

Inspection of Kirklees Council Adult and Community Learning

Inspection dates:

25–27 September 2019

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Information about this provider

Kirklees council's adult and community learning service provides adult learning programmes in disadvantaged communities. The large majority of courses are non-accredited and focus on four key themes that are aligned to the council's strategic aims; these are volunteering, personal development, family learning, and digital inclusion and information and communication technology (ICT).

At the time of the inspection, there were 62 adult learners on the programmes. Almost half of the learners were following personal development or family learning programmes. There were 10 learners on a digital inclusion and ICT course and a small group of learners on volunteering programmes. Provision is jointly managed by leaders and managers in the learning and early support and economy and infrastructure departments of the council, and is delivered through a network of eight subcontractors.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Learners successfully develop confidence and resilience through their programme. Learners who previously felt isolated and lacking in confidence develop their communication skills as a result of the social interaction that the courses provide. The courses help many learners to improve their mental health and well-being.

Learners attend regularly, arrive on time and are ready to learn, quickly engaging in their training sessions. They take pride in their learning and demonstrate positive attitudes by recognising their own and other learners' achievements. Learners work very well with people from a diverse range of backgrounds. Tutors cultivate an inclusive environment and learners demonstrate high levels of respect and tolerance.

Learners feel safe in their learning environment and have a good understanding of how to stay safe in the community in which they live. They know how to protect themselves from risks posed by extremist groups, both face-to-face and online. Learners value the care and support from their tutors because it encourages them to challenge themselves and push boundaries. As a result, learners develop a broad range of personal and social skills, and they gain greater independence.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and managers have high expectations for what their learners can achieve. Many learners have a poor previous experience of education, little employment history, and well-being issues; the adult and community learning service often provides them with their first positive experience of education.

Leaders and managers work successfully with local stakeholders and subcontractors to plan programmes that make effective use of the community learning fund to promote social inclusion. The adult and community learning service successfully meet the council's goal of raising aspirations through lifelong learning.

Tutors assess learners' starting points effectively and use this information well to plan learning. They structure sessions appropriately to allow time for learners to recap their knowledge and build on what they know. Tutors successfully assess the development of learners' skills and use this information to tailor what they deliver in the next session. For example, learners in ICT classes who master the use of the mouse go on to practise using 'drag and drop'; this enables them to organise their computer files.

Tutors plan and teach courses that enable learners, including those with additional needs, to develop new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Tutors support learners to consolidate what they already know and use their new knowledge to perform more complex tasks. For example, learners on paediatric first aid courses develop an understanding of what a defibrillator is and how and when to use it. They apply this knowledge effectively when determining how they will use it with babies, children and adults.

Tutors successfully enhance the programmes that they deliver by drawing on topical issues. They encourage learners to participate actively in discussions about topics that affect their community and the country. For example, learners discuss recent parliamentary events to develop further their understanding of democracy and the rule of law. Consequently, learners develop a better understanding of the world in which they live and are able to play a more active role in society.

Tutors focus on developing the core skills that learners need in order to succeed in their next steps. As a result, learners improve their self-esteem, develop new interests and demonstrate an eagerness to improve their lives further. For example, at the end of their course, learners on accredited programmes perform in a drama production at local schools. The production is linked closely with the school curriculum on citizenship and helps to tackle misconceptions about older people among school children. Learners make positive contributions to the education of children in their local community.

Learners benefit from access to impartial careers advice and guidance delivered by careers experts. Tutors work effectively with learners to identify their aspirations, and careers advisers use this information to provide bespoke advice that helps learners to make informed choices about their next steps.

Leaders and managers use their knowledge of the quality of education to inform the planning of professional development activities for staff. Managers provide the opportunity for tutors to work with their peers to learn from each other and develop their teaching practice. Tutors benefit from very effective training that develops their knowledge on key issues affecting their learners. For example, a specialist practitioner delivered mental health awareness training for tutors in response to the growing number of learners presenting with mental health concerns.

Managers are mindful of workload, and staff rightly value the support that they receive to enable them to deliver programmes that meet learners' needs. Managers listen to staff and involve them in the design and planning of the curriculum. Staff feel valued and find their work rewarding.

Governors have clear strategic oversight of adult and community learning. They are well connected locally and they successfully draw on their knowledge of the district to influence the purpose of the provision. They challenge leaders and managers and hold them to account for the performance of the adult and community learning provision. However, information that they receive about the quality of education does not fully identify all of the actions required to make improvements.

Leaders and managers monitor the destinations of learners after completing their courses. However, they do not fully analyse the breadth of learners' destinations or evaluate the development of learners' broader knowledge and skills to determine the progress that learners have made from their starting points. As a result, leaders and managers are unable to measure fully the impact that their provision has on the lives of learners or how well the courses prepare learners for their chosen next

steps.

A few tutors do not correct learners' misunderstandings sufficiently or provide guidance on what learners need to do to improve their knowledge and skills. For a small minority of learners, this means that their course does not challenge them sufficiently to understand the subject content or encourage them to apply their skills more effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers follow safe recruitment practice and ensure that staff and volunteers who work with adult learners are safe to do so. Managers regularly review policies and procedures to ensure that they meet statutory requirements and fully reflect local risks.

Leaders and managers have a proactive approach to keeping learners safe from the risks posed by radicalisation and extremism. They work positively with specialist agencies to provide high-quality training to managers and staff on pertinent issues such as gang and knife crime and online safety. As a result, tutors have developed expertise in the delivery of learning activities that improve learners' knowledge and understanding of current risks in their community and how to manage them.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Identify how successfully courses result in learners moving into further learning, volunteering or employment and what impact the courses have on learners' everyday lives and the community in which they live.
- Measure fully learners' progress from their starting points in the development of new knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Support tutors to identify and correct learners' misunderstandings in sessions and in their work by ensuring that they provide constructive feedback to learners that helps them to improve their understanding and application of their skills.

Provider details

Unique reference number	52870
Address	Kirkgate Buildings Byram Street Huddersfield HD1 1BY
Contact number	01484 221000
Website	www.kirklees.gov.uk
Principal/CEO	Jeanette Palmer
Provider type	Local authority
Date of previous inspection	25 November 2013
Main subcontractors	Crosland Moor Community Learning Centre Fusion Housing Kirklees Ltd Kirklees Success Centre Paddock Community Trust Proper Job Theatre Company S&H Training and Development (UK) Ltd The Workers' Educational Association Sport Works Yorkshire Ltd

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the acting head of service, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

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