

INSPECTION REPORT

Salford City Council

14 October 2005



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

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 aged over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnndirect** 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.

Pre-inspection analysis

The resources allocated to a cycle 2 inspection are primarily determined by the findings from the previous inspection. Account is also taken of information about achievement and retention obtained from the funding body, and any significant changes in the size or scope of the provision.

Where a provider has received good grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is relatively light. If the provider offers a number of areas of learning, a restricted sample is inspected.

Where a provider has received satisfactory grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is less intensive and it is possible that not all areas of learning are included.

Where there are significant unsatisfactory grades from cycle 1, the intensity of the cycle 2 inspection is broadly the same as cycle 1, and all significant areas of learning are inspected.

Providers that have not previously been inspected will receive a full inspection.

Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half of the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and in at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning.

Grading

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

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - inadequate*

INSPECTION REPORT

Salford City Council

Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Overall effectiveness	1
Key challenges for Salford City Council	2
Grades	2
About the inspection	2
Key Findings	3
What learners like about Salford City Council	7
What learners think Salford City Council could improve	7

Detailed inspection findings

Leadership and management	11
Equality of opportunity	12
Quality improvement	13
Preparation for life and work	15
Family learning	18

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The Family Adult and Community Learning (FACL) service is part of Salford City Council's lifelong learning team. Its present organisation is relatively new. Previously, the service subcontracted out all of the provision, but from November 2003 it stopped the subcontracted provision almost entirely and started to deliver the service directly. The FACL manager manages the service and reports to the head of lifelong learning who reports to the assistant director, transition. The management structure of the FACL service is under review.

2. The FACL service offers courses in six areas of learning throughout Salford and family learning in Little Hulton, but some have very few enrolments. The areas of learning covered by this inspection were preparation for life and work programmes, including literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and family learning.

3. Salford is part of the Greater Manchester conurbation. It is predominately urban and, according to the 2001 census, it has a population of approximately 216,103. The proportion of the city from minority ethnic groups is 3.9 per cent. The 2001 census indicates that Salford has twice the national average of people who are permanently sick or disabled. The city ranks as the 12th most deprived authority in the UK, with 40 per cent of the population living in the 10 most deprived wards in the country.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 4

4. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate.** Salford's FACL leadership and management, quality improvement and its approach to equality of opportunity are all inadequate. Its provision is satisfactory in preparation for life and work and family learning.

5. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The 2004-05 self-assessment report used for inspection is in its third draft. It has recently been sent out for consultation with the local partners. Staff have been involved in the assessment. The previous self-assessment report was drawn up by the curriculum team only. Salford's FACL service makes good use of learners' feedback in the areas of learning. The self-assessment report used for the inspection is well structured and broadly accurate in its assessment of leadership and management, although it overstates some strengths. In the areas of learning, inspectors judged that one of the two areas had been down-graded. A development plan is in its initial stages.

6. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** Salford's FACL management have made good progress in implementing the action plan that was developed after the consultants' review. However, it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of these improvements. The service has reviewed the management structure and the additional appointments are now planned for January 2006. Quality assurance procedures were developed from January 2004 and are now complete. The framework is comprehensive and covers the important aspects of the learners' experience.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR SALFORD CITY COUNCIL:

- introduce systematic monitoring of performance
- incorporate quality improvement into the provision
- improve curriculum development and planning
- develop family learning provision to meet the needs of learners throughout the city
- promote awareness of the skills for life agenda
- raise awareness of equality and diversity and health and safety

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = inadequate

Leadership and management		4
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		4
Quality improvement		4

Preparation for life and work			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
ESOL			
Adult and community learning	43	3	
Literacy and numeracy			
Adult and community learning	33	3	

Family learning			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Adult and community learning			
Adult and community learning	50	3	

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

7. The inspectors inspected and graded leadership and management, including quality improvement and equality of opportunity, preparation for life and work and family learning. Some of the information and communications technology (ICT) programmes were inspected as part of the preparation for life and work provision. Salford's FACL service also runs classes in science and mathematics, health, public services and care, ICT, arts, media and publishing. At the time of inspection there were insufficient programmes running in these areas of learning to make a judgement, but they were used to contribute towards judgements in leadership and management.

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	20
Number of learners interviewed	73
Number of staff interviewed	22
Number of subcontractors interviewed	1
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	17
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	9
Number of visits	48

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

8. The learners' achievement on all preparation for life and work courses is satisfactory. Learners work towards nationally recognised qualifications in literacy and numeracy at levels 1 or 2, and accredited units at entry level in literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

9. In family learning, achievement rates for 2004-05 are satisfactory, with 50 per cent of learners achieving all aspects of their individual learning plans. A significant proportion of learners achieve most of their personal learning goals.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Preparation for life and work	0	7	0	0	7
Family learning	1	4	1	0	6
Total	1	11	1	0	13

10. **In preparation for life and work, the teaching and learning are good.** Learners enjoy lively and challenging lessons and get involved. They work at their own pace and are entered for tests as soon as they are ready. Homework is an integral part of literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses and this promotes independent study. Tutors mark the learners' homework and provide them with constructive feedback. There is group feedback on homework and then the learners work independently or with the support of the tutor.

11. **In family learning, the teaching and learning are good.** Most sessions are well planned, with clear learning aims and objectives, which the learners understand well. Tutors use a wide range of teaching methods, reflecting those used in school with the children. They incorporate good differentiation into lesson plans to meet individual learners' needs. Tutors and learners focus well on the tasks and achieve a great deal within limited timescales.

12. **In preparation for life and work, the monitoring of learners' progress is good.**

Planning for group and individual learning is thorough, with comprehensive schemes of work and lesson plans. Group and individual targets are identified on lesson plans. Tutors are skilled at developing learners' skills in the context of topics that are relevant to their everyday lives.

Leadership and management

13. Salford's FACL service has developed good links with local agencies to plan its provision. This was identified in its most recent self-assessment report. Collaboration with local colleges has enabled an equitable distribution of the provision across the area, according to need.

14. The organisation has made good progress on the action plan. This was developed after external consultants carried out a review of the service in February 2005.

15. The FACL service has good initiatives to widen the participation of learners from under-represented groups. It has good links with many local organisations and it is able to use these connections to target provision for particular learners.

16. The organisation has good working relationships with schools in the Hulton Excellence in Cities Action Zone (EiCAZ). Head teachers are very supportive of the family learning provision, and value highly the positive benefits that it confers on parents, children and the schools. They appreciate the opportunities to engage with parents in a way that they do not find threatening.

17. The organisation's control and provision of data was poor during 2004-05. The FACL service has had difficulty in producing accurate data to use as a basis for decision-making. It has identified significant errors between registers and enrolment data.

18. The FACL's service management of performance is inadequate. Staff do not regularly monitor recruitment, attendance, retention and achievement, and performance against targets. Staff and management meetings do not discuss all aspects of performance except when underperformance is noted.

19. The organisation's quality assurance arrangements are not sufficiently established. It did not recognise the significance of this in its most recent self-assessment report. Quality assurance procedures were developed from January 2004 and are now complete. A new quality assurance calendar ensures staff are aware of the timing of specific events. The new framework is comprehensive and covers the important aspects of the learners' experience. However, there is insufficient emphasis on checking the effectiveness of improvement actions and measuring quality improvement.

20. The organisation's use of management information to help develop curriculum planning in its provision for preparation for life and work is insufficient. It does not routinely use data to examine trends to plan for curriculum development. It does not routinely monitor performance.

21. In family learning, curriculum development is insufficient. The FACL service has offered the provision for the past two years, and parents are ready to progress, but it has insufficient staff to support this development. There is no team leader for family learning

across the city, and the organisation is not developing appropriate progression routes.

22. The focus on quality improvement for skills for life provision is insufficient. Skills for life is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. The appointment of a team leader has not yet happened and this is severely affecting the quality of the provision to enable co-ordination of the skills for life provision. The manager of the service has received skills for life awareness training but this has not been disseminated fully to other members of staff.

23. The provision to meet the needs of learners across the city is inadequate. The family learning provision is concentrated on the Little Hulton EiCAZ. Parents outside of this zone have no access to family learning opportunities. The organisation's provision is limited and it is unable to spread good practice.

24. The promotion of equality of opportunity within the FACL service is inadequate. The organisation has not offered staff any appropriate training to raise their awareness of equality and diversity issues. However, the learning plan for 2005-06 has some training for staff scheduled for spring 2006.

25. The monitoring of health and safety and equal opportunities is inadequate. Not all venues have been audited by a health and safety specialist. Teaching staff have not received training in risk assessment or health and safety good practice.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good links with local agencies to plan its provision
- good initiatives to widen the participation of learners from under-represented groups
- good progress in rectifying many of the weaknesses from the service review

Weaknesses

- poor control and provision of management information
- inadequate management of performance
- inadequate monitoring of health and safety
- inadequate promotion of equal opportunities and diversity
- insufficiently established quality improvement

Preparation for life and work

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- good monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of management information to help develop curriculum planning
- insufficient focus on quality improvement in the skills for life provision

Family learning

Adult and community learning

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- good working relationships with schools in the action zone

Weaknesses

- insufficient curriculum development
- inadequate provision to meet the needs of learners across the city

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT SALFORD CITY COUNCIL:

- 'it's been great fun - you get something out of it. The kids enjoy it, and they can make a mess'
- 'I've come to all the sessions - it's fantastic. The kids love it, and we do other things at home. I don't remember doing things like this at school'
- 'the course fits in with the kids. I'm really glad I came'
- 'before I came here, I was worried that I wouldn't be able to help my kids with their homework. Now I feel I can ... I don't feel so hopeless. I hated school myself, but I can do things now I couldn't then'
- 'it's brilliant'
- 'crèche facilities are really important'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK SALFORD CITY COUNCIL COULD IMPROVE:

- learners on the skills for life provision feel that one session each week is not enough - they would like more sessions
- the signs at some venues to indicate car parking and disabled access

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 Mentor		Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them
Learning goals	Main learning goals Secondary		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. 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 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 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.
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 self managing, sustainable communities.

Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make 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 4

Strengths

- good links with local agencies to plan its provision
- good initiatives to widen the participation of learners from under-represented groups
- good progress in rectifying many of the weaknesses from the service review

Weaknesses

- poor control and provision of management information
- inadequate management of performance
- inadequate monitoring of health and safety
- inadequate promotion of equal opportunities and diversity
- insufficiently established quality improvement

26. The FACL service has developed good links with local agencies to plan its provision. It identified this in its most recent self-assessment report. Collaboration with local colleges has enabled the equitable distribution of the provision across the area, according to need. The FACL service and colleges identify gaps or duplication in provision and rectify them. A new website hosted by a local college displays the range of provision available and this is accessible through the council's website. Negotiation with other agencies has determined the type of offer that might attract the learners. The well-structured strategic plan for the FACL service clearly defines its aims and sets targets for delivery and how it can achieve these. However, links to the city council's corporate plan and the three-year development plan are not explicit. The FACL service is represented on the Salford lifelong learning partnership and works closely with a number of voluntary organisations. The service has good links with schools for family learning provision.

27. Courses take place at various venues across Salford. Many take place in schools and some are in community centres. The FACL service uses an 'ICT bus' to provide courses in different locations. The resources available are generally satisfactory. Rooms are usually well furnished and pleasant environments. In some centres, although ICT resources are available they are not always used.

28. Staff development is satisfactory. Staff training needs are identified through individual meetings, programme and team meetings, and through the appraisal process. A good range of staff development has taken place using a variety of in-house and external training. Considerable work has been carried out in-house to train new staff to understand the range of adult and community learning provision and how to plan their lessons and support learners. The FACL service has not made training in equal opportunities and health and safety a priority.

29. The organisation's most recent self-assessment report recognised that the control and provision of data was poor during 2004-05. The FACL service has had difficulty in

producing accurate data to use as a basis for decision-making. It has identified significant errors between registers and enrolment data. Some enrolment data was incomplete. Tutors failed to complete registers and enrolment data accurately. Learners were not withdrawn at appropriate times and some were enrolled on the wrong course codes. Family learning learners were not registered on the management information systems, and subcontractors' data had not been included. No one member of staff was responsible for the system. Significant work was carried out during July 2005 to ensure the reliability of the data and many learners were removed from the system. The FACL service has now implemented control procedures and checks registers each week. The organisation quickly recognises any discrepancies between registers and enrolment forms and follows them up. Audits are scheduled to take place every six weeks to review learners' records. The FACL service has now appointed a member of staff to manage the system and has provided training for staff. It has agreed data formats for subcontracted courses so that they are compatible with its management information system.

30. The organisation's management of performance is inadequate. This was not fully recognised in the self-assessment report. Staff do not regularly monitor recruitment, attendance, retention, achievement, and performance against targets. Staff and management meetings do not discuss all aspects of performance except when underperformance is noted. Reports to the assistant director concentrate mainly on budgets rather than performance, as do reports to the council's lead member. The quality improvement group minutes indicate no discussion of performance. Although targets for the provision were derived in consultation with staff, the targets were based on inaccurate data. The management of the subcontracted provision has been unsatisfactory. The council failed to draw up a contract for the provision by a local college in 2004-05. It did not monitor the quality and performance of the subcontractor. However, a new contract for 2005-06 clearly specifies the quality assurance requirements. The FACL service has recently carried out an audit of the college's arrangements to ensure that they are appropriate. Monthly meetings are now scheduled to monitor performance. During 2004-05, the service did not carry out sufficiently close financial monitoring of the budget. The budget for family learning was underspent for the past two years. During this time, the organisation did not provide additional courses to meet the learners' needs. Financial management systems are now carefully planned for 2005-06. Budgets are allocated that take into account the range of grants and the funding stream. Costs are allocated to each of these income sources and are profiled across the year. The FACL service now monitors the budget closely.

31. The organisation does not monitor health and safety adequately. In response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, Salford City Council and the FACL service audited buildings that the organisation uses for access by learners with mobility difficulties. However, not all venues have had the appropriate adaptations made. The FACL service uses Salford City Council's corporate services statement for health and safety, which was produced in August 2004. Health and safety audits have been completed for only 75 per cent of the venues used by the FACL service. Teaching staff have not received training in risk assessment or health and safety good practice. Accurate, locally collected data has only been available recently.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 4

32. The FACL service used Salford City Council's equal opportunities policy statement to produce its own contextualised policy in March 2005.

33. The organisation has good initiatives to widen the participation of learners from under-represented groups. It has good links with many organisations in Salford and it is able to use these connections to target its provision for particular learners. For example, Broughton Trust, a voluntary organisation working in the area, identifies learners with particular needs and then arranges with Salford's FACL service how to meet these needs. The service provides tutors and crèche facilities, while the voluntary organisation arranges the venue and ongoing support for learners as they progress. Family learning has organised a series of successful workshops for men as part of their 'Dads and Lads' programme. There is a well-established Asian fashion group held on Saturdays, which offers an opportunity for learners to learn sewing and literacy and numeracy. The service is also establishing new links with the Jewish community to deliver literacy and numeracy. Salford's FACL service has 13.6 per cent of learners from minority ethnic groups, which is considerably higher than the 3.9 per cent of the population of Salford that come from minority ethnic groups. Crèche facilities are available at some of the venues.

34. The promotion of equality of opportunity within the service is inadequate. The head of lifelong learning attended training on equal opportunities provided by Salford City Council, but no other members of the FACL service have attended this training. The service has not offered its staff any other appropriate training to raise their awareness of equality and diversity issues. However, the learning plan for 2005-06 has some training for service staff scheduled for spring 2006. The new learners' guide includes sections on equality of opportunity and the complaints procedure, but there is little monitoring of whether promotional and learning materials follow equal opportunities good practice. For example, there is no evidence that the learners' guide or promotional material are available in large print or different languages. Equality of opportunity is not regularly discussed at the service's staff meetings. A formal complaints procedure is in place, but this is the council's procedure and is not always suitable to meet the needs of the learners. Learners did not receive formal information regarding the complaints procedure until September 2005, when the new learners' handbook was produced. There are no recorded complaints from learners. The organisation collects data on learners' participation by gender and ethnicity, but makes insufficient use of this data to target under-represented groups or to plan future provision.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 4

35. Consultants carried out a review of the FACL service in February 2005 and identified significant weaknesses. The service has made good progress on the resulting action plan, but it has only recently completed many of the actions. These include redesign of individual learning plans, improvements to internal verification and financial management, a contract with the subcontractor, control systems for registers, the production of a learners' handbook and the completion of the quality assurance system. It is too soon to judge the effectiveness of these improvements. The service has reviewed the management structure and proposed additional appointments. The review identified two new posts of team leader and a post for quality management. However, delays between identifying these posts, now planned for January 2006, and the appointment of staff, have affected the management of the curriculum and its development. The council's lead member has been kept informed of the progress against the action plan and the council's scrutiny committee received a copy of the review in February.

36. The FACL's quality assurance arrangements are not sufficiently established. The

significance of this was not recognised in its most recent self-assessment report. Quality assurance procedures were developed from January 2004 and are now complete. A new quality assurance calendar ensures that staff are aware of the timing of specific events. The framework is comprehensive and covers the important aspects of the learners' experience. However, there is insufficient emphasis on checking the effectiveness of changes and measuring quality improvement.

37. The service's course reviews are ineffective. They are carried out by individual tutors and are often superficial in identifying areas for improvement. The reviews are insufficiently self-critical and sometimes they are not completed consistently. No checks are evident that suggest changes take place. Overall evaluation of the reviews concentrates on improvement to the review process rather than changes to courses. The service recognises the need for interim reviews for 36-week courses and it is implementing a 12-weekly course review process.

38. The FACL service does not use learners' feedback for quality improvement. Analysis of learners' feedback does not focus sufficiently on improving the provision and no clear action plans have been drawn up. Teaching and learning observations carried out by the service in 2004-05 did not identify closely enough the learning that takes place. Joint observations to ensure the accuracy of judgements on teaching and learning have not yet taken place. Area of learning specialist staff are not used to carrying out observations. During 2004-05, all tutors were observed, either by the service's staff or by the consultants carrying out the review.

39. Observations of teaching and learning are inadequate. Follow-up observations have not regularly taken place for staff except where performance is below an overall satisfactory grade. Internal verification is satisfactory. Internal verification carried out in June revealed significant errors in assessment and there were discussions to improve the approach of assessors.

40. The organisation's most recent self-assessment report is in its third draft. It has recently been sent out for consultation with the local partners. Staff have been involved in the assessment. The local college that acts as a subcontractor has also contributed to the process. The previous self-assessment report was drawn up by the curriculum team only. The service makes use of learners' feedback in the areas of learning. The self-assessment report is well structured and broadly accurate in its assessment of leadership and management, but it overstates some of the strengths. In areas of learning, inspectors judged that one of the two had been down-graded. A development plan is in its initial stages.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Preparation for life and work

Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL Adult and community learning	43	3
Literacy and numeracy Adult and community learning	33	3

41. At the time of the inspection, 76 learners are taking part in literacy and numeracy and ESOL programmes. Salford's FACL service offers classes at adult education centres and at community venues throughout the area, such as local authority community centres, voluntary organisation community centres, schools, and libraries. The six fractional tutors work at more than one location. Learners can join courses at any time throughout the year and usually attend one learning session a week. Learning sessions offer teaching and learning in the contexts of work, everyday life, community settings and citizenship. Salford's FACL service offers discrete courses for dyslexic learners. All learners work to achieve the learning goals agreed with them at the start of their programme of learning. Approximately 80 per cent of the learners work towards nationally recognised qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ESOL at entry levels 1 to 3, and national tests in literacy and numeracy at levels 1 and 2. The FACL service offers accredited units for entry level learners in literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Skills for life is established across all vocational areas. All sessions run for two hours.

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- good monitoring of learners' progress

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of management information to help develop curriculum planning
- insufficient focus on quality improvement in the skills for life provision

Achievement and standards

42. Learners' achievement on all courses is satisfactory. Learners work towards nationally recognised qualifications in literacy and numeracy at level 1 or 2 and accredited units at entry level literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Seventeen learners achieved qualifications in literacy or numeracy for 2003-04. One hundred per cent achieved targets against their individual learning goals in 2003-04. Attainment on all non-accredited courses is now good at 80 per cent. Learners are confident to work on their own and share their presentation with others. In literacy and numeracy classes, learners are able to demonstrate their skills to their colleagues.

The quality of provision

43. Teaching and learning are good at the FACL service. Standards of teaching and learning are good on all courses. Learners enjoy lively and challenging lessons and get involved. Lessons include group teaching, small group activity, paired work and individual programmes of study. They work at their own pace and are entered for tests as soon as they are ready. Tutors prepare appropriate materials for all ability levels. Homework is an integral part of literacy and numeracy and ESOL courses and this promotes independent study. Tutors mark homework and provide the learners with constructive feedback. There is group feedback on homework and then learners work independently or with tutor support.

44. Learners make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy or language skills and become more independent. For example, learners on literacy and numeracy courses improve their accuracy in spelling, decoding words and doing calculations. They are more confident carrying out tasks involving literacy in front of other people, such as helping their children with homework, reading manuals at work and understanding weights and measures. Similarly, many learners on ESOL courses significantly improve their pronunciation, accuracy in grammar and command of vocabulary, appropriate to the levels of their courses. Most learners improve their ability to communicate more effectively in English in situations critical to their economic and social well-being.

45. Monitoring of the learners' progress is good. Planning for group and individual learning is thorough, with comprehensive schemes of work and lesson plans. Group and individual targets are identified on lesson plans. Tutors are skilled at developing learners' skills in the context of topics that are relevant to learners' everyday lives. They have a good understanding of learners' difficulties in grasping concepts. They provide good explanations and skilfully adapt their teaching methods to help learners fully understand the concepts and methods they are learning. In literacy, numeracy and ESOL, learners are aware of their individual targets and what they need to do to improve their skills. They receive detailed and accurate feedback on their progress towards their learning goals. Most learners participate well in learning activities and benefit from the opportunities to communicate in different contexts.

46. Tutors work well with learners and encourage them to support each other among the groups. Tutors provide the learners with appropriate verbal feedback on their progress. Learners are able to identify their learning and can demonstrate increased skills throughout the sessions. For example, one learner had learnt to use a spidergram to plan writing and had shown her daughter this technique to describe the doll she wanted for Christmas. The reports completed by external verifiers are good. However, the internal verification reports are more descriptive than evaluative.

47. In some sessions the use of information and learning technology is good. Learning resources are satisfactory in literacy, numeracy and ESOL community programmes. Paper-based learning resources are appropriate and of a good standard. Tutors encourage the learners to practise new skills at home using a range of learning materials that they provide them with. Teaching accommodation is satisfactory and the general accommodation is welcoming to learners.

48. Support for learners is satisfactory. Tutors demonstrate knowledge and understanding

of the learners' strengths and weaknesses and support them accordingly. They follow up any absences. There is good in-class support for learners. In one session observed, a member of support staff was deployed to support learners with identified learning difficulties and disabilities. Learners can also now access specialist assistance with dyslexia assessments. Learners value the extremely welcoming and friendly environment at Salford's FACL service and cite this as an important reason for their continued attendance.

49. All tutors delivering literacy and numeracy provision have attended core curriculum training. There are plans for them to work towards specialist qualifications at level 4. However, ESOL tutors have yet to identify specialist training opportunities.

Leadership and management

50. The use of management information to help develop curriculum planning is insufficient. The service does not routinely use data to examine trends to plan for curriculum development. It does not routinely monitor performance. Also, the focus on quality improvement for skills for life is insufficient. The appointment of a team leader has not yet happened and this is severely affecting the quality of the provision to enable the co-ordination of skills for life. The service does not use course evaluation to plan development. Meetings are irregular and are often informal. Management information is not an agenda item. The organisation does not use learners' reviews efficiently to identify new courses. Learners are only offered one session a week to develop their skills. Managers are beginning to work in collaboration with external organisations and other community groups in areas of high deprivation, to identify significant groups of potential learners to plan new courses. The teaching staff have taken part in training in skills for life awareness and the national curriculum in literacy, numeracy and diagnostic assessment. Tutors teaching on literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes have opportunities to develop their skills. Once a year, specialists in literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes observe tutors teaching. Combined with annual appraisal, this process identifies tutors' training needs. Take-up of relevant training and development is satisfactory. A skills for life action plan has been developed, but it is not costed or time-bound and does not identify responsibilities.

Family learning**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Adult and community learning</i> Adult and community learning	50	3

51. The family learning provision consists of a range of taster workshops, and a small number of longer courses of up to 30 weeks. Taster workshops are provided for parents and carers to participate in learning activities with their children, linked to the curriculum stage at which their children are working. Workshops are run at levels appropriate to nursery, reception, key stage 1 and key stage 2. Most taster workshops are planned to run for one and a half to two hours, with the aim of familiarising parents with the concepts children are learning in school, demonstrating that learning can be fun, encouraging parents to continue with similar activities at home, improving the skills levels of parents, and increasing their personal confidence in their ability to support their children's learning more effectively. Some taster workshops are specifically targeted at fathers and male carers. A small number of grandparents and other relatives attend. Longer courses are designed to capitalise on parents' interests in contributing positively to their children's education. A teaching assistants' course is aimed at parents who have completed other courses and who wish to pursue a career in working with children, either in a voluntary or in an employed capacity. All courses are run in schools within the Little Hulton EiCAZ. Some courses linked to child development are offered in community venues.

52. During the year 2004-05, 167 learners enrolled in family learning programmes, of whom 131 were female and 19 were male. Seventeen learners did not declare their gender on the enrolment documentation. One learner declared a disability. Data relating to ethnicity was not available. In the academic year 2005-06, to date, 107 women and 18 men have enrolled. During inspection, 47 women and three men were in attendance. A full-time family learning team leader manages and teaches the provision within the Little Hulton EiCAZ. This area of learning comprised 30.7 per cent of Salford City Council's adult and community learning provision.

Adult and community learning*Strengths*

- good teaching and learning
- good working relationships with schools in the action zone

Weaknesses

- insufficient curriculum development
- inadequate provision to meet the needs of learners across the city

Achievement and standards

53. Achievement rates for 2004-05 are satisfactory, with 50 per cent of learners achieving all aspects of their individual learning plans. A significant proportion of learners achieve

most of their personal learning goals. In September 2005, the FACL service introduced staff training in the measure of success known as recognition and recording of progress and achievement, which is being used for all non-accredited provision. The number of externally accredited achievements appears to be low, as some qualifications gained have been recorded under other areas of learning. For example, some learners gained the national literacy or numeracy test, but these are reported under preparation for life and work. Similarly, some learners gained child development accreditation, but these are reported under health, public services and care.

54. In most lessons, learners develop good skills, knowledge and confidence to support their children at school. Learners gain a better understanding of the school curriculum, key stages, teaching methods and terminology used in schools. This enables them to communicate more effectively with school staff. Staff value the learners' oral contributions to the lessons. Staff provide the learners with much verbal encouragement, which emphasises what they have achieved. Written work produced in group sessions and at home is of a high standard. Learners are proud of their portfolios of evidence, which are well presented. All learners are very positive about the progress they are making, and thoroughly enjoy their work. One learner commented that she had always done badly at school, but family learning had inspired her to set herself the goal of working with children in paid employment. One learner has gained sufficient confidence to become a school governor, and participate more effectively in school life. Others are now working as volunteer helpers within their children's schools.

55. Retention rates are fairly low in family learning provision at 60 per cent. While retention is high on the short taster courses, it is lower on the longer courses. Staff do not systematically follow up learners who have left, to find out their reason for leaving.

The quality of provision

56. Teaching and learning in the provision are good. Most sessions are well planned, with clear learning aims and objectives, which are well understood by learners. Tutors use a wide range of teaching methods, reflecting those used in school with the children. Tutors incorporate good differentiation into lesson planning to meet individual learners' needs. Tutors and learners focus on the tasks well and achieve a great deal within limited timescales. In one lesson, parents and children explored the concept of shape-matching, creating their own individualised snap cards, and then using them to play a game. The practical 'fun' activities help concept development. Learners are highly motivated, and the tutors create a relaxed, friendly atmosphere that is conducive to learning.

57. Staff have a good knowledge of the learners and their family circumstances. They are flexible in their delivery, and make allowance for individual circumstances. There is good modelling by staff of language and skills development with parents, enabling them to interact with their children more effectively. Learners are very appreciative of the provision, which they enjoy. Many learners compared their learning at school very unfavourably with the current learning with which they are engaged. They have been inspired to raise their employment aspirations and feel optimistic that they are acquiring skills that will enable them to find better jobs. Innovative approaches have been used in the Little Hulton EiCAZ to recruit male parents and carers, as well as grandparents. There are workshops targeted specifically at men, such as 'Dads and Lads', in which tutors use football and other games to explore numeracy skills. Tutors also use construction toys effectively to develop design concepts, and stress the value of play in problem-solving.

58. Teaching and learning resources are satisfactory, with appropriate materials used for the age groups of the children. The accommodation is mainly in school buildings, and is satisfactory. There is sufficient access to initial advice and guidance, as well as personal support for adult learners. Staff are appropriately qualified, skilled and experienced to teach in a family learning context. Tutors work effectively with school staff and learning mentors.

59. The FACL service makes limited use of ICT, even though laptop computers are available in the centres. Only two lessons were observed in which computers were used, and in one session this was for assessment purposes rather than for learning.

Leadership and management

60. The service has good working relationships with schools in the Little Hulton EiCAZ. Head teachers are very supportive of the family learning provision, and value highly the positive benefits that it confers on parents, children and the schools. They appreciate the opportunities to engage with parents in a way that they do not find threatening. School staff frequently attend for part of the learning sessions, which parents and children greatly appreciate. The family learning provision is owned by the schools, which emphasises the positive esteem in which it is held. Head teachers monitor and evaluate the courses, and plan future provision.

61. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Quality improvement procedures are in place, but they are not established in the provision. Equal opportunities are satisfactory, with the celebration of diversity within the family learning provision, and teaching materials reflect positive images from a range of cultures. The self-assessment process is satisfactory, although some strengths were understated, and some weaknesses were not identified.

62. There is insufficient curriculum development. The provision has been offered for the past two years, and parents are ready to progress, but there are insufficient FACL staff to support this development. The team leader for family learning has no team or management on which to call, and this is affecting the learners negatively. The FACL service does not develop appropriate progression routes. Accreditation is available on longer courses, but there are limited opportunities for learners to access these.

63. The provision is inadequate to meet the needs of learners across the city. The family learning provision is concentrated on the Hulton EiCAZ and parents outside of this action zone have no access to family learning opportunities. Good practice is not being spread, as provision is so limited.

