

Surrey County Council ACL

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 54684

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Last day of inspection: 3 December 2010

Type of provider: Local authority

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Information about the provider

1. The adult learning service (the service) sits within cultural services in the customers and communities directorate of Surrey County Council (SCC). Under a contract with the Skills Funding Agency, the service delivers personal and community development learning (PCDL) provision from its seven centres in north and south-west Surrey. Provision of learning in four districts and boroughs is separately contracted to East Surrey College. PCDL provision is supplemented by three teams delivering targeted services: one that focuses on meeting the learning needs of adults with disabilities and learning difficulties; a second that delivers family learning programmes across the county; and, the third providing first-step learning opportunities in areas of disadvantage. The family and community learning teams work from children centres, schools and community venues. Learner numbers grew by 8.5% in 2009/10, and by 24% over the past two years.
2. The subject areas inspected were sport, leisure and recreation; visual arts; classical and modern foreign languages; and family learning. The service's independent living and leisure skills provision was inspected, but not graded; comments on this area are included in the report.
3. Surrey has a high level of economic activity, with 82% of men and 68% of women in employment, compared with 75.2% and 65.5% nationally. Unemployment is relatively low, at 4.8% compared to 6% in the South East and 8% nationally. There are 16% of residents from minority ethnic groups, compared with 13% for the South East and 16% for England.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2009/10
Provision for adult learners: Learning for social and personal development Family learning and community learning	8,921 part-time learners 1,723
Employer provision: Train to Gain	71 learners

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
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Capacity to improve	Grade 2
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	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	3

Subject Areas	
Sport, leisure and recreation	2
Visual arts	2
Classical and modern foreign languages	2
Family learning	2

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of SCC’s provision is good. Managers provide good leadership and have communicated successfully to staff the need for continuous improvements in teaching and learning and in outcomes. The service has maintained steady improvements in provision and outcomes since the previous inspection, despite considerable growth in enrolments across the past two years. Retention and achievement rates in all subject areas are good.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall. Learners make good progress in most lessons and gain good practical skills. Many classes enable learners to develop confidence and health benefits that help sustain their independence. Safeguarding of learners is good. Learners feel safe and have a good understanding of safe working in practical classes and studios. Measures to promote equality and diversity have improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. Partnerships are very well developed in family learning, supported learning and in community development areas, and are

satisfactory elsewhere. Tutors are well supported by their managers and receive good continuing professional development opportunities. Arrangements for quality improvement are good overall. The service self-assessment process is inclusive and leads to a broadly accurate self-assessment report.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good in all subject areas, with good achievement, good retention and good skills development in practical subjects. Achievement and retention rates have risen against a background of sharply increasing enrolments over the past two years. Across the service as a whole, achievement rates were 98% in 2008/09, and 97% in 2009/10.
- Learners feel safe in centres and in classes. Induction and course introductions give good information about the service's health and safety policy and procedures, and learners understand these well. In practical and studio-based classes, tutors carefully apply safe working practices. Risk assessment is robust and thorough.
- Learners enjoy their classes and value the benefits derived from courses. Many learners have experienced positive benefits to their physical and mental health as a result of attendance on courses. Many learners on practical art courses have exhibited, and some have sold, their work. Language learners have been able to use their skills on holidays or in business. In supported learning, learners enjoy their learning and have good opportunities to express their views and develop their abilities by making choices about their learning.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. However, there remains a significant number of satisfactory lessons. Successful classes are well planned, take good account of learners' personal goals, and offer learners a good level of challenge through a range of interesting activities. In a significant minority of classes, tutors are not making effective use of initial assessment and individual learning plans to meet individual needs.
- Care, guidance and support for learners are good. Tutors generally give good personal support in classes across all subject areas, especially for learners who have additional needs, or who lack confidence. Care and support for supported learners are outstanding.
- The range of provision effectively meets the needs of users, and the service has been successful in developing outreach provision in areas of disadvantage, and in areas where need is identified among particular communities. However, there is insufficient progression from outreach to mainstream provision, or to provision run by partners. Currently, the service makes insufficient use of virtual learning opportunities to broaden learners' experience and access to provision.
- Leadership and management of the service are good, with good strategic planning and prioritisation. Senior service managers have effectively communicated a clear strategy for improvement across the service. Managers receive good support from senior council officers and from the portfolio-holding

member. Centre staff and tutors have a good understanding of service direction and share the broad aims for improvement.

- Curriculum management is good in most subject areas. Supported learning is very well managed and curriculum planning is highly responsive to the changing needs of learners. Curriculum managers are successful in communicating service aims and priorities for improvement. Tutors feel well informed and supported by managers. However, there is insufficient sharing of good practice across subject areas and, in some areas, cohort and aggregated data are used insufficiently to provide clear information about trends in retention, attendance and progression.
- Professional development opportunities are good for centre staff and tutors. There has been a good range of cross-service training over the past two years, including safeguarding training. However, only around one half of tutors have attended formal training in equality and diversity during the past two years.
- Quality improvement measures have raised standards across provision since the previous re-inspection. Good progress has been made in establishing reliable systems for recognising and recording progress and achievement in informal learning. Lesson observation processes have contributed to the raising of standards.
- Promotion and maintenance of equality and diversity have improved and are now satisfactory. Safeguarding is good; learners feel safe and work safely.

What does Surrey County Council need to do to improve further?

- Continue to increase the proportion of good or better teaching across the provision.
- Further develop the identification and dissemination of good practice sharing across subject areas.
- Develop an effective and accessible virtual learning environment.
- Improve the progress and monitoring of learners from outreach and first steps courses to provision delivered in main centres or by partners.
- Further develop the understanding and promotion of equality and diversity across the service.
- Ensure that cohort and trend data are used more effectively in all subject areas to bring about improvement and widen participation.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the supportive, patient and encouraging tutors
- the helpful and welcoming centre staff
- the many personal, health and social benefits brought about by attending courses

- the opportunities to share ideas and practise skills with other learners during classes
- the welcoming ambience and atmosphere of learning centres
- the range, levels and timing of courses available.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the provision of computers and electronic learning materials
- the clarity and accessibility of service information from electronic sources
- the length of some classes that is too short.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

6. Surrey County Council demonstrates good capacity to make and sustain improvements. Since the previous re-inspection in 2007, achievement and retention rates in all subject areas have risen, and are now good. Managers communicate very effectively with staff, and have prioritised strategies for improvement very well. Senior officers in the county council provide good support for the service and its managers. Quality assurance arrangements are good overall. Among managers and staff, there is a good, shared understanding of the need to improve standards. However, the good practice identified in some areas is not shared effectively across the provision. The current self-assessment report is accurate in its identification of strengths and most areas for improvement, and provides a generally useful tool for improvement planning. Self-assessment processes in subject areas are inclusive, and managers have good access to, and understanding of, data on quality and standards in the subject areas.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

7. Outcomes for learners are good across the service. The overall achievement rate was 98% in 2008/09, and was 97% in 2009/10. Measures for recognising and recording progress and achievement have been strengthened during the past two years and now offer a reliable starting point for the measurement of learners' achievements. Learners' practical and other work is generally good. Learners are very well motivated and enjoy their learning. Retention is good in all subject areas and has averaged 93% across the past two years.
8. Many learners derive significant social and health benefits from their participation in classes. For many, the classes are a focal point of the week. Among the benefits identified by learners are increases in mobility, general health and fitness, confidence, social integration and, for some, increased economic and employment opportunity. Learner surveys conducted during autumn and summer terms report very high levels of satisfaction with provision, at around 97%.
9. Learners feel safe in classes and are familiar with the service's health and safety policy and procedures. Induction effectively covers all aspects of health and safety. Tutors apply safe working practices during learning sessions, and there is a robust risk assessment of all venues, programmes and classes.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

10. Quality of provision is good with good teaching and learning overall. Aspects of good teaching were seen in each of the graded subject areas, with outstanding aspects in a few. Tutors plan effectively to meet individual learners' needs. They set clear and progressive targets. Early in the course learners discuss the

areas they want to improve with their tutor and set appropriate individual learning targets. There is effective monitoring of individual progress in most classes and a satisfactory process is used to monitor and record individual learners' progress. However, in some modern foreign languages classes the individual learning plan is used more as a tutor evidence document rather than as a tool for learners. The recording of learner information is incomplete in some sport, leisure and recreation classes, with tutors not signing off the relevant sections related to the achievement of learning goals. Also, for some entry level learners in family learning this process has become an overly complex one.

11. Observations of teaching and learning provide a good and detailed assessment of the quality of teaching and learning. Feedback to tutors is useful and constructive; it provides a helpful tool to improve practice. Inspectors agreed with SCC's self-assessment which identified a high number of good or better lessons. However, the lesson observation reporting process, in some areas, does not include a sufficient range of evidence about the quality of learning. Moderation of the process includes peer reviews and recognises that there is much to do to identify and promote some of the best practice that already exists.
12. Generally, tutors plan sessions that are dynamic and interactive. They use technology creatively to provide a range of stimulating activities that actively engage learners. Skilled and knowledgeable tutors often have a wide range of experience working in relevant occupations which they use effectively to develop learners' ability and proficiency. Tutors support the development of high standards in practical and technical work in subject areas such as languages and arts and crafts.
13. SCC has responded well to the changing priorities of adult and community learning. For example, it has considerably increased its provision aimed at those in the most disadvantaged areas of the county and has focused its community and family learning provision to meet their needs and interests. A much wider range of programmes and activities has been designed with partners to engage those learners previously disengaged from training or education. Almost all of these programmes are delivered through outreach centres, providing good and easy access. However, a geographic and physical separation exists between outreach provision and the majority of other programmes delivered within the main centres. There is insufficient natural progression from one set of programmes to the other.
14. There are strong partnerships with schools, children centres and other public sector organisations. SCC has developed practical and productive links with partners to extend the range of courses available in family and community learning, and particularly in supported learning. These provide good access for those learners from the priority groups the service seeks to attract. There is limited partnership development in subject areas beyond family and community programmes.

15. There is a wide range of programmes and activities which effectively meets the needs and interest of all learners. The provision is broad and responsive, as identified within SCC's own self-assessment report. There is good advice and guidance with extremely effective initial assessment for those learners with supported learning needs. For learners with moderate to profound learning support needs there is additional effective discrete provision. This is exceptionally well managed, planned, and delivered, with each individual learner's needs being thoughtfully considered, assessed and met.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

16. Leadership and management are good. Senior managers have developed and implemented a successful strategy for improvement since the previous inspection. Strategic planning is articulated clearly through the service delivery plan and the service training plan. Communications with staff and learners are good. Staff have a good understanding of service priorities and long-term aims for improvement. Tutors and centre staff feel well informed and appreciate the ways that their views are gathered and taken seriously.
17. Measures to ensure equality of opportunity have improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. Learners appreciate the welcoming centres and the friendly staff who encourage attendance, active engagement and participation. Centre staff offer advice, guidance and support to learners specifically at enrolment, but also during courses. Displays in centres offer a colourful account of learners' skills and achievements. There are many effective displays centred on cultural diversity in centres which raise awareness of equality and diversity.
18. Promotion of equality and diversity within lessons is broadly satisfactory, but there is insufficient exploration of cultural diversity and equalities within some subject areas, particularly in fine art and crafts. In a significant minority of lessons there is only limited promotion of equality and diversity, with little incorporation of equality-related materials or discussions. All centre and curriculum staff have received some training either through SCC or using the 'Grass Roots' diversity booklet, but only 46% of tutors have completed this training. Not all tutors have received training in equality and diversity in the past two years.
19. Initiatives to promote inclusion and widen participation are successful. Participation in learning for those from disadvantaged communities has risen significantly over the past two years. The service has effectively used partners' venues and community facilities to successfully engage under-represented groups in learning. However, there is insufficient progression from outreach and first-steps provision in community venues to mainstream provision in the main centres or to further learning in partner institutions. Plans are in place to develop a more accessible and useful virtual learning environment but, at present, learners and staff have insufficient access to remote and virtual learning opportunities.

20. Analysis of data is comprehensive, and managers explore achievement, retention, success and satisfaction rates by different groups of learners. However, in some areas, data are used insufficiently to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes or interventions. In these cases, too much single-case or anecdotal information is recorded, rather than focusing on broad outcomes and impact using objective analysis of data and trends.
21. Measures to safeguard learners are good. Over the past eighteen months a clear priority has been given to safeguarding. Comprehensive arrangements are in place and a clear policy has been established with appropriate training for all staff. SCC has ensured that its policy includes an appropriate section outlining the safeguarding of vulnerable learners under the age of 19. A safeguarding working group exists to review the implementation of the policy and monitor all reported incidents. There is frequent and effective promotion of safeguarding and safe working either in newsletters or on posters displayed prominently within centres.
22. Curriculum management is generally good. Tutors make frequent contributions to improvement planning and the self-assessment process is inclusive. However, there is insufficient sharing of good practice between subject teams and between tutors in cognate disciplines.
23. Centre staff and tutors receive good professional development opportunities. Staff are encouraged to train and frequently receive financial or other support to engage in development activity. Clear plans are in place for service-wide training on key areas for improvement.
24. Quality improvement measures are effective and have raised standards since the previous re-inspection. Reliable measures are now in place for recognising and recording progress and achievement in informal learning. Target setting has improved across all subject areas. Lesson observation processes have contributed to the raising of standards.

Subject areas

Sport, leisure and recreation

Grade 2

Context

25. Some 866 learners were enrolled on 99 courses at the time of inspection. Of these, 86% are female, 11% from minority ethnic groups and 70% are aged over 55. This compares with 2,105 enrolments for the whole of 2009/10. None of the courses leads to formal accreditation. Courses include bridge, yoga, tai chi and Pilates and are offered in 14 venues. Courses last from one to two hours and enrolments are generally for a period of ten to twelve weeks. The area is managed by one full-time curriculum manager and two part-time assistant curriculum managers.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Retention on all courses is good, and improving, at 91% in 2009/10. Learners' achievement, based on learner outcomes and course achievement of their learning goals, is also good at 93%. Attendance for 2009/10 is satisfactory at 78% and has remained satisfactory to date in 2010/11.
- Learners gain significant health and fitness benefits from attending courses. Learners in yoga, Pilates and gentle exercise classes achieve a wide range of physical and mental benefits, particularly for older learners. They improve suppleness, mobility, breathing, posture and find relief from arthritis and sciatica as well as benefits in terms of stress relief and relaxation. Learners in bridge classes improve their mental agility and develop the capacity for logical thinking.
- Learners make good improvements to their social well-being. In particular, older learners appreciate the opportunity to learn and socialise with others. They point to the valuable community service adult learning provides for older people to keep them mentally active and engaged with other people.
- Learners feel safe. Detailed attention is given to health and safety in most lessons allowing learners to develop safe working practices. However, some tutors do not sufficiently enforce appropriate dress for exercise. Essential information is collected by most tutors through pre-course health screening, but this is not always used effectively to plan to meet the individual needs of learners.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons teachers manage learners well, giving clear instructions, demonstrations and corrections of poor technique where required. Tutors monitor learners' exercising closely and promote the use of safe practices. In the weaker lessons tutors do not sufficiently reinforce or check learners' knowledge and understanding of the effects and benefits of exercise. Some tutors fail to plan explicitly to meet the needs of learners with medical conditions.

- Tutors use individual learning plans well to set targets. Group learning goals are generally realistic and challenging. Learners are then encouraged to identify meaningful individual goals related to their physical and mental progress. However, some tutors fail to monitor and record progress against these targets effectively. Where plans are used less well, learners fail to reflect on, and record, their progress regularly.
- The range of provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is satisfactory. There remains a good choice and geographical spread of courses. The needs of older learners in particular have been identified and targeted. However, the number of courses and number of enrolments decreased in 2009/10.
- Support for learners is satisfactory. Some learners are well supported by tutors during sessions, but others receive little or no individual support while participating. Learners receive sufficient information about courses to make informed judgements about their suitability, although courses are poorly promoted.
- Curriculum management is good. Communications with tutors are much improved and tutors are well supported. Sharing of best practice is improving, with specific meetings scheduled for particular groups of tutors, such as bridge and yoga. Tutors are able to access valued training opportunities.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are satisfactory. Activities are adequately risk assessed overall. Learner health is screened adequately prior to participation in exercise. However, some tutors fail to ensure all health screening forms are completed. Some equipment used in class has not been electrically tested for safety.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Managers monitor the progress of different groups and there are no significant differences in success for minority ethnic learners. A significant proportion of courses are based on styles of exercise inspired by different cultures. However, most learners are women and over 55 years of age and there do not appear to be clear strategies to address this imbalance.
- The self-assessment report is thorough and focuses on improvement within the provision. Data are used effectively to inform self-assessment and to identify planning priorities. Observations of teaching and learning are detailed and judgements are largely in line with inspection findings.

What does Surrey County Council need to do to improve further?

- Improve the completion and quality assurance of individual learning plans by both learners and tutors.
- Encourage more interaction between tutors and learners and the effective reinforcing and checking of learning.
- Ensure that all learners receive an initial assessment, especially of their health, so that all tutors can both plan for, and meet, the individual needs of learners.

Visual arts

Grade 2

Context

26. The visual arts area offers PCDL courses across seven dedicated centres and five external venues in north and south-west Surrey. No courses are accredited. In fine arts and design, 409 courses were offered and in craft, 429 courses were offered. In the fine art area courses cover painting and drawing, sculpture, book art, interior design and digital photography. In crafts, the courses offered were stained glass, pottery, beadwork, lace making, jewellery, upholstery, furniture restoration, calligraphy, soft furnishing, creative embroidery and creative writing. There was a substantial increase in enrolments in 2009/10, amounting to 12% in craft and 9% in fine art. The area is managed by a curriculum manager supported by two assistant curriculum managers. Courses are delivered by 102 part-time tutors.

Key findings

- Retention and achievement are good at 95% and 96% respectively in 2009/10. In 2009/10 retention improved on craft courses alongside a substantial increase in recruitment across the area.
- Learners develop good practical skills and the majority are able to work on individual projects independently within and outside of their classes. Most craft learners have not developed their own visual language sufficiently well to express themselves on paper, but many have increased their aesthetic awareness through the use of visual diaries and are able to produce high-quality, attractive artefacts. Some learners participate in external exhibitions and sell their work.
- Learners enjoy their studies and those with mental health problems particularly value the opportunity to socialise, develop new skills and rebuild their confidence. The flexible approach in craft subjects enables learners to work on artefacts in ways appropriate to their skills, abilities and interests. Small group sizes and positive relationships enable tutors to have good knowledge of the individual needs of learners and of any circumstances which may affect learner progress or attendance.
- Learners feel safe and tutors respond well to the considerable needs of those with health problems. There is good liaison with external agencies to ensure that the care needs of vulnerable adults are met. Learners develop a good awareness of health and safety and conform to the safe practices in workshops.
- Teaching and learning are good. Tutors, many of whom are professional practitioners, set high standards and use demonstration techniques effectively to help learners build on their individual skills.
- The monitoring of learners' progress by tutors is effective. In craft sessions, tutors update records after each session to log the activities completed and how successful they were. There is excellent recording of learners' progress in pottery including the use of thumbnail images of the artefacts produced. In fine

art some excellent synopses of course outcomes, illustrated with learner work, are used to measure course outcomes.

- Craft tutors make very good use of initial assessment to differentiate activities and develop skills. They manage the wide range of abilities, interests and motivation well through a flexible approach to tasks and good one-to-one support for practical work. Fine art tutors do not always complete course documentation fully, and frequently fail to adequately assess learners' achievements against starting points. The progress made is therefore difficult to measure.
- The range of provision is good and meets the needs and interests of enrolled learners. Courses run in attractive, welcoming and well-equipped community venues. However, the availability of places for new learners on the more popular courses is sometimes restricted.
- Curriculum management is satisfactory. The area employs a substantial number of hourly-paid, geographically-dispersed staff. Managers have made successful efforts to improve communication through the use of newsletters, email and a virtual learning environment pilot project, backed up by one-to-one meetings. However, attendance at meetings by part-time tutors remains poor.
- Arrangements to promote equality and diversity are satisfactory overall. The curriculum area supports vulnerable learners well, particularly those with disabilities or learning difficulties. However, the promotion of equality and diversity in the curriculum is insufficiently developed, and some tutors fail to make use of naturally-occurring opportunities to deal with equality and diversity matters. Measures to provide for learners' health and safety are good.
- Lesson observation reports have insufficient focus on evaluative commentary to inform improvements in teaching and learning. Much of the comment on observation reports is descriptive, with limited information on the impact of the observed activities on the quality of teaching, learning and progress.

What does Surrey County Council need to do to improve further?

- Establish a systematic approach to initial assessment across the subject area, using learners' starting points and the already established progress monitoring techniques, to provide a more accurate view of the skills and knowledge acquired during the courses.
- Ensure new learners are able to access the more popular courses alongside the high number of repeat learners.
- Increase the involvement of tutors in meetings and training activities to help establish minimum standards for teaching and learning, and improve course management.
- Improve the evaluative content of lesson observation reports to better inform improvement strategies, ensuring that observations report more fully on the impact of teaching and assessment activities on learning.

Classical and modern foreign languages

Grade 2

Context

27. Currently 1,473 learners follow languages courses for social and personal development. Non-accredited courses in Chinese, Japanese, Norwegian, Polish, Spanish, Italian, Greek, German, French, Russian and Portuguese are offered at six different centres and five venues across the county, in the day and evening, and at a variety of levels. Taster courses, short intensive, holiday and culture programmes are also available to learners. An expanding English as a foreign language programme is offered in four venues. The provision is managed by a curriculum manager, supported by three assistant curriculum managers and is delivered by 52 sessional tutors.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. The achievement rates are good across the provision. Learners achieve their learning goals successfully. Retention rates and attendance are good. Learner numbers are increasing year on year. Learners enjoy their courses. They are well motivated, gain much confidence and make good progress.
- Learners acquire language skills which help them in their current employment, but also increase their opportunities for promotion. The lessons and the additional extra-curricular activities provide good opportunities for personal and social development. Learners make friends, gain knowledge of other cultures and maintain their health and well-being.
- Teaching and learning are good. Tutors make good use of the target language to give instructions and clear explanations on grammar. Many tutors make good use of information learning technology and the better tutors produce stimulating and colourful learning materials. However, many rely heavily on paper-based learning materials, some poorly photocopied.
- Schemes of work are well developed and most tutors use very effective strategies to encourage language practice. However, some tutors pay insufficient attention to pronunciation, including intonation.
- Initial assessment is good. Learners contribute effectively to the process by completing a self-assessment form and are placed in classes at appropriate levels. Assessment processes are flexible, inclusive and meet learners' needs. The processes for measuring the progress and achievement are satisfactory. However, these are heavily reliant on the quality of individual learning plans, which is sometimes variable.
- The provision meets the needs and interests of learners well. Classes take place in a range of locations across the county at times which suit learners. The subject area offers good progression opportunities. Centres are responsive in planning a programme which takes into account the needs and interests of learners in specific languages and levels.

- Care, guidance and support for learners are good. Learners receive good initial advice about courses and possible progression routes. Tutors provide much individual attention and support in class and also help learners catch up when they miss lessons by emailing work to their home.
- Leadership and management are good. Internal communication is good and staff work well as a team. Managers are responsive and provide good support to a large staff team. The induction processes are informative. The observation of teaching and learning is rigorous with detailed reports. Managers effectively monitor the action points through timely meetings and informal observations of classes.
- Tutors have good access to professional development. However, there is insufficient focus on subject-specific teaching and learning methods and approaches. Recent initiatives have been developed among tutor groups to share resources and learning materials, but it is too early to judge their impact.
- The promotion of safeguarding is good. In lessons, teachers pay good attention to safeguarding and health and safety. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Tutors make adequate use of inclusive practices in the classroom. They acknowledge and promote cultural diversity well in lessons. Managers collect data and set targets to ensure they take the necessary action to recruit under-represented groups.
- The self-assessment process is inclusive. Tutors contribute very detailed course reviews. Inspectors found many of the strengths and areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment report.

What does Surrey County Council need to do to improve further?

- Through professional development activity, ensure tutors use detailed learning objectives and a range of activities to improve learners' speaking and listening skills and pronunciation.
- Further monitor the quality of individual learning plans to ensure accurate recording of learners' achievements.

Family learning

Grade 2

Context

28. In 2009/10, 1,479 learners attended a range of family learning programmes across the whole county. Currently 306 learners are enrolled on 45 wider family learning (WFL) courses including 'magic maths' and understanding children's behaviour. There are 123 learners attending 18 family literacy, language and numeracy courses. An additional 55 learners attend 10 family learning initiative funded (FLIF) courses. Most courses are based in schools or children's centres, with a small minority in community venues. Thirteen per cent of learners are male and thirty per cent are from Black and minority ethnic groups.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Learners enjoy their learning and value the opportunities for social interaction and opportunities to share their parenting experiences with others. They gain increased confidence and skills in managing their children's behaviour and supporting their children's learning at school. Headteachers and children's centre managers value highly the work of family learning with the increased engagement of parents and progress of children.
- Many adult learners make good progress in improving their own literacy, numeracy and written language skills. Seventy learners gained entry level accreditation for their language learning. Many attend further family learning courses, volunteer in schools or gain employment. Others gain confidence to attend school meetings and events, often for the first time.
- Attendance is satisfactory overall, but is very sporadic on a significant minority of courses. The service has developed a rigorous strategy to monitor attendance and raise awareness of the importance of regular attendance. However, this has had little impact on attendance in entry level groups, particularly with those with language needs.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. Tutors are generally well qualified and knowledgeable in supporting learners to develop greater understanding of their children's needs. Learners enjoy practical activities, making resources to use with their children at home. Learners are challenged to try new ideas and methods with their children and evaluate the effectiveness of these in their next session. In some lessons tutors do not sufficiently check learners' understanding.
- Initial assessment is satisfactory. Tutors use a good range of methods to identify learners' skill levels which informs programme planning. However, not all tutors have sufficient experience or skills in identifying and meeting the needs of language learners. Some tutors are unable to plan effectively to develop speaking and listening skills of entry level learners. Often, language used for activities is overly complex and learners have insufficient opportunities to practise their speaking skills.
- The process of recording and monitoring learners' progress and achievement is well established. Tutors work alongside learners to set learning goals based on

initial assessment and learners' aspirations. However, the process is overly complex for entry level learners and becomes a tutor record rather than an effective tool or record for the learners.

- The range of courses is good. Courses are well designed to encourage first steps into learning in non-threatening, interesting environments. Courses effectively focus on the development needs of specific age groups as well as the basic skills needs of parents in supporting their children more effectively. Managers improve programmes in response to learner feedback.
- Partnership working is highly effective. Family learning staff target specific areas of deprivation and work very closely with children's centres, schools and community link workers to successfully identify and engage learners who would benefit from family programmes. Many learners are effectively supported into first-time learning situations by personal contact with partner workers rather than through impersonal publicity.
- Support and guidance for learners is good. Learners benefit from good opportunities to initially meet staff from agencies, such as nextstep and the Citizens' Advice Bureau, in the relaxed, familiar classroom setting. Learners are well supported in engaging with schools over their concerns about the behaviour and progress of their children.
- The service has a clear strategy to engage disadvantaged learners with low levels of educational experience and widen participation and involvement in the community. Family learning has over exceeded its recruitment targets over the last two years. Tutors have good access to high-quality training sessions to support improvements in delivery of learning.
- Equality and diversity are satisfactory. Learners are encouraged to set ground rules in lessons in terms of valuing others' views and working constructively with others from differing backgrounds. However, only 13% of learners are male and plans to increase participation have not yet been effective. Safeguarding of learners is good.
- The self-assessment process is satisfactory and the report is broadly accurate. Tutors are thoroughly involved in the process and use learner feedback to inform self-assessment. Observations of teaching and learning identify appropriate areas for development. However, the self-assessment report is insufficiently analytical and use of data is underdeveloped to inform quality improvement in some areas.

What does Surrey County Council need to do to improve further?

- Engage in more comprehensive negotiation with target learners as to times and modes of delivery to suit their lifestyles, aspirations and needs in order to improve attendance.
- Develop tutors' abilities to promote speaking and listening skills in all lessons, but particularly in those lessons involving learners with language needs.
- Simplify and illustrate the learner records of progress and achievement to make the process more accessible to learners and to better support learning.

- Aggregate data in order to identify trends and set clearer targets for improvements in attendance, male participation, accreditation uptake and achievement and progression.

Information about the inspection

29. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's quality and curriculum manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the local Skills Funding Agency or other funding bodies, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
30. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the provider. They also observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the provider offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Surrey County Council ACL

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Leamer responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Adult safeguarded learning
Approximate number of enrolled learners		
Full-time learners	10,715	10,715
Part-time learners		
Overall effectiveness	2	2
Capacity to improve	2	
Outcomes for learners	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2	
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2	
How well do learners progress?	2	
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2	
How safe do learners feel?	2	
<i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	-	
<i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	-	
Quality of provision	2	2
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2	
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2	
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	3	
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2	
Leadership and management	2	2
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2	
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2	
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2	
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3	
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2	
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2	
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2	

*where applicable to the type of provision

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