

Inspection of Leicestershire County Council

Inspection dates: 14 to 17 January 2025

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

Information about this provider

Leaders at Leicestershire County Council offer education and training for adult learners and apprentices, the largest programmes of which are tailored learning, adult skills and family learning. Leaders offer courses online and in around 49 dedicated learning centres across Leicestershire, including community centres, libraries and schools.

At the time of the inspection, there were just over 2,000 adult learners studying a broad range of accredited and non-accredited courses, from pre-entry to level 3. Courses are offered in key areas such as English, mathematics, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), employability and digital skills, learning for independence, well-being, family learning, mental health and languages, including British Sign Language.

Apprentices study level 2 adult care worker, level 3 payroll administrator, level 3 business administrator, level 3 team leader or supervisor, level 3 teaching assistant, level 3 early years educator and level 5 payroll assistant manager standards. There are 52 current apprentices, with fewer than five aged 16 to 18.

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

Due to the friendly and inclusive environment, learners and apprentices feel welcomed and valued. Learners are very positive about the sense of belonging that they experience, which makes them feel part of a supportive learning community. Apprentices benefit from tutors who provide the individualised help that they need to thrive.

Most learners and apprentices gain new knowledge, skills, and professional behaviours that enable them to progress to the next stage of their personal journey or future careers. Learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) on the learning for independence course develop the confidence and social skills for living independently. Most apprentices understand their study topics well and can confidently apply their new knowledge at work.

Learners build their confidence by engaging in community activities such as exhibiting their work at local museums and creating a video guide for the local museum to help visitors with neurodiversity prepare for their visit. Tutors design and plan the apprenticeship curriculum with employers to ensure that payroll administrator apprentices develop the skills to use complex payroll systems.

Learners and apprentices feel safe and comfortable reporting safeguarding or welfare concerns. They are confident that staff will take their concerns seriously and provide appropriate support.

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

Leaders have a clear rationale for their adult learning and apprenticeship curriculum offer. They focus on developing courses that support the council's broader strategic aims related to improved opportunities, safety and well-being, building stronger communities, strengthening the economy and sustainability. For example, on ESOL courses, managers work with refugee resettlement teams to identify any specific language support that learners may need. They also offer a range of community programmes such as sewing and bhangra dancing to encourage a diverse range of learners to participate. As learners master new techniques and see their progress, their confidence grows. The social interaction, sense of accomplishment, and physical activity help to improve learners' mental health and well-being.

Most tutors plan their curriculums logically, allowing learners to build foundational knowledge before tackling more complex topics. For example, ESOL tutors organise lessons around specific topics, ensuring that learners understand key vocabulary and grammar before progressing to more advanced reading and writing tasks. Apprentices enrol on courses throughout the year. They receive good support from tutors at the start of their apprenticeship to determine the most suitable sequence of topics to study.

In most cases, tutors use their expertise well to plan and teach effectively. They make suitable use of presentations and demonstrations to provide clear and precise explanations. They use a range of methods to enable learners to learn more effectively and enhance their ability to retain information over time. For example, digital skills tutors use their expertise to provide personalised support, and community learning tutors plan engaging activities linked to cultural events and holidays. Tutors of payroll apprentices use a range of complex scenarios to illustrate contrasting approaches that apprentices can use to resolve payroll issues in different workplace settings.

Most tutors use a range of appropriate assessments and strategies to check learners' understanding and recall of knowledge. For example, in adult community tap dancing, tutors demonstrate steps to a particular dance while watching the class in a mirror to identify learners struggling with their technique and provide individualised support. In English and mathematics sessions, tutors set individualised tasks and use questioning effectively to check learners' understanding and reinforce key concepts. On apprenticeships, tutors do not consistently check apprentices' understanding well enough.

Most tutors use a range of effective activities to help learners practise their new knowledge and skills. For example, tutors in learning for independence courses use arts and crafts, games, and social activities to help learners improve their independence, practise and apply their learning. However, in a few cases, such as in ESOL and on some apprenticeships, activities are less carefully chosen or appropriate, which occasionally results in confusion among learners and apprentices about key concepts being taught.

Leaders have suitable arrangements to identify and support learners and apprentices with SEND. Tutors receive training and guidance from a SEND specialist to help them provide appropriate support to learners and apprentices. Tutors provide a range of suitable support mechanisms, such as in-class support and individualised learning resources. As a result, most learners and apprentices with SEND progress well on their courses.

Tutors support learners to make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills. Adult pottery learners produce work to a very high standard, using complex patterns, techniques and firing sequences. The focus and creativity involved in pottery provides a calming effect, helping learners to reduce stress and anxiety. Learners significantly boost their belief in their own abilities and reduce self-doubt. Apprentice payroll administrators can confidently apply what they have learned at work and take on more challenging tasks.

Achievement across the adult learning programme is not consistently high. In a number of subjects, including GCSE mathematics, a high proportion of learners achieve their qualifications. However, in others, such as ESOL and on some essential digital skills courses, achievement is not high enough. Most apprentices complete their courses successfully, and a high proportion now achieve distinction grades.

Most learners and apprentices receive suitable careers guidance to help them plan their next steps. Many learners who complete their accredited courses progress to study further, and apprentices often secure promotions, gain increased responsibilities or move to a higher level of study. However, too few learners on non-accredited courses receive appropriate careers advice and guidance.

In most cases, leaders' quality assurance activities are appropriate for identifying issues and implementing improvements across curriculums. Leaders use performance review meetings and 'GOAL' process reviews, which have resulted in improvements. However, leaders and managers do not implement quality assurance and monitoring processes well enough across a few adult learning courses, such as ESOL, or on apprenticeships.

Governance arrangements are effective. Elected members have sufficient oversight of strategic and curriculum developments. They have access to appropriate performance data, which they use to scrutinise and challenge leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Make sure that tutors on apprenticeships consistently use effective assessment strategies to check apprentices' understanding.
- Improve the quality of teaching practice in ESOL and on the business administrator apprenticeship, so it is consistently high.
- Provide learners on non-accredited tailored learning courses with effective careers advice and guidance.
- Improve quality assurance arrangements so they are effective across all curriculum areas.

Provider details

Unique reference number	52998
Address	Room 700, County Hall Leicester Road Glenfield Leicester LE3 8RF
Contact number	01162 323232
Website	www.golearnleicestershire.ac.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Paul Fleming
Provider type	Community learning and skills-local authority
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2018
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

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

Inspection team

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