider

- The executive director and the elected council member have a very good understanding of the service's priorities and the importance of ensuring that they are closely aligned with those of the city council.
- Senior leaders have good arrangements for scrutiny of finance, resources and learner performance. However, they do not hold senior managers to account well enough for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. No parents, carers, learners or suitable representatives from external organisations support the executive director and the elected council member in carrying out the governance function.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding of learners and staff has a high priority in the service. All learners are introduced to safeguarding during their induction programme and alerted to the risks associated with digital and interactive technology. Staff are trained effectively to ensure that learners remain safe. Learners feel safe in the learning venues. Learners recognise signs of radicalisation and extremism and are confident in reporting them.
- Managers ensure that the vetting and recruitment of staff and subcontractors are thorough and effective. The service has a comprehensive range of safeguarding and safeguarding-related policies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Tutors and assessors have a good range of experience that they use well to motivate and encourage learners to participate and make progress. They develop positive relationships with learners and provide appropriate support to help learners overcome barriers to learning.
- Tutors and assessors use a wide range of activities that interest and motivate learners and enable them to make good progress. Tutors make very good use of digital learning technologies, particularly within adult and family learning and music courses on study programmes. Learners who are unable to attend successfully engage in lessons by accessing learning programmes remotely with support from tutors.
- The vast majority of learners and apprentices know how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve their skills further and achieve their qualifications. Staff assess learning frequently and review learners' progress effectively. As a result, most current learners are making good progress.
- Staff ensure that learners and apprentices benefit from positive learning environments and resources that help them to improve their skills and prepare well for employment or further learning. For example, learners create high-quality music in the music technology and broadcasting studio which is very well-equipped with digital software and traditional instruments. Learners in the catering kitchen prepare meals of a high standard for many customers each day.

- Tutors and assessors develop positive and constructive relationships with employers which results in good apprenticeships and stimulating work experience opportunities. Consequently, apprentices and learners develop good practical and work-related skills.
- Learners and apprentices have very positive attitudes to their learning and show respect for each other. Equality and diversity are integrated well into learning, and learners have a good understanding of the differences within modern Britain and how to respect different cultures. They learn about different faiths and cultures and discuss topical issues such as democracy.
- In adult and family learning, learners make good progress in developing their English and mathematics skills, and this enables them to become more independent in their communities. However, on study programmes progress is slower because many learners do not regularly attend their English and mathematics lessons. Tutors do not always identify common spelling punctuation and grammatical mistakes in learners' work to help them to improve their writing skills, or plan learning that is set in the context of the learners' vocational areas.
- Too often, tutors and assessors do not challenge learners to develop their skills and knowledge beyond the requirements of the qualifications. As a result, the most able learners do not routinely make the progress of which they are capable.
- Too few tutors on study programmes and adult and community learning courses plan learning that is based closely on learners' individual starting points. They often set targets that do not match individual needs, which limits learners' progress and skill development. A few tutors do not assess learning in lessons thoroughly enough. They do not check that learners have a good understanding and have developed the skills that they need to make more rapid progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- The vast majority of learners make good progress in developing their confidence and self-awareness. They are highly motivated and enthusiastic about learning, and they know what they need to do to be successful learners and employees. Learners take great pride in their work and are positive about their learning experiences. Current learners are making good progress towards achieving their qualifications.
- Learners on study programme and traineeships benefit from comprehensive, tailored and well-planned approaches to work experience. Placements enable learners to develop their work-related skills rapidly and shape their career aspirations. Adult and family learners become confident in using email and the internet, completing online forms and searching for jobs. This helps them to overcome barriers to further learning and employment.
- Apprentices and trainees develop valuable work-related skills such as reliability, showing initiative and listening carefully to instructions. They recognise the importance of these on retaining employment and becoming a valued employee. Learners with high needs successfully develop skills that enable them to live independently as many of them prepare for adulthood.
- Learners on adult and family learning courses benefit from a range of programmes that effectively promote their understanding of health and well-being. For example, in a yoga

class attended by older learners, the tutor managed exercise particularly effectively to ensure that learners used correct techniques to avoid injury.

- Learners know how to keep themselves and others safe, including how to remain safe from online bullying and cybercrime. Learners know how to raise any concerns and are confident that these will be dealt with swiftly. Learners, particularly those with high needs and apprentices, understand the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Learners acquire a good understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens of modern Britain.
- Learners demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning, and their behaviour is very good. They benefit from good access to enrichment activities such as outward-bound schemes. As a result, they acquire valuable experience which supports their personal development.
- Attendance and punctuality across most of the provision are good. However, attendance is too low on study programmes.

Outcomes for learners

Good

- The large majority of learners and apprentices complete their courses successfully and move on to higher-level courses or employment. Adult learners receive very well-targeted advice and support that improve their chances of securing long-term employment. Learners with low starting points make good progress, and many, particularly those with problems which inhibit learning, exceed their own expectations.
- Most learners on family and community learning courses achieve their learning goals and make good progress in improving their personal, social and communication skills, their self-confidence and their work-related skills. Learners attending courses in schools and children's centres gain very valuable skills, and they use these successfully to help support their children's learning and development.
- The work produced by learners and apprentices is of a good standard and, in a few cases, the standard exceeds the requirements of the qualifications. Learners on all programmes, including apprenticeships, become increasingly motivated, confident and enjoy their training.
- Since the last inspection, achievement rates for learners, particularly apprentices, have improved. The proportion of apprentices who complete their programmes within the expected period of time has been high for the last two years. The large majority of current learners make good progress on their courses and are on track to achieve within their planned timescales.
- Learners with high needs and those on traineeships achieve particularly well and many quickly develop a good range of skills and become more independent. Thorough assessment and regular reviews of progress ensure that staff identify the progress of these learners swiftly and plan their next steps effectively.
- The proportion of learners on study programmes who achieve their qualifications is too low.

Types of provision

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Sheffield City Council provides study programmes from entry level to level 3 in construction, music, hospitality and catering, and horticulture. At the time of inspection, there were 95 learners on study programmes.
- Tutors do not use strategies to assess learning in lessons well enough. They do not ask sufficiently probing questions to challenge learners to demonstrate their understanding and skills.
- Learners' attendance has improved but is still too low. Consequently, too many learners make insufficiently rapid progress, particularly in improving their English and mathematics skills. Managers have put in place robust procedures to monitor and improve attendance further but the impact of their actions is limited to date.
- Tutors do not help learners to improve the accuracy of their written English skills well enough. They do not consistently identify spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors in learners' work.
- In too many instances, tutors do not plan learning well enough to meet learners' individual needs. They do not set targets that are sufficiently tailored to enable learners to make more rapid progress. Too few tutors provide consistently helpful feedback to enable learners to improve their work. On the level 3 music programme, tutors provide innovative feedback through voice recordings overlaid on screenshots of learners' work. This helps learners to improve their work effectively.
- The requirements of the study programme are being met. Learners benefit from good learning resources in high-quality learning environments that are often of an industrial standard. These engage learners well and motivate them to learn.
- Tutors are highly experienced in their vocational areas and use their knowledge and skills well to engage learners and prepare them for work in a professional environment. For example, in music, tutors develop skills that will help learners to plan for owning their own business and to budget their spending effectively. Learners develop good entrepreneurial skills to prepare them for the world of work.
- Learners access high-quality work experience as part of their study programmes and other purposeful work-related activity including workplace visits, trade fairs, commercial projects and charitable work. For example, in construction, excellent relationships have been developed with prestigious local and national employers which enable study programme learners to develop a thorough understanding of the requirements for working in the construction industry.
- Effective advice and guidance help learners to develop good work-related skills and plan for their next steps. They improve their skills in preparing for and attending job interviews. Learners benefit from an enrichment programme that provides them with useful additional learning opportunities. For example, learners in construction gain authorisation under the Construction Skills Certification Scheme to access construction sites.

- Learners enjoy their courses and demonstrate a positive attitude to learning. They develop good practical skills in construction, music, catering and horticulture which prepare them for the world of work. For example, construction learners develop a wide range of skills in addition to their vocational area; bricklayers develop simple joinery techniques as requested by employers.
- Learners have a good understanding of British values and life as a citizen in modern Britain. They feel safe and recognise what they need to do to if they have any concerns including from the risks of online bullying. Learners have a good understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Adult learning programmes

Good

- There are currently 2,344 learners studying on adult learning programmes of whom 486 are on family learning courses. Managers carefully plan learning provision that successfully meets the specific needs of different community groups and local priorities. They use a wide range of community venues across disadvantaged parts of the city. Consequently, adults who have significant barriers to learning and employment can take their first steps back into learning easily.
- Learners who attend family learning courses increase their understanding of school curricula while improving their language skills. As a result, they become more confident in supporting their children’s learning and development. In community learning, learners improve their personal, social and employability skills, which enables them to participate more fully in their local communities.
- Tutors provide good information, advice and guidance for learners. Tutors routinely take time towards the end of courses to ensure that learners are aware of the opportunities for further learning and employment. Opportunities for further study both within the service and at other providers are explored fully. Learners seeking employment receive impartial guidance on local employment opportunities.
- Tutors promote equality and diversity effectively by sensitively covering relevant and current topics in lessons. Learners show good levels of respect for others and collaborate successfully in lessons. For example, tutors relate learning to recent news items and discuss the impact that topical issues have on learners’ communities.
- Learners feel safe and value the good security arrangements in community venues. They know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet. Learners have a clear understanding of how to report any concerns that they may have and are confident that these will be dealt with swiftly. Learners know how to protect themselves from the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- In most adult and community learning lessons, tutors frequently check on learning and understanding. As a result, learners have a clear awareness of the progress that they are making towards achievement of the objectives set for the lesson. However, in family learning this is less effective because tutors do not routinely evaluate whether learning has taken place. For example, teachers often ask questions to which only the more confident learners respond. Consequently, tutors are unable to evaluate how much

learning has taken place for all members of the group and whether individuals are making progress.

- In too many lessons tutors do not take into account each learner's starting point when planning learning and assessment. They do not use assessments from the start of the programme effectively to plan learning activities that closely match the wide range of needs and abilities within the group. Too many tutors do not sufficiently challenge the most able learners to work to their full potential and make rapid progress.
- The process for checking the rigour of final assessment on non-accredited courses is not sufficiently robust. As a result, managers cannot accurately evaluate the effectiveness and performance of these courses in meeting individual learner needs.

Apprenticeships

Good

- There are a total of 200 apprentices, of whom 164 are on intermediate-level programmes and 36 are on advanced-level programmes. Almost one third of apprentices are employed by SCC. Apprenticeships are provided in construction, business administration, hospitality and catering, and health and social care. Since the last inspection, apprenticeship provision has grown significantly. The provision meets fully the principles and requirements for apprenticeships.
- Enthusiastic and supportive tutors and assessors use their good vocational experience and skills successfully to ensure that apprentices are motivated and make good progress. As a result, apprentices develop increased confidence and improve their medium- and long-term employment prospects. Most apprentices are on target to achieve their qualifications within planned timescales.
- Apprentices develop a good range of work-related skills, including digital skills. For example, business administration apprentices learn how to use event-booking tools as part of their role and take on additional responsibility for paying wages using payroll software. The large majority of apprentices improve their English and mathematics skills during off-the-job training, and achieve their qualifications.
- Apprentices benefit from good off-the-job training. For example, carpentry apprentices attend the very well-equipped construction training centre one day a week and receive detailed demonstrations on relevant technical work skills, such as measuring, marking and cutting joints.
- Employers work very effectively with tutors and assessors to plan and review apprenticeship programmes and to monitor the progress that each apprentice is making. They value the significant contribution that apprentices make to their businesses. The large majority of apprentices gain additional qualifications offered by their employers, such as food hygiene certificates, and by attending 'in-house' training courses.
- Apprentices attend sessions regularly, and they demonstrate good levels of respect for their peers and their assessors. They have a good understanding of British values, such as democracy. Tutors and assessors ensure that apprentices recognise the importance of diversity during reviews. For example, apprentices discuss various religious events such as Ramadan and how this can affect people in the workplace.
- Almost all apprentices produce a good standard of work. They show mature attitudes to their learning, arrive at sessions ready and eager to learn, and demonstrate the progress

they have made between sessions. Apprentices extend their learning by visiting large employers and attending trade shows.

- Assessors use listening and questioning skills very well to assess and develop learners' understanding of topics identified during discussions. However, in a few instances, targets set at review sessions are not sufficiently well recorded and do not meet apprentices' personal and social development needs.

Provision for learners with high needs

Good

- There are 80 learners with high needs including severe and complex learning difficulties and disabilities. Almost all learners study on entry-level independent living programmes which are designed specifically to meet their individual needs.
- Tutors have high expectations of their learners and develop good working relationships with external partners. These ensure that learners make good progress from their starting points and achieve their qualifications.
- Staff make good use of funding to provide very effective support, specialist facilities and equipment for learners with autism or more complex needs. As a result, the majority of learners progress onto higher levels of learning and become more independent, reducing their need for support in lessons.
- The large majority of current learners work successfully in group and individual sessions to develop new skills and understanding. Learners contribute well during stimulating activities and make good use of a wide range of excellent specialist resources such as assistive technology which enable them to progress well.
- Attendance and punctuality are good, and learners achieve their core learning aims well. Learners take pride in their work and respond very well to staff requests and expectations.
- Learners enjoy and participate well in their programmes and in the very wide range of stimulating enrichment activities. This helps them to develop a good range of practical skills, such as speaking more clearly, listening to instructions, preparing meals and budgeting for living independently. Learners enjoy participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and taking trips on public transport to local shops. A high proportion of learners gain good vocational skills in subjects such as hospitality and catering, and music technology.
- Tutors and support staff provide highly effective care and work very successfully with health and social care partners and with parents and guardians to provide effective support. Partners include speech and language therapists, counsellors, and mental health and sensory inclusion teams.
- Staff provide highly effective advice and guidance to help learners to understand their options for progression. Learners quickly settle into their new courses and learning environments. This ensures that they build their self-confidence and improve their personal and social skills and well-being.
- Managers have been highly effective in matching the curriculum to local priorities. The Sheaf training centre provides a wide range of programmes and facilities to help learners manage their behaviour and anxieties, achieve their goals, and develop confidence and

independence. Learners progress well through a good range of vocational pathways, some of which are delivered in partnership with other local training providers and colleges.

- Learners feel safe. They behave well, respect others and understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They value the very good support they receive from the staff and thrive in the highly inclusive learning environments. Learners and staff hold useful discussions about current affairs which help learners to gain a better understanding of the world and the local environment.
- All learners benefit from worthwhile work experience in good environments such as supported internships, busy commercial kitchens and through running a local radio station. Several learners gain very useful experience of horticulture, and use the excellent resources to grow flowers and vegetables.
- Staff conduct accurate and very detailed assessments of learners' starting points and progress during lessons. However, information gathered during learners' progress reviews is not used consistently well for setting new targets. A few tutors set targets for learners that are not specific or measurable and, as a result, a minority of learners have insufficiently clear guidance on how they can improve their work or achieve higher grades.

Provider details

Unique reference number	54349
Type of provider	Local authority
Age range of learners	16+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	5,334
Principal/CEO	Dee Desgranges
Telephone number	01142 667 503
Website	www.sheffield.gov.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	55	2,133	15	132	27	37	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	82	82	10	26	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	75							
Funding received from:	Education and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Aspiring Communities Together SAVTE Heeley Development Trust Reach South Sheffield Learn for Life Enterprise Ltd Woodhouse Community Forum SOAR Manor Training and Resource Centre (MATREC)							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the service director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

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