

# Ofsted Inspection: Employment and Skills Service, Adult Learning and Employer Provider Apprenticeships

Date: 7th February 2024

Report of: Director of City Development

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## Brief summary

This report is to share the key judgements and full report of the recent four-day full Ofsted inspection of the Employment and Skills Service, Adult Learning and Employer Provider Apprenticeship programmes.

The provision was found to be **outstanding** in all areas. Leeds City Council is the first Local Authority to achieve the outstanding judgement since the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) commenced in September 2019.

Adult Learning programmes are targeted to areas with the highest levels of deprivation (top 20% Lower Super Output Area). At the time of inspection 42% (418) of adult learners who had completed a course with the Employment and Skills Service, self-declared that they held no prior qualifications. This judgement underlines the contribution of the service to the Best City Ambition, tackling poverty and inequality and supporting our learners to improve their quality of life while developing more of the skills local employers need.

## Recommendations

- a) Note the content of the report and celebrate the fact that Leeds City Council is the first Local Authority, to achieve the Outstanding judgement since the new Education Inspection Framework (EIF) commenced in September 2019.
- b) Note that the Employment and Skills Service has improved from its previous inspection and judgement of Good to Outstanding.
- c) Note there are no areas for improvement.
- d) Formally record the appreciation and congratulations of the Board to all those involved in the inspection.

## What is this report about?

- 1 This report presents the findings of the recent Ofsted inspection of Leeds City Council, Employment and Skills Service, Adult Learning and Employer Provider Apprenticeships. This was a full inspection and was carried out between 11th December to 14th December 2023. The inspection report was published on 25 January 2024 and is included at Appendix 1. At the time of inspection there were 564 learners on non-accredited adult learning courses funded by West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) The main curriculum areas include English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), preparation for learning and employment and courses in health, wellbeing and confidence. There were 50 apprentices on standards in team leader, operations manager, chartered manager and senior leader, most of whom are employees of the council. All learners and apprentices are over the age of 19.

The judgements are as follows:

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The quality of education	<b>Outstanding</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Adult learning programmes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Apprenticeships	<b>Outstanding</b>

- 2 The previous inspection of the Employment and Skills service was in February 2017. This was a short two-day inspection. The outcome of that inspection was that; ‘this provider continues to be good’. This inspection was under the old inspection framework, the Common Inspection Framework (CIF).
- 3 Since that inspection the service started to deliver Employer Provider Apprenticeships and a new inspection framework was implemented, the Education Inspection Framework (EIF), which commenced in September 2019. Leeds City Council is the first Local Authority to achieve the Outstanding judgement under this new framework.

## Summary of the general findings

- 4 “Adult learners gain valuable skills, which often transform their lives. They benefit from a highly ambitious curriculum that meets a diverse range of needs across the city, widens participation in learning, improves life chances and develops stronger communities. Learners are supported very well to achieve aspiring and personalised targets relevant to their skills, age and phase of education. They are motivated and empowered to make the transition to further learning or employment.”
- 5 “Teachers have high expectations of their learners, many of whom face significant barriers to learning. They know their learners well and take effective action to enable them to participate fully in education. Teachers are clear about the importance of attendance, conduct and hard work. Learners value the support of their teachers and reciprocate by maintaining good attendance, arriving punctually and taking part enthusiastically in learning sessions.”
- 6 “Learners and apprentices demonstrate significant commitment beyond the requirements of their programme. They are actively involved in projects to support their peers and the local community and build their understanding of social issues affecting the lives of others. For example, many adult learners volunteer at local foodbanks, making and selling products to raise

money for those in need, and donate toys for local Christmas projects. Apprentices use the knowledge and skills that they gain through their programmes to make positive contributions in their local communities. For example, apprentices have set up and run a community youth football team using their increased confidence in and understanding of project management and finance.”

- 7 “Leaders and staff have created a highly effective personal and social development programme for learners and apprentices which supports them well for their future employment and in their everyday lives. Teachers consistently and extensively promote the personal development of learners and apprentices under five key themes, which are employability skills, volunteering, digital skills, next steps and health and well-being. They effectively adapt the programme to make it contextually relevant to each programme.”

### **Summary of more specific findings**

- 8 “Leaders have a very secure understanding of the quality of provision, including at the subcontractors. They carry out reviews of the quality of teaching, hold meetings with learners and apprentices and scrutinise learners’ work to assess the quality of their provision. Leaders make good use of the information that they gather from these activities to identify and provide highly effective and focused staff training and development opportunities. Staff, including those at the subcontractors, rapidly improve and sustain their high-quality teaching skills and practice.”
- 9 “Teachers ensure that learners and apprentices are prepared well for the next phase of education, training or employment. Learners and apprentices receive regular reviews about their progress, which they discuss eagerly. They make practical plans for their next steps and are very well informed about relevant routes based on their circumstances and aspirations. Apprentices are inspired and confident to apply for new management roles, and adult learners are well informed and prepared to move on to their next phase of learning.”
- 10 “Leaders and managers provide a curriculum that contributes well to meeting current skills needs by supporting adults into employment or further study. They work very effectively with a wide range of stakeholders, including WYCA and employers such as the NHS, to gather information about local needs. They use this information very well to inform and develop their curriculum to keep it relevant and current.”
- 11 “Governance processes are very strong. Those with governance responsibility are confident to support and challenge senior leaders and have sustained a strong focus on securing improvements in all aspects of the provision. Leaders receive support, challenge and scrutiny from various bodies within the council, including the executive board, the scrutiny board and the community committees. Governors and senior leaders work together effectively to maintain the positive reputation of Leeds City Council’s employment and skills service in the community. They are justifiably proud of the positive contribution that it makes to the local area.”

### **Areas identified for improvement**

- 12 There are no areas for improvement in the report.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 13 There is no proposal resulting from this report, it is for information purposes only.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

14 This judgement underlines the contribution of the Employment and Skills service to the Best City Ambition, tackling poverty and inequality and improving quality of life for our learners. The Employment and Skills service lives the 'Team Leeds' values working with a wide range of partners including WYCA, the NHS and a wide range of skills providers and employers to deliver the best possible provision for individual learners. The skills provision directly contributes to the delivery of inclusive growth, ensuring that everyone is able to thrive in the Leeds economy and makes a positive contribution to the lives of thousands of Leeds residents.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: None

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

15 Prior to the inspection learner, staff and employer surveys were circulated by Ofsted. The results were shared during the inspection which were very positive. Numerous Deep Dives of specific curriculum areas were undertaken throughout the inspection, on both the Adult Learning provision and the Employer Provider Apprenticeships, where inspectors also talked to learners, apprentices', tutors, partners, leaders and managers. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority, as commissioner of adult education, was engaged throughout the inspection.

## What are the resource implications?

16 The challenging financial environment in which the Council is currently operating may impact on service delivery in the future and the ability to achieve such a positive assessment.

## What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

17 No key risks identified. There is an ongoing programme of Quality Assurance activity to ensure that delivery of Adult Learning provision and Employer Provider Apprenticeships maintains a high standard.

## What are the legal implications?

18 No legal implications.

## Options, timescales and measuring success

### What other options were considered?

19 No other options considered.

### How will success be measured?

20 Leeds will continue to be subject to Ofsted inspection activity but having the Outstanding judgement means there will not be another inspection for 6 years. This is providing there is nothing identified during the annual Ofsted desk top risk assessment. The directorate will bring further updates to Executive Board as and when appropriate.

## **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

21 Not applicable.

### **Appendices**

- Leeds City Council Final Ofsted Report

### **Background papers**

- None.