

INSPECTION REPORT

Warwickshire LEA

30 April 2004



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

Warwickshire LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Warwickshire Local Education Authority (the LEA) is contracted by Coventry and Warwickshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide adult and community learning services to rural and urban communities across Warwickshire. The LEA's community education service (the service) is a combined youth and community service and is part of the education directorate of Warwickshire County Council (the council). The LEA's main strategic objective for adult learning is to encourage opportunities for personal and community development and the participation of all members of the community in lifelong learning.

2. The service is responsible for the direct delivery of information and communication technology (ICT), literacy, numeracy, family learning and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses. Most of this provision is non-accredited and is aimed at new learners and those from disadvantaged groups in the local community who are taking their first steps back into learning. In addition, the service operates an affiliation process which enables community groups and voluntary organisations to bid for funds to support community learning and development projects. Two local general further education colleges are also contracted to provide sport and leisure and visual and performing arts courses.

3. The service is managed by the assistant county education officer. He reports to the county education officer and works with the service's lifelong learning officer, five area community education officers and three curriculum co-ordinators to plan and deliver the provision. The area community education officers manage a team of 80 staff which includes four adult and community learning co-ordinators, a deputy area officer, 10 adult and community learning development workers, 12 widening participation workers, five family learning participation workers and 39 part-time tutors.

4. Warwickshire contains some affluent areas, most of which are situated in the south of the county, and a number of areas of significant deprivation. Two wards in the Nuneaton and Bedworth area are among the top 10 per cent of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. However, Warwickshire has a number of economic strengths, including a low rate of unemployment. According to the 2001 census, 4.4 per cent of the county's population is from minority ethnic groups, compared with 9.1 per cent of the population nationally. In 2002-03, approximately 4 per cent of adults in the county took part in some sort of learning activity that was either delivered or supported by the council.

5. Courses take place in more than 50 venues across the county, including local schools, general further education colleges, community halls, family centres and eight UK online centres. The service does not own any purpose-built premises for adult and community learning. Courses range from drop-in sessions for individual learners to programmes lasting a full academic year. In 2002-03, just under a quarter of learners were men, which is in line with the national average, and 41 per cent were aged over 60. Seventeen per

cent of learners were from minority ethnic groups.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Information & communications technology

6. During 2002-03, just over 1,000 learners enrolled on ICT programmes. At the time of the inspection, 867 learners were studying on 63 courses throughout Warwickshire. Almost all the provision is non-accredited and is aimed at beginners. Courses range from individual drop-in sessions to group programmes which run for six to 10 weeks. They are held during the day and in the evening, at 61 venues including eight UK online centres, community centres, primary and secondary schools, and libraries. The service uses laptop computers in centres which have no existing information technology facilities. Most learners are women, and over 60 per cent are aged over 60. Three full-time tutors and 12 other staff teach courses in this curriculum area, assisted by an ICT curriculum co-ordinator.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

7. The LEA currently funds two local general further education colleges to provide sport and leisure courses to learners who attract concessionary fees. From September 2003 to the time of the inspection, just over 360 learners enrolled on sport and leisure courses at four colleges. Two of these colleges no longer hold contracts with the LEA. At the time of the inspection, 132 learners were studying on 24 courses including keep fit, yoga, tai chi, badminton and bridge. All learners are enrolled on non-accredited programmes, and most courses run for two hours a week, for 10 weeks, during the evening. Courses are offered at a variety of venues including the colleges' main sites, primary and secondary schools, church and village halls, and community centres. Eighty per cent of learners are women, and almost the same proportion is aged over 60. The courses are taught by part-time tutors who teach for between three and six hours a week.

Visual & performing arts & media

8. The LEA currently funds two local general further education colleges to offer non-accredited visual and performing arts courses to learners who attract concessionary fees. It also runs its own provision in local communities throughout Warwickshire, aimed at adults who are taking their first steps back into learning. From September 2003 to the time of the inspection, 546 learners enrolled on courses including upholstery, soft furnishing, dressmaking, pottery, watercolour painting and puppet making. Most classes at the two colleges last for two hours a week and run for 10 weeks. They take place during the daytime and evening. Community programmes which incorporate visual and performing arts run at a variety of times to suit the needs of learners. At the time of the inspection, 424 learners were following visual and performing arts courses. Almost 65 per cent of learners are aged over 60, and 83 per cent of learners are women. Courses take place at the main college sites, community centres, primary and secondary schools, and church halls. Both subcontracted colleges have managers responsible for this area of learning, and most teaching staff are part time.

Foundation programmes

9. At the time of the inspection, 122 learners were following foundation programmes in literacy and numeracy, with a further 37 learners enrolled on ESOL courses. This area of learning accounts for almost 20 per cent of the service's provision. Courses operate during the day and the evenings, and include drop-in and workshops sessions for individual learners. They can join literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses at any time throughout the year, and usually attend learning sessions for between one and three hours each week. Most literacy and numeracy courses are offered from pre-entry to level 1, and 19 learners are working towards qualifications at entry level 3 and level 1. Thirty per cent of learners are men and 30 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Forty per cent have a learning difficulty or disability. Learners are enrolled onto programmes by the service's adult and community learning development workers, who work in partnership with a range of external agencies including the probation service and social services. Fourteen tutors teach the courses in this curriculum area, supported by an essential skills curriculum co-ordinator.

Family learning

10. The LEA provides LSC-funded family literacy, numeracy and language programmes and projects for wider family learning which are aimed at new learners and those from disadvantaged groups in the local communities. Classes take place at a number of venues including primary and secondary schools, libraries, and community centres. Many courses are run in partnership with organisations including health trusts, schools, the youth service, and a range of voluntary and community organisations. Examples of courses offered include family literacy and numeracy, first aid, reminiscence with families, handling children's behaviour and ICT for families. In 2002-03, 1,064 learners enrolled on a combination of accredited and non-accredited family learning courses, and 201 learners have enrolled so far in 2003-04. Almost all are women, and 7 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. A family learning co-ordinator and five family learning participation workers manage the provision.

Community development

11. The service has operated in partnership with the voluntary sector to develop community projects for many years, and views this as an important means of maintaining community infrastructure and developing social capital. Many community development projects have been running for more than five years. Community development provision is concentrated in the most deprived wards and neighbourhoods in the south and north of the county. Provision is funded through the LSC and external sources such as the Single Regeneration Budget and European Social Fund. Eighty-two learners are currently involved in projects. Adult and community learning development workers and widening participation workers are based in the five areas of the county and collaborate with a range of partners to develop provision in local communities. Their role is to develop the capacity of local project management committees to design and implement projects and learning activities which will meet the needs of their communities. Many of the members of the management committees have taken part in previous projects and training. Projects take account of the concerns of young people, as well as adults.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	12
Number of inspection days	87
Number of learner interviews	267
Number of staff interviews	140
Number of subcontractor interviews	10
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	47
Number of partner/external agency interviews	56

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

12. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the LEA's leadership and management are satisfactory. Its approach to equality of opportunity is good, but its arrangements for quality assurance are unsatisfactory. Provision is good in family learning and community development and satisfactory in ICT, visual and performing arts, and foundation programmes. Sport and leisure provision is unsatisfactory.

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Leadership and management	3
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	2
Quality assurance	4

Information & communications technology	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	4
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	4

Visual & performing arts & media	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Family learning	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

Community development	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

13. **Learners develop good basic ICT skills.** Many learners are new to ICT and say the courses have a significant effect on their lives, often in a short period of time. They develop new skills in word processing, constructing charts and graphs, and using the internet and e-mail. Some learners progress onto courses leading to qualifications at their local college. Retention rates are good. In 2003-04 so far, the retention rate is 97 per cent.

14. **Retention rates on sport and leisure courses are good,** averaging over 90 per cent on most courses. Most learners demonstrate appropriate practical skills and the use of technical language. Those interviewed appreciate the positive psychological and physical benefits achieved through classes such as yoga and tai chi. However, some fitness programmes have long periods of inactivity during the school holidays when classes do not run, and learners' progress is restricted.

15. **Many visual and performing art learners gain significant personal enrichment.** Community arts and crafts projects provide learners with new skills and insights into subjects such as home decoration. Exhibitions are used to help learners develop their self-confidence and critical awareness, and the service makes good use of awards evenings, sales and open days to promote learners' work to the local media. Some learners say that the courses have been a life-changing experience.

16. **Most learners on literacy, numeracy and language courses are successful in achieving their personal learning goals.** They develop effective literacy and numeracy skills and improve their self-confidence and self-esteem. They apply these skills outside the classroom in their everyday lives. The atmosphere observed in most classes was supportive and welcoming. Few learners are following courses which lead to a qualification.

17. Learners on family learning programmes develop good skills to support parents and children's learning. Parents can identify improvements in their relationships with their children and school teachers as a result of attending courses. Programmes enable learners to gain positive experiences of education, and parents spend more time helping their children with homework. Learners develop their confidence to speak in front of groups of learners, and value the opportunity to make new friends. **Retention rates on family learning courses are very good**, with over 90 per cent of the learners starting programmes in September 2003 still in attendance at the time of the inspection.

18. Local learners involved in community development projects develop useful skills, including problem-solving, writing policies and procedures, managing budgets and submitting planning applications. Many learners interviewed value the increase in their self-confidence and enjoy being able to make decisions which benefit their local communities. Some progress into further education and training.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Information & communications technology	0	3	8	10	0	0	0	21
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	0	4	5	1	0	0	10
Visual & performing arts & media	0	1	5	5	0	0	0	11
Foundation programmes	1	2	4	4	1	1	0	13
Family learning	0	2	5	0	1	0	0	8
Community development	0	1	3	2	1	0	0	7
Total	1	9	29	26	4	1	0	70

19. The monitoring and recording of learners' progress on ICT courses are good. Tutors keep detailed records of the work completed by learners each week, and learners can quickly assess the progress they are making.

20. The service makes good use of a wide range of venues to successfully take ICT learning into local communities. Learners interviewed value being able to attend classes close to their homes, and classes are run at times which suit them. Laptop computers are used to teach courses in venues where computing facilities are not available.

21. The standards of teaching and learning in ICT are satisfactory. In the best classes observed, tutors use a variety of teaching methods and make good use of handouts. Computer hardware and software are up to date and reflect the standards of equipment used in industry. Most centres provide internet access and learners can use colour printers, scanners and, in some cases, digital cameras. Learners are given appropriate support by tutors.

22. The service does not use appropriate methods to identify whether ICT learners

require any additional literacy support. Learners are embarrassed by being asked questions about their prior achievements in front of other learners. Some tutors do not know how to obtain additional support for learners.

23. The standard of accommodation used for most sport and leisure courses is good. Classrooms are spacious, well decorated and brightly lit. Specialist equipment is used by learners in all classes. Venues are located throughout the county on main transport routes and are easily accessible to learners.

24. A narrow range of teaching methods is used in most sport and leisure classes. Tutors frequently stand at the front of the class giving instructions and demonstrations without involving learners sufficiently in the activities taking place. In the better classes observed, tutors demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject and have high levels of technical expertise.

25. The LEA does not ensure that the subcontracted colleges carry out sufficient monitoring and recording of sport and leisure learners' progress. Many learners are not asked about their individual goals or why they want to attend classes. Although some tutors have a good understanding of the progress learners are making, many do not keep satisfactory written records.

26. The induction process for sport and leisure learners is weak. The LEA does not check that all learners receive an induction on joining a new course. Health checks are not always carried out with learners. Pastoral support for learners is satisfactory, and those interviewed value the caring and supportive approach of tutors.

27. A wide range of good resources is available for visual and performing arts learners. Learners value the spacious classrooms, which are bright and welcoming, and good specialist equipment is available at many venues. Classes are held throughout the county in locations which are easily accessible to local residents. Tutors are well qualified and experienced.

28. Tutors provide good support for learners on visual and performing arts courses, particularly those that are held in community venues. They help learners with practical problems and often work with them outside their normal teaching hours.

29. The standards of teaching and learning on visual and performing arts courses are satisfactory. In the better classes observed, tutors make good use of learning materials and demonstrations are accompanied by informative explanations and group discussions. Relationships between tutors and learners are good. However, in some classes, a narrow range of teaching methods is used, with learners copying from photographs or using materials in a very traditional manner.

30. In literacy, numeracy and language, the service has productive working relationships with a wide range of organisations. Learners from a broad range of groups and communities are encouraged to participate in courses. Different types of learners are attracted to different locations and types of courses, including individual drop-in sessions,

workshops and group classes.

31. **Literacy, numeracy and language learners are supported well by their tutors.** Tutors work closely with learners to identify appropriate progression routes, and learners' achievements are celebrated through in-house certificates, awards ceremonies and good media coverage.

32. Teaching and learning standards on literacy, numeracy and language courses are satisfactory. **However, tutors do not place sufficient focus on meeting learners' individual needs in those classes graded as satisfactory or worse.**

33. **The initial assessment process used to identify learners' literacy, numeracy and language needs is ineffective.** Tutors do not clearly identify learners' abilities, or a starting point from which they can progress. Staff carry out sensitive individual discussions with some learners to establish their previous achievements, but this information is not always used to plan their learning.

34. **Standards of teaching and learning on family learning programmes are good.** Courses are planned well with clear aims. Tutors use imaginative activities to ensure that all learners take an active part in classes, and make good use of everyday objects that learners can relate to. Most parents say that this is their first experience of learning as an enjoyable activity, and they feel more confident about their ability to learn.

35. **Learners are supported well on family learning programmes.** Well-run crèches are available at most venues and these enable learners with children to access courses. Learners interviewed value the supportive relationships they develop with tutors. They are encouraged to ask questions about the content of courses, and future career development.

36. **The accommodation in most centres used for family learning is good.** All venues are within easy reach of public transport routes and are furnished to meet the needs of adults and children. Classrooms are well lit, spacious and comfortable, with good-quality furnishings. Many venues have access to ICT facilities.

37. **The recording of learners' progress is insufficiently detailed on family learning courses.** Individual learning plans agreed with learners focus on the content of the course, rather than individuals' goals.

38. **Community development partnerships are particularly effective.** Community education staff work with a wide range of organisations to develop innovative and successful community development projects throughout the county. Projects often incorporate imaginative courses for local residents. Examples include building a robot, circus skills, sewing for the blind and healthy eating on a budget. Many projects have been successful in creating better relationships between different groups in local communities, and promoting increased understanding and tolerance amongst residents. **However, the service does not sufficiently analyse the overall effect of its community development projects across Warwickshire.**

Leadership and management

39. **Inadequate attention is given to health and safety issues on many ICT courses.**

Learners receive too few reminders about the importance of health and safety, and insufficient attention is paid by tutors to correcting poor practices at the beginning of new courses.

40. **The planning of some aspects of the ICT curriculum is inadequate.** No arrangements currently exist to offer courses leading to qualifications. Some staff lack more advanced ICT skills to enable them to teach intermediate level courses. No clear strategic plan is in place to guide the management and development of ICT courses.

41. **The service's management of sport and leisure, and visual and performing arts courses in the subcontracted colleges is poor.** Communications are poor, and the sharing of management information is inadequate. The service is not involved in planning the curriculum for these subjects, and the colleges do not actively promote the types of courses which will attract those under-represented groups of learners targeted by the LEA. The service does not employ anyone with curriculum expertise in a management role in these two areas of its provision.

42. **Good recent improvements have been made in the management of the literacy, numeracy, and ESOL programmes** with effective curriculum co-ordination. Staff development is good and staff share good practice and success stories at frequent and purposeful meetings.

43. **The LEA has a clear vision of the contribution of adult and community learning to the council's strategic objectives,** and makes a priority of adult learning at all levels of the organisation. It places particular emphasis on the needs of adult learners with few or no qualifications. Senior managers have a good understanding of adult and community learning and talk knowledgeably about the importance of learning to the social regeneration of communities throughout Warwickshire.

44. **The service works very effectively with a wide range of internal and external partners to offer learning opportunities to adults.** These partnership arrangements operate at all levels throughout the service and demonstrate a strong commitment to partnership working.

45. **The service's approach to lifelong learning through the use of community development projects is very effective.** The service has a clear focus on providing learning for those groups of adults in areas of urban and rural deprivation in most need of support.

46. The service clearly recognises the importance of helping learners with any additional literacy, numeracy or language needs. Many courses are imaginatively titled to encourage learners into a non-threatening environment to improve their literacy, numeracy and language skills.

47. **The current management structures do not effectively support the operation of the adult and community learning programmes.** The central team which has responsibility for curriculum management and planning and quality assurance does not have any line management responsibility for the five area community education teams. The progress of planned improvements to the adult and community learning provision is restricted, as is the implementation of important changes.

48. **Management information systems are weak,** and the analysis and use of data to assist planning and target-setting are poor. Data are often unreliable and cannot be used appropriately to improve the quality of the adult and community learning provision.

49. **The service takes effective action to recruit new and under-represented groups of learners.** All staff devote a significant amount of their time to developing and running courses and projects for these groups, and they have an excellent knowledge of the local communities in which they work. Staff demonstrate considerable experience and sensitivity in working with local communities, and learners are strongly encouraged and supported by the service to develop activities and plan their own learning.

50. The service has a satisfactory equal opportunities policy and a draft disability equality policy. Learners with restricted mobility have satisfactory access to the wide range of community venues. Staff complete a comprehensive audit of the suitability of accommodation before any venue is used for adult and community learning.

51. **The arrangements to assure the quality of teaching and learning on adult and community learning courses are inadequate.** The service is making some progress towards developing systematic quality assurance procedures which are appropriate for the many small subcontracted providers it funds. However, the service does not have an overall quality assurance schedule which shows clearly how quality assurance activities fit together. Procedures to review courses and the curriculum are inadequate, and the service does not make suitable arrangements for staff to meet and discuss quality concerns and improvements.

52. The service's self-assessment process is insufficiently thorough. The most recent report does not include any evaluation of key parts of the provision. Staff in some parts of the service are not involved enough in self-assessment activities. External partners, subcontracted providers and learners are not asked for their views. Insufficient emphasis is placed on the significance of learners' attainment and the quality of teaching and learning. Inspectors found the self-assessment report's grades to be accurate in most areas.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good strategic focus on adult and community learning

- very effective and productive partnerships
- very good use of community development to provide relevant local learning
- good action to reach under-represented groups

Weaknesses

- inappropriate management structures
- weak management of some subcontracted provision
- weak management information systems
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements

Information & communications technology

Strengths

- good development of basic ICT skills
- good retention rates
- good monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- good use of a range of learning venues to widen participation

Weaknesses

- inappropriate assessment of literacy skills
- inadequate attention to health and safety issues
- inadequate planning of some aspects of the curriculum

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good attendance and retention rates
- good accommodation for most courses

Weaknesses

- narrow range of teaching methods
- insufficient monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- weak induction
- poor management of subcontracted provision
- weak quality assurance arrangements

Visual & performing arts & media

Strengths

- good personal enrichment through skills development
- good resources
- good practical support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor curriculum management
- ineffective quality assurance arrangements

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good personal development for most learners
- productive working relationships with local partners
- good learning support
- good recent improvements in curriculum co-ordination and management

Weaknesses

- insufficient focus on meeting individual learners' needs in some classes
- ineffective initial assessment process

Family learning

Strengths

- good development of skills to support parents' and children's learning
- very good retention rates
- good teaching and learning
- good personal support
- good accommodation in most centres

Weaknesses

- insufficiently detailed recording of learners' individual targets
- inadequate use of data
- insufficiently clear management roles and responsibilities

Community development

Strengths

- good acquisition of community project management skills by local learners
- particularly productive partnerships
- wide range of good projects to meet community needs
- effective operational management to support community development work

Weaknesses

- insufficient analysis of the overall effect of community development projects

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT WARWICKSHIRE LEA:

- the help with childcare - 'it's a miracle to have time to myself to learn'
- the support given by fellow learners - 'learning together, it's like being part of a big family'
- the patient and supportive staff
- classes which take place in convenient locations
- being able to help their children with schoolwork
- the good bilingual support

WHAT LEARNERS THINK WARWICKSHIRE LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the amount of paperwork - there is too much, particularly on short courses
- the way in which learning activities are recorded - 'the learning journal is patronising'
- the availability of audiovisual aids
- the standard of some handouts - they need to be clearer
- the scheduling of classes so they are not interrupted by school holidays
- the provision of more free courses

KEY CHALLENGES FOR WARWICKSHIRE LEA:

- improve the structures for the management of adult and community learning within the service
- carry out greater analysis and use of data for planning and target-setting
- fully develop and implement quality assurance arrangements to bring about continuous improvements
- improve the sharing of good practice
- improve initial assessment and induction processes for many learners
- continue to focus on improving the management of subcontracted provision
- give learners more opportunities to gain accreditation and progress on to more advanced courses

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework*. The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good strategic focus on adult and community learning
- very effective and productive partnerships
- very good use of community development to provide relevant local learning
- good action to reach under-represented groups

Weaknesses

- inappropriate management structures
- weak management of some subcontracted provision
- weak management information systems
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements

53. Warwickshire LEA has a clear vision of the contribution of lifelong learning to the council's strategic objectives, and makes a priority of adult and community learning at all levels of the organisation. This strength is partly identified by the LEA in its most recent self-assessment report. Particular emphasis is placed on the needs of adult learners with few or no qualifications. Senior managers have a good understanding of lifelong learning and talk knowledgeably about the importance of learning to the social regeneration of communities throughout Warwickshire. Priorities for adult and community learning are effectively integrated with the LEA's single education development plan, for which the council is a pathfinder authority. The aims of this plan are accurately reflected in the service's overall adult and community learning plan and in each of the draft community learning plans in the five district and borough council areas. Groups which are convened to write these area plans ensure that most local organisations operating at community level focus jointly on learning activities as part of the community planning process. For example, in one area where a credit union is being developed, the draft local community learning plan analyses the existing learning opportunities for financial literacy and what other support is necessary to support the credit union. The LEA has an effective infrastructure to ensure that the planning process considers fully, and responds effectively to, the needs of local communities. Targets set for adult and community learning are consistently identified throughout almost all of the LEA's corporate plans.

54. The service works very effectively with a wide range of internal and external partners to offer learning opportunities to adult learners. These partnership arrangements operate at all levels throughout the service and demonstrate a strong commitment to partnership working. The service has good internal working relationships with other departments in the council to provide opportunities for learners. For example, community education staff work closely with library staff to offer ICT and family learning courses in libraries,

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and to train library staff to identify learning opportunities for library users. Community education staff often initiate new areas of work with cross-council departments. The service works closely with a wide range of other statutory services, voluntary and community groups, primary schools and secondary schools to develop programmes which are relevant to the needs of local communities and residents. For example, community education tutors in one area of Warwickshire work with, and train, staff in care homes to provide reminiscence sessions for older residents and people with dementia. This strength is identified in the self-assessment report.

55. The service approaches lifelong learning very effectively through the use of community development to provide relevant local learning opportunities. The service focuses clearly on providing learning for those groups of adults in areas of urban and rural deprivation in most need of support. Widening participation workers build successful long-term links in local communities with groups of residents and individual learners. They provide informal and structured learning opportunities in convenient locations that are relevant to the needs of individual learners. Learning sessions, for example in literacy and numeracy, are often held for individual learners. Learners take advantage of the many drop-in sessions and workshops to integrate learning with their everyday lives. Much of the provision focuses on effectively developing the skills learners need to contribute to their local communities, such as writing policies and procedures, managing committees and taking part in meetings.

56. The service does not have an overall strategy for literacy, numeracy and language support, but clearly recognises the importance of helping learners with their additional support needs. The service's business and adult and community learning development plans focus clearly on the provision of this support. Good recent improvements have been made in the management and co-ordination of literacy, numeracy and language programmes. Staff have carried out useful training to improve their teaching skills and awareness of literacy and numeracy learning strategies. Many courses are imaginatively titled to encourage learners into a non-threatening environment to improve their literacy, numeracy and language skills. Imaginative links are made between ICT provision and literacy and numeracy courses to attract adults into learning. However, the identification of learners' skills levels and additional support needs is not always appropriately managed. Some learners with little confidence are required to undergo tests of their literacy and numeracy skills levels before they have established strong relationships with their tutors.

57. Resources to support adult and community learning programmes are generally satisfactory. A wide range of community venues is used, including primary and secondary schools, church halls and community centres. The service carries out detailed audits of all the venues it uses, and the accommodation used for family learning and sport and leisure courses is good. However, some rooms used for literacy and numeracy teaching are cramped and do not promote effective learning. In ICT classes, not enough attention is given to safe working practices. Many learners' medical histories are not sufficiently checked before they join sport and leisure courses. The service offers a substantial training and development programme to all staff which is linked to the appraisal system and the service's strategic priorities. However, part-time staff are not

sufficiently aware of training opportunities and their attendance at staff development activities is poor.

58. The service's current management structures do not effectively support the operation of the adult and community learning programmes, a weakness which was identified in the most recent self-assessment report. The central team, comprising the lifelong learning officer and the three curriculum co-ordinators for ICT, literacy and numeracy and family learning, do not have line management responsibility for the five area community education teams. The adult and community learning co-ordinators and teams of widening participation workers, adult and community learning development workers and family learning participation workers report directly to the area officers in each district, together with staff providing youth and outdoor education services. Responsibility for curriculum management is divided from the day-to-day operational management of community education and the progress of planned improvements to provision is hindered, as is the implementation of changes. The LEA's financial management of the service is poor. The funding received from the LSC is devolved to the five area teams according to demographic factors in each area, but the allocations are not linked to performance. The lifelong learning officer has no management control to deal effectively with poor performance. Curriculum co-ordinators can only introduce important changes by relying on the considerable goodwill which exists between the central curriculum team and the area offices. However, these arrangements are not always effective. For example, the implementation of accredited ICT courses has been slow, and some staff are not able to meet regularly or share good practice.

59. The management of some subcontracted provision is weak. The service works with over 50 community and voluntary groups, and new arrangements have recently been implemented to ensure that funding for these groups is linked to strategic objectives. However, the curriculum co-ordinators are unable to influence the work of some of these groups sufficiently, and the overall co-ordination of some curriculum areas is poor. The service does not employ anyone to manage the visual and performing arts or sport and leisure provision. Changes to programmes are not always shared with the central team. The service does not know whether the funding it gives to the two subcontracted general further education colleges is used to attract new learners and meet its strategic priorities. It is unable to influence decisions about the curriculum offered by the colleges, and information about the learners funded by the service is only provided at the end of each term. However, the LEA has identified this weakness and has recently withdrawn funding from two colleges unable to comply with the service's requirements to only fund the concession of fees for new learners.

60. The service's use of management information is weak, as is identified in the most recent self-assessment report. The service does not adequately analyse or use data for planning and target-setting. The data produced by the service's management information system are unreliable, with errors in the data supplied by subcontracted providers not being identified at the time they are entered into the system. During the inspection, the data on numbers of learners and enrolments in 2003-04 were changed several times. Staff say they have found it very difficult to analyse trends in progression and retention and achievement rates, or to manage the cancellation of courses and attendance

monitoring. The service does not have a clear strategy for the regular collection, analysis and use of learners' data for planning the provision. Manual records are kept in some area offices, but not in others.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

61. The LEA has a service users' equal opportunities and diversity policy and a draft disability equality policy. Both policies clearly demonstrate the service's commitment to diversity and equality of opportunity. All staff have received training in equality and diversity and the implications of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. Most literacy, numeracy and language tutors have carried out training in recognising and understanding dyslexia. Staff actively support county-wide and local initiatives to promote a better understanding of equality of opportunity. However, equality and diversity issues are not always regularly discussed at management or team meetings, and procedures are not used to ensure that equality of opportunity policies are applied throughout the service.

62. The service takes effective action to widen participation, as is identified in the self-assessment report. All staff devote a significant amount of their time to developing and running courses and projects for identified groups of learners. Adult and community learning development workers and widening participation workers have an excellent knowledge of the local communities in which they work. Courses and activities are successfully designed to meet a wide range of local needs. For example, in one area of the county, courses are offered in Arabic, Asian cookery, beginners' cookery and bereavement care. Staff demonstrate considerable experience and sensitivity in working with local communities and individual learners, and diversity is celebrated and promoted well through art, fashion and cookery workshops. Childcare facilities are available at most centres, and widening participation workers ensure that childcare staff have a good knowledge of the cultures and beliefs of the parents of children in their care. Specific courses are effective in encouraging non-traditional learners to take up courses not normally associated with their gender. One course has successfully recruited young, unemployed men to learn about healthy living, and a young Asian women's group attends a learning centre with the full support of their families.

63. The service strongly encourages and supports local communities to develop activities and plan their own learning. It is actively engaged in supporting a wide range of community development projects throughout the county, particularly in areas of rural and urban deprivation. In one deprived area of south Warwickshire, local residents have been supported to develop a sports pavilion as a learning centre. Staff from the service have helped the residents to form a steering group and taught them skills in managing committees, writing policies and procedures, and obtaining finance. The centre is now used for classes in creative writing, ICT, and arts and crafts. Activities in the school holidays for parents and children are held, and participation in community events has increased. The service's staff identified the need for separate accommodation for young people, and a mobile youth centre is now permanently located next to the learning centre.

64. The service collects data on learners' ethnicity, gender and age, which it analyses to examine participation rates for different groups of learners. Senior managers set clear and demanding targets for recruiting learners from under-represented groups in the community, and in most cases the targets have been met or exceeded. Achievement of the targets is monitored by the five area officers, who analyse monthly returns submitted by widening participation workers and reallocate workers' time where necessary to meet the needs of the service.

65. Learners with restricted mobility have satisfactory access to the wide range of community venues. Staff complete a comprehensive audit of the suitability of the accommodation before any venue is used for adult and community learning. They evaluate the appropriateness of the venue's location, its accessibility, the services supplied and its conformity to health and safety requirements. Where a venue does not meet all the requirements of the service, alternative premises are sought, or the organisation responsible for the venue is asked to make the necessary improvements.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 4

66. Arrangements for the quality assurance of teaching and learning on adult and community learning courses are inadequate. The service's self-assessment report identifies its weak quality assurance procedures and staff are committed to making improvements. The service has made some progress towards developing systematic quality assurance procedures which are appropriate for the many small subcontracted providers it funds. Each subcontracted provider is required to fulfil strict criteria covering administrative arrangements and the qualifications of its tutors before it can become one of the LEA's partner organisations. This process ensures that each organisation's proposed course specifications match the principal targets set out in the service's adult learning plan. A new mentoring system has been introduced to assist partner organisations to meet the service's requirements for paperwork. Significant progress has been made in the standardisation of this paperwork, and a new quality assurance handbook has recently been written. However, the service does not have an overall quality assurance schedule which clearly shows how quality assurance activities and processes fit together, who is responsible for monitoring the outcomes, and how the individual parts of the framework contribute to self-assessment.

67. Procedures to review courses and the curriculum are inadequate. The service does not make suitable arrangements for staff to meet and discuss quality assurance problems and improvements. Good practice in providing stimulating and interesting learning activities in some areas is not adequately shared throughout the service. A new management information system introduced in 2003 does not yet produce sufficiently reliable data to assist managers in analysing the effectiveness of their programmes.

68. The service has observed classroom teaching on only a small percentage of courses in the past 18 months. Staff who are responsible for carrying out these observations are given appropriate training, and they produce realistic evaluations of learning sessions in many instances. However, the systems used to select learning sessions for observation do not ensure adequate coverage of all staff, and insufficient action is taken to rectify the

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weaknesses identified. These weaknesses are identified in the self-assessment report and plans are now in place to monitor observations through the new management information system. The service collects learners' course evaluations at the end of the programmes that it delivers directly but the views of learners are not systematically gathered from all of the subcontracted providers. Although some improvements to accommodation have been made following learners' feedback, the service does not formally monitor and evaluate the data available from learners' questionnaires.

69. The recording of learners' achievements has recently improved, following the introduction of diaries for each learner, but is still inadequate on many programmes. Insufficient recording or analysis is carried out of learners' progression onto more advanced courses, or into employment. The LEA is unable to state what percentage of the learners, taking their first steps back into learning with the service, then progress into further education. Most subcontracted providers produce written reports at the end of each course but these vary in quality and often do not guide further discussion in the service on what improvements are required.

70. The most recent self-assessment report is the third produced by the service. It is insufficiently thorough and does not include any evaluation of key parts of the provision, particularly that which is subcontracted to the general further education colleges. Although some managers' views were used to identify strengths and weaknesses and they found the process useful, not all relevant staff were consulted. External partners, subcontracted providers and learners were not asked for their views. The report includes many of the strengths and weaknesses in leadership and management identified by inspectors. However, some of the report's judgements about the quality of the provision in the areas of learning are no more than normal practice, and some key weaknesses were not identified by the provider. Approximately 25 per cent of subcontracted providers have recently completed their own self-assessment reports with the help of staff from the service, who have acted as mentors. These will be incorporated into the service's own self-assessment reports in the future.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology

Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	867	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of basic ICT skills
- good retention rates
- good monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- good use of a range of learning venues to widen participation

Weaknesses

- inappropriate assessment of literacy skills
- inadequate attention to health and safety issues
- inadequate planning of some aspects of the curriculum

Achievement and standards

71. Learners develop good basic ICT skills, a strength which is not identified in the self-assessment report. A large number of the learners are new to ICT. They say the courses and drop-in sessions have a significant effect upon their lives, often in a short period of time. For many learners, enrolling on a course is a significant achievement. They develop new skills in word processing, constructing charts and graphs and using the internet and e-mail. Some learners progress on to accredited courses at local general further education colleges, but still return to the service's drop-in sessions to receive additional support and guidance. Learners broaden their knowledge of other topics through the use of computers and improve their self-confidence. Their interest in hobbies such as painting, gardening, golf and photography is enhanced through using the internet for research.

72. Retention rates are good. The retention rate in 2003-04 so far is 97 per cent across all courses, and the average attendance in classes during the inspection was 85 per cent.

Quality of education and training

73. The monitoring and recording of learners' progress are good. Tutors keep detailed records of the work completed by learners each week, in group learning sessions and individual drop-in workshops. The detailed records of learners' progress enable tutors to assess easily which skills learners have successfully achieved and the dates when they

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became proficient. Learners also record their progress in their individual learning plan, and the recently introduced learning journals. They can quickly assess the progress they are making. Tutors monitor learners' attendance well. They regularly follow up unexplained absences, and withdraw learners who have not attended for a number of weeks and who have not offered an explanation.

74. Good use is made of a wide range of learning venues to widen participation. The ICT provision is widely dispersed across the county and successfully takes learning into local communities. Learners interviewed value being able to attend classes close to their homes. The service makes particularly good use of libraries and community centres in disadvantaged areas of the community, and runs classes at times which suit learners. It uses strong partnerships to design initiatives to bring ICT resources to a wide variety of under-represented groups of adults. Laptop computers are used to teach classes in venues where computing suites are not available.

75. The standard of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some learning sessions are planned well, with good schemes of work. In the best sessions observed, tutors use a variety of teaching methods including lectures and individual tuition, and make good use of handouts. Some tutors are particularly adept at altering their styles of teaching to enable all learners to be fully involved in learning sessions. They evaluate the effectiveness of their training at the end of every session. However, in the satisfactory sessions, tutors use a narrow range of teaching strategies.

76. Teaching and learning resources are generally satisfactory or better in most venues. Hardware and software are up to date and reflect the standards of equipment used in industry. Most centres have access to the internet and learners are able to use colour printers, scanners and, in some cases, digital cameras. Centres have good access for learners with restricted mobility, and some have specialised equipment for learners with visual impairments. However, the different versions of software used on laptops owned by the service are sometimes unreliable and cause problems for some learners. Centres are well equipped with resource packs for tutors to use as teaching materials. Tutors are appropriately qualified and have good specialist ICT skills.

77. Learners are given appropriate support by staff. Tutors fully understand the difficulties many adult learners face when they return to learning, and in particular the prior experiences of education of learners from disadvantaged communities.

78. ICT tutors do not use appropriate methods to identify whether learners require any additional literacy skills support. The assessment of learners' literacy skills is based on the prior attainment of relevant qualifications. Many adult learners have left school before gaining any qualifications at all, and are embarrassed by being asked questions about their prior attainments in front of other learners. Some tutors do not know how to obtain additional support for learners, and many are inadequately trained to help learners improve their literacy skills in the classroom. This weakness is identified by the service in its self-assessment report.

Leadership and management

79. Inadequate attention is given to health and safety issues on many ICT courses. Learners receive too few reminders about the importance of health and safety. Tutors pay insufficient attention to correcting poor practices at the beginning of new courses, particularly in relation to bad posture, sitting correctly and the use of monitors. Tutors are not sufficiently aware of the possible risks to learners. For example, in one observed learning session where the sun was shining on screens and making it difficult for learners to view their work, the window blinds were not lowered to reduce the glare. Some entrances to classrooms are blocked, and coats and bags are frequently left on chairs and desks. Electric cables in one centre are not covered to prevent learners and the tutor tripping over them. Poor attention is paid to the development of learners' keyboarding skills. Many learners have poor keyboard techniques, and spend a long time sitting at computers to input information.

80. The planning of some aspects of the ICT curriculum is inadequate. The long-term development and planning of accredited and non-accredited courses is poor, and no arrangements currently exist to offer accredited provision. Many of the learners specifically require ICT qualifications in order to improve their employment prospects. Some staff do not have the more advanced ICT skills to enable them teach intermediate level courses. The service has identified this weakness and is currently training tutors to develop their knowledge and expertise so that it can introduce accredited courses at the beginning of the 2004-05 academic year. No clear strategic plan exists to guide the management and development of ICT courses, and data are not used to plan the overall development of the provision. Insufficient attention is paid at curriculum and area team meetings to monitoring performance against targets, and not all staff are aware of the importance of meeting set enrolment and participation targets for particular target groups.

81. Quality assurance arrangements on ICT courses are generally satisfactory. Classroom observations are carried out effectively and staff appreciate and understand the feedback they receive. However, where weaknesses are identified in tutors' specialist ICT knowledge, they receive insufficient training to broaden their skills. Curriculum meetings are held every two months, and all tutors in the five area teams meet every term. Communications between staff are good, and some useful sharing of good practice takes place at these meetings.

82. The LEA's most recent self-assessment report identifies some of the strengths and weaknesses in ICT programmes. The grade for the area of learning given by the report matches that given by inspectors. However, some of the strengths identified in the report are no more than normal practice. The service did not sufficiently consult with staff, learners and external partners to identify their views of the provision.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**Grade 4**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	132	4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good attendance and retention rates
- good accommodation for most courses

Weaknesses

- narrow range of teaching methods
- insufficient monitoring and recording of learners' progress
- weak induction
- poor management of subcontracted provision
- weak quality assurance arrangements

Achievement and standards

83. Retention rates on sport and leisure courses are good, averaging over 90 per cent on most courses. Attendance in most classes is good and learners are punctual in arriving for sessions. Tutors' approach to attendance monitoring is sensitive to adult learners' needs. Learners who miss classes are contacted, but only if they have agreed that their tutor can contact them.

84. Most learners demonstrate appropriate practical skills and the use of technical language. Many have been returning to the same class for a number of years, and say they value the social benefits and friendships they develop. They appreciate the positive psychological and physical benefits achieved through classes such as yoga and tai chi, and have increased self-confidence in applying their own learning to everyday physical activities such as gardening and shopping. However, on some fitness programmes, learners' progress is restricted during school holidays, when classes do not run.

Quality of education and training

85. The standard of accommodation used for most sport and leisure courses is good. Classrooms at the main college sites and in community venues are spacious, well decorated and brightly lit. Specialist equipment is used by learners in all classes. In one observed learning session, mirrored walls and soft lights were used effectively to create an appropriate atmosphere for learning yoga. In a fitness class, the tutor used a raised platform to carry out demonstrations. Access to venues for learners with restricted mobility is good. Venues are located throughout the county on main transport routes

and are easily accessible to learners.

86. The range of courses offered in sport and leisure is satisfactory. The subcontracting arrangements with two local general further education colleges ensure that learners are able to choose from an appropriate range of programmes. However, classes do not run during school holiday periods, and the break between the short summer term and the beginning of the winter programme is particularly long. In sports-related subjects, learners cannot attend classes during this break to retain their strength and suppleness.

87. A narrow range of teaching methods is used in most classes. Sixty per cent of the classes observed during the inspection were satisfactory or worse. Tutors frequently stand at the front of the class giving instructions and demonstrations without involving learners sufficiently in the activities taking place. Teaching styles do not take sufficient account of individual learning needs or preferred learning styles. Some tutors do not provide warm-up activities for learners who arrive late for their classes. In the better learning sessions, tutors demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject and have good levels of technical competence.

88. The LEA does not ensure that the subcontracted colleges carry out sufficient monitoring and recording of learners' progress. Although some tutors have a good understanding of the progress learners are making, many do not keep satisfactory written records. Progress records are not always used to identify learners' achievements or to inform them of the progress they are making. Many learners are not asked about their individual goals or why they want to attend classes. Individual learning plans are not used effectively to identify learners' objectives or to set them specific targets.

89. The induction process for sport and leisure learners is weak. The LEA does not check that all learners receive an induction on joining a new course. Learners are not always informed of their rights and responsibilities, health and safety arrangements and the services available to them elsewhere in the college. One college has a detailed induction checklist, but not all tutors use the paperwork. Health screening is inconsistent. Tutors use several different systems for collecting and recording learners' initial health information, which vary in their sufficiency and consistency. In many classes, checks are not carried out. Pastoral support for learners is satisfactory; those interviewed value the caring and supportive approach of tutors. Learners are provided with sufficient information and guidance before joining courses.

Leadership and management

90. The management of subcontracted provision is poor, a weakness identified in the most recent self-assessment report. The LEA is aware of many of the weaknesses in its management arrangements with the local further education colleges, and has withdrawn its contracts with two of the colleges. Detailed service agreements have only recently been produced and have not yet been fully implemented. The service and the colleges do not communicate frequently enough, and their sharing of management information is poor. The service is not involved in planning the sport and leisure curriculum, and the colleges do not actively promote the types of courses which will attract those under-

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represented groups of learners targeted by the LEA.

91. Quality assurance arrangements are weak. The service does not carry out regular checks to ensure that the quality arrangements of the subcontracted colleges are adequate, and it does not monitor the quality of the teaching and learning. Some staff who carry out the colleges' classroom observations have not received any training to perform this role, and many do not have the necessary subject expertise to make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Many tutors do not receive any feedback after being observed. The sharing of good practice is poor, and learners' views are not always analysed to monitor the provision or plan the curriculum.

92. The service's most recent self-assessment report does not include any analysis of the sport and leisure curriculum or identify any specific strengths and weaknesses for this area of learning.

Visual & performing arts & media**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	424	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good personal enrichment through skills development
- good resources
- good practical support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor curriculum management
- ineffective quality assurance arrangements

Achievement and standards

93. Learners develop a satisfactory range of skills in visual and performing arts and generally produce good standards of finished products and performances, for example in flower arranging, pottery and dressmaking. However, in many mixed-ability classes, tutors are unable to set the more capable learners challenging work which is appropriate to their needs, and these learners' progress is hindered. Attendance, punctuality and retention rates are all satisfactory on courses in the subcontracted colleges. These rates are difficult to assess on arts and crafts community learning courses where the provision is deliberately arranged to allow learners to attend drop-in sessions to suit their everyday lives.

94. Many learners gain significant personal enrichment as a result of attending visual and performing arts classes. The service's community arts and crafts projects provide learners with new skills and insights into subjects such as home decoration. Exhibitions are used to help learners develop their self-confidence and critical awareness, and the service makes good use of awards evenings, sales and open days to promote learners' work to the local media. In one observed class, a small group of learners with particular needs were making tiles to adorn the outside wall of their community centre and were excited by the prospect of their work being seen by their relatives and other local residents. Some learners report that the courses have been a life-changing experience, and have transformed them from feeling lonely and isolated to having the confidence to make friends and play an active role in the community.

Quality of education and training

95. A wide range of good resources is available for arts and crafts learners. The accommodation used by the service and the subcontracted colleges is good. Learners value the spacious classrooms, which are bright and welcoming. Most centres are accessible to learners with restricted mobility, and good specialist resources are available at many venues. Classes are held throughout the county in locations which local residents can access easily. For example, one course for elderly residents takes place in the lounge area of their sheltered housing accommodation. Tutors are well qualified and experienced, and some have been learners themselves. Many were previously full-time tutors in their specialist subject who have now chosen to teach part time in adult and community learning classes.

96. Tutors provide good support for learners, particularly in the service's arts and crafts community learning classes. They help learners with practical issues such as enrolment and progression onto further courses, and often work with them outside their normal teaching hours. They bring additional learning materials and teaching resources to classes and use their own equipment, such as pottery kilns, at home to finish off learners' work to a professional standard.

97. The standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better learning sessions observed, good use is made of learning materials and demonstrations are accompanied by informative explanations and group discussions. The relationship between tutors and learners in these sessions is good. However, those sessions which were satisfactory use a narrow range of teaching strategies, with learners copying from photographs or using materials in a very traditional manner.

98. The assessment of learners' progress on most courses is satisfactory, but standards vary across the subcontracted college provision and the community learning projects delivered by the service. Some initial assessment is carried out and learning outcomes are agreed with learners. However, the outcomes are not always formally recorded, and reviews of learners' work at the end of a course are not always documented. Learners' views are not used to monitor group progress or to make improvements to courses.

99. The range of visual and performing arts courses is satisfactory in most disciplines, but narrow in drawing and painting, performing arts and music. The service's requirement for the subcontracted colleges to attract targeted groups of under-represented learners is not reflected in the design and marketing of the provision. Learners do not have sufficient opportunities to attend courses in the school holidays when the colleges' courses do not run.

Leadership and management

100. Curriculum management and planning are poor. Communications between the service and the subcontracted colleges are poor, and the curriculum is discussed and evaluated at very few meetings. Little or no sharing of good practice takes place either

within or between centres, and decision-making is not shared with service staff. The overall management of visual and performing arts by the service is poor. The service does not employ anyone in a management role who has curriculum expertise in this area of learning, and staff are not fully aware of what courses are running and in which locations. The subcontracted colleges decide what programmes will run based on tutor availability, and little consideration is given to the under-represented groups of learners specifically targeted by the LEA. Data on retention and achievement rates, attendance and progression are unreliable and are not produced consistently to help monitor and improve the provision.

101. The quality assurance arrangements for visual and performing arts courses are ineffective. The LEA does not monitor its subcontractors' quality assurance processes or receive any feedback on the quality of teaching and learning. The classroom observation schemes do not ensure that all tutors are regularly observed, and the service does not use the feedback to discuss staff development and training needs with the colleges. The most recent self-assessment report does not identify any specific strengths or weaknesses for visual and performing arts and makes no reference to any self-assessments carried out by the subcontractors.

Foundation programmes**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	122	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good personal development for most learners
- productive working relationships with local partners
- good learning support
- good recent improvements in curriculum co-ordination and management

Weaknesses

- insufficient focus on meeting individual learners' needs in some classes
- ineffective initial assessment process

Achievement and standards

102. Most learners are successful in achieving their personal learning goals, a strength partly identified in the most recent self-assessment report. They develop effective literacy and numeracy skills and improve their self-confidence and self-esteem. They apply these skills outside the classroom in their everyday lives, both at home and at work. Learners can point to real benefits they experience in using their skills to manage money and to support their children. Most learners make good progress towards completing the tasks set for them by their tutor and they take pride in the standard of their work. They maintain good levels of concentration and interest in the learning sessions, and are willing to help other learners with their work. The atmosphere in most classes is supportive and welcoming. However, learners are not always punctual in arriving for classes, and some do not attend learning sessions regularly. Few learners are following courses which lead to a qualification.

Quality of education and training

103. The service has formal productive working relationships with many statutory and voluntary organisations to encourage learners from a broad range of groups and communities to participate in learning. Different groups of learners are attracted to different locations and types of provision, including individual drop-in sessions, workshops and group classes. Community groups trust the service's staff to provide courses to meet their individual needs. For example, ESOL classes for older learners have been successfully set up in collaboration with a Sikh welfare and social association. Following extensive partnership working, an English and basic food hygiene course for workers at a large local bakery has been developed. The service has taken a leading role

in offering training to other organisations and supporting them with their development plans. Two programmes are now running following effective partnership working with a national learning disability charity. Previous successful partnerships have produced a literacy project for men with mental health conditions, offered in conjunction with a family care and housing trust, and a basic financial literacy project for adults with learning difficulties in a local day centre.

104. Learners are supported well on literacy, numeracy and language courses. Initial advice and guidance is well documented, and is appropriate to the needs of learners. Learners talk positively about the support they receive from their tutors. For example, women on ESOL courses can use good crèche facilities, and receive support from bilingual staff during induction to complete enrolment forms. Tutors work closely with learners to identify appropriate progression routes. Learners' achievements are celebrated through in-house certificates, awards ceremonies and good media coverage. These events are often attended by senior managers in the LEA.

105. Resources are generally satisfactory. The standard of accommodation varies across the county. Some learning sessions are taught in bright, spacious and well-lit classrooms. However, other courses take place in cramped classrooms which are cold and have poor acoustics. Inspectors observed one class which took place in a cellar with little natural light and no visual displays, and which was interrupted by noise from other staff holding discussions. Most venues have good access for people with restricted mobility. Tutors have access to a good range of imaginative teaching resources for both literacy and numeracy, including playing cards, dice, navigational compasses and number-related games. A wide range of handouts and textbooks are available at most centres. Staff have appropriate qualifications and take part in well-organised training and development activities to enhance their existing skills and acquire new skills and qualifications.

106. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better learning sessions observed, good planning and carefully structured activities ensure that learners work at a pace and level that suits them. Stimulating learning materials are used to sustain learners' interest and concentration. Tutors have a good relationship with learners and ensure that their concerns are respected and valued. However, in the learning sessions which are satisfactory or worse, tutors do not place sufficient focus on meeting the individual needs of learners. Tutors do not pay enough attention to the relevance of the learning tasks and the pace of the teaching. For example one course tutor did not plan any breaks in the classes, despite the learners having commented in course evaluations that they became tired and had difficulty in concentrating throughout the sessions. Most of the session plans for one ESOL course, in which the learners' primary goal is to improve their listening and speaking skills, make no reference to the use of audiovisual aids. In other classes, activities are based around worksheets which are designed for much younger learners. The needs of more able learners are met in some sessions, but adults who find the learning more challenging are not always fully involved.

107. The initial assessment process used to identify learners' literacy, numeracy and language needs is ineffective, as is partly identified in the self-assessment report. Tutors do not clearly establish learners' prior abilities, or a starting point from which they can

progress. The identification of short- and medium-term goals is poor. Staff carry out sensitive individual discussions with some learners to identify their previous attainments, but this information is not routinely used to plan their learning. Learners who are asked to carry out an initial assessment test sometimes feel threatened and are reluctant to participate in the process. Learning plans do not include sufficiently detailed information about the specific skills learners need to acquire. The service has identified this weakness, and revised assessment processes are now being implemented and monitored.

Leadership and management

108. Good recent improvements have been made in the management of the literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes through effective curriculum co-ordination. Staff development is good and covers a wide range of relevant topics. Part-time staff who are unable to attend training sessions receive individual support to ensure their professional competence is updated. Communications between staff are good, and frequent and purposeful meetings, briefings and newsletters are used to share good practice and success stories. Staff morale is good.

109. The quality assurance arrangements are improving for foundation programmes, and are generally satisfactory. Classroom observations are used effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and staff are given good support to bring about improvements to their teaching practices. An extensive review of many procedures such as initial assessment has been carried out, and staff take an active role in piloting new systems and suggesting improvements.

110. The self-assessment report identifies a significant number of strengths and weaknesses for foundation programmes. Many of these match those identified by inspectors, but the report is insufficiently critical in assessing the effect of the provision on learners. Staff were well prepared for the inspection.

Family learning**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	201	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of skills to support parents' and children's learning
- very good retention rates
- good teaching and learning
- good personal support
- good accommodation in most centres

Weaknesses

- insufficiently detailed recording of learners' individual targets
- inadequate use of data
- insufficiently clear management roles and responsibilities

Achievement and standards

111. Learners on family learning programmes develop good skills to support parents' and children's learning, a strength not identified in the self-assessment report. Most learners successfully increase their levels of literacy, numeracy and language skills and have more confidence when working with their children. Parents clearly articulate how attaining personal and parenting skills is improving their relationships with their children, schools and in the wider family. Some parents have devised games at home to develop their children's reading and number skills, and one parent has started labelling household items to reinforce her children's spelling and reading skills. Learners gain positive experiences of education and parents spend more time helping their children with homework. Communications between parents and teachers have improved as learners have become more confident in talking to staff at school, and parents are more appreciative of the efforts that teachers make to help their children learn. Learners improve their own self-confidence through attending family learning courses. One parent, who had never read a book from beginning to end until she enrolled on a family learning literacy course, is now reading her second book. Learners develop their confidence to speak in front of groups of learners and say they value the opportunity to make new friends.

112. Retention rates are very good throughout the full range of family learning courses. From September 2003 to the date of the inspection, retention rates were over 90 per cent on family literacy, language and numeracy courses and wider family learning programmes. The retention rate in classes observed during the inspection was 95 per cent, and many of these courses have been running for two months or more.

Quality of education and training

113. Standards of teaching and learning are good on family learning programmes. Almost 90 per cent of the classes observed by inspectors were graded good or better. Courses are planned well with clear aims and learning outcomes. Tutors use imaginative activities to ensure that all learners are actively involved in learning sessions, and make good use of everyday objects that learners can relate to. The teaching style is informal, which encourages a sense of fun, but is structured to ensure that effective learning takes place. Most parents say that this is their first experience of learning as an enjoyable activity and they feel more confident about their ability to learn. Tutors who teach specialist topics as part of the wider family learning programme have a very good knowledge of their subject, and develop good relationships with adults and children.

114. Learners on family learning programmes receive effective support. Well-run crèches are available at most venues and these enable learners with children to access courses. Many courses include weekly lunchtime tutorial sessions during which tutors monitor learners' progress and discuss any concerns they have. Learners are offered good guidance about the range of family learning courses available, and on possible progression routes into further education. They value the supportive relationships they develop with tutors, and are encouraged to ask questions about the content of courses and future career development. Where tutors cannot deal with a problem themselves, learners are quickly referred to other external agencies which can offer them professional support. A learner who could not attend her class for a number of weeks was given individual tuition and support in her home to ensure that she was able to continue with her studies.

115. The accommodation in most centres used for family learning is good. All venues are within easy reach of public transport routes and are furnished to meet the needs of adults and children. Furniture is arranged to maximise eye contact between adults and children, and to ensure good learner interaction. Classrooms are well lit, spacious and have comfortable furnishings. Many venues have access to good-quality ICT facilities. In one venue, an open-plan kitchen area is incorporated into the classroom where refreshments are prepared for children.

116. The range of family learning programmes available is generally satisfactory. The service effectively identifies communities which are most in need of support by using published indices of social deprivation, and holds discussions with a wide range of partners to establish the most appropriate programmes. Community education staff have a responsive approach to partner organisations. Funding for family learning has been used creatively to develop the programmes.

117. The recording of learners' progress is insufficiently detailed on family learning courses. Initial assessment is carried out using a range of different methods appropriate to the needs of individual learners, but the outcomes of this assessment are not accurately reflected in individual learning goals agreed with learners. Individual learning

plans focus on the content of the course, particularly where it leads to an accredited qualification, rather than individuals' goals. Although most learners keep a portfolio of their work and tutors give them verbal feedback on their progress, formal records of assessment are poor. The new learning diaries introduced by the service encourage learners to identify what they are learning, but many learners only record what they have done or particularly enjoyed.

Leadership and management

118. The service makes inadequate use of data to assist curriculum and service planning for family learning programmes. Retention and achievement rate data are not held for a number of previous years, and area teams often have to use manually collated data in management meetings due to the unreliability of the central management information system. Progression data are poor. Data are not consistently used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, or to plan for improvements.

119. Management roles and responsibilities within family learning are unclear. The management structure for the delivery of family learning is not coherent. Staff in the area teams report to more than one manager with responsibility for family learning programmes, and curriculum priorities are sometimes not clear. Area officers are not sufficiently aware of their responsibilities in relation to the self-assessment of family learning and the identification of future plans, even though they manage family learning participation staff and tutors. The role of the family learning participation workers is not clearly understood across the service. Not enough links exist between family learning staff and those involved in other areas of learning.

120. The self-assessment report for family learning identifies some of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision, but underestimates the effect on learners of the good development of their skills and the good teaching and learning. Partner organisations are not sufficiently involved in the LEA's self-assessment processes for family learning.

Community development**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	82	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good acquisition of community project management skills by local learners
- particularly productive partnerships
- wide range of good projects to meet community needs
- effective operational management to support community development work

Weaknesses

- insufficient analysis of the overall effect of community development projects

Achievement and standards

121. Learners' attainment of personal and community development skills is good. Local residents develop useful skills which enable them to participate effectively in community development projects. These skills include problem-solving, writing policies and procedures, managing budgets and submitting planning applications. Many learners say they value the increase in their self-confidence and enjoy being empowered to make decisions which benefit their local communities. Two learners who have received training in managing financial accounts are now treasurers of their management committees, and a group of learners recently carried out a house-to-house survey in their local community to identify what projects would most effectively meet residents' needs. Some project management committees produce a regular newsletter which informs residents of progress with particular projects.

122. Many learners involved in community development projects progress into further education and training. Some learners have enrolled on the service's literacy and numeracy courses, and a learner with a mental health condition has participated in counselling training. Four learners are working towards an accredited qualification in literacy and numeracy skills and two learners who volunteered to join management committees have now gained employment with the council. Through involvement with a community development project, one learner has gained the confidence to speak at a national conference in front of other people, and is now actively involved in a wide range of youth activities in the local community.

Quality of education and training

123. The service has formed particularly productive partnerships to meet community needs. Community education staff work with a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies to develop effective innovative projects that aim to build capacity and develop learning opportunities in local communities throughout the county. Where project committee members need specialist advice, they are quickly referred by the service to appropriate organisations which can offer support. In one community project, committee members work closely with a national mentoring network to provide monitoring arrangements for young women from the local school who are not attending lessons regularly. Members of committees responsible for community development projects in different wards collaborate effectively to share transport arrangements and places on courses. They invite residents to attend community coffee mornings to share good practice and exchange ideas for new projects.

124. The service funds a wide range of good projects to meet community needs. Residents from local communities work effectively with staff from the LEA to promote and develop innovative and successful projects. In some areas, representatives from the parish council and committee members have carried out house-to-house surveys to establish the needs of local residents. On one large housing estate, the service identified that considerable tension existed between young people and older residents. Both groups use the local football club premises for separate activities and staff from the service brought them together to work on a 'Warwick In Bloom' project which resulted in 150 tubs of flowers being placed around the estate. Seven adult learners are now studying for a level 2 qualification in youth work. Projects often incorporate imaginative courses, for example, building a robot, circus skills, sewing for the blind and healthy eating on a budget. On one course, parents and their children used music and ICT skills to write a poem about a local premiership football team and were presented with certificates by one of the team's players. However, shortages of tutors mean that requests for courses are not always in some rural areas of the county, while in other areas, courses do not continue through the school holidays.

125. Standards of teaching and learning on courses linked to community development projects are generally satisfactory. Informal learning is promoted through the community development projects. Tutors make activities varied, challenging and relevant.

126. Resources to support community development projects are satisfactory. The service uses a wide range of venues to provide meeting places and training close to where learners live. Venues are chosen well to ensure that they are welcoming to different community groups, and most are spacious, well lit and have good facilities. However, the accommodation is poor in some areas, with cold rooms and insufficient catering facilities. Some accommodation is not adequate for the size of the groups using it.

Leadership and management

127. The service has effective operational management arrangements to support community development work. Senior managers fully support the valuable contribution that projects make to the regeneration of local communities, and talk enthusiastically and with pride about the work carried out by the LEA. Area teams are structured to provide very effective support to individual projects. Staff are appropriately qualified and many have considerable experience of working in community education settings. They demonstrate good skills in community development strategies, and are actively involved in attending community meetings and events, talking to local residents, and disseminating information to different wards. Staff are supported well by managers, and attend a comprehensive range of useful training and development activities. Good practice is shared between the five area teams through the use of an internal website. Interim and final reports and evaluations of each project are regularly produced.

128. Although individual projects receive detailed reviews and evaluations, the service does not carry out sufficient analysis of the overall effect of community development projects across Warwickshire. Staff are not sure how many projects are being funded, the dates when they started, or the numbers of learners involved. Data are unreliable and are not used to evaluate the provision as a whole or to plan future projects. The service has not assessed the effectiveness of its community development projects against the criteria in the 'Common Inspection Framework'. The most recent self-assessment report does not critically evaluate the effect of community projects on adult learning in the county. Strengths and weaknesses are not identified to assist action-planning for continuous improvement.