

Community Learning

Self-Assessment Report 2020-2021

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 UNDERSTANDING STAFFORDSHIRE - BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



Figure 1 Staffordshire's 8 districts: Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, South Staffordshire, Stafford, Staffordshire Moorlands and Tamworth

Staffordshire is a diverse county situated in the heart of the UK. The county stretches from the fringes of the West Midlands in the south, to the uplands of the Peak District National Park in the North. The county shares borders with eleven other strategic authorities, with a sphere of influence which extends into the East Midlands and Northwest regions.

The county covers more than 1,000 square miles and has a population of 883,000¹ people living in eight districts and boroughs. While more than 80% of land is rural, most people live in the urban areas

of Stafford (the County town), Newcastle-under-Lyme, Lichfield, Burton-upon-Trent, Tamworth, and Cannock. Staffordshire has a growing ageing population as people are living longer and healthier lives.

Staffordshire is a relatively prosperous county although there are pockets of deprivation, with the English indices of deprivation 2019² showing that approximately 15,750 residents (1.8%) are living in areas that are in the top 10% most deprived nationally. The population is mostly white with only 6.4% from a minority (based on 2011 Census data).

Staffordshire has a diverse economy with strengths in advanced manufacturing, automotive, aerospace, energy, medical technologies, constructions, digital technologies and agri-tech. We are members of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP)³, and have representation on the Skills Advisory Panel which is responsible

¹ 2020 ONS estimate 883,172

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

³ <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Business/Documents/Covid-19/Staffordshires-Economic-Recovery-and-Renewal-Strategy.pdf>

for securing delivery of the SSLEP Skills Strategy⁴. Four of the Staffordshire districts also partner with Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP.

At the start of the academic year, 32% of Staffordshire residents were on some type of government support through the Job Retention scheme, furlough, or Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS); this was in line with national figures. The claimant count of those claiming Universal Credit was 4.9%, below the national average of 6.4%, although this rose to 6.1% in Tamworth district, with Cannock Chase and East Staffordshire also being above the local average. Young people aged 18-24 were most likely to be claiming Universal Credit, at rates consistently 5 percentage points above the national average.

There was a significant decline (37%) in job vacancies in Staffordshire from Feb to June 2020 at the start of the pandemic and prior to the start of the academic year, 7% higher than the national average. The most common vacancies were in nursing, care work, teaching and van-driving.

During the academic year, Staffordshire County Council put in place a 5-year Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy to mitigate against the impacts of Covid-19 on the local economy, and to support the achievement of the Council's Strategic Plan 2018-22⁵. Staffordshire County Council continues to work collaboratively on employment opportunities with residents and businesses, through the work of the countywide Redundancy Service, KickStart scheme, Additional Restrictions Grants, Business Start Up Scheme, Student Start Up Scheme and Business Start Up Loans, and Restart scheme.

Lockdown restrictions aimed at mitigating the effects of the Covid pandemic were not lifted until 19th July 2021 in England, at the end of the academic year. At this point, 13% of the local population was on some form of government support (compared to 15% nationally) with young people, women, and part-time workers being most affected. This figure has decreased as more workers on furlough and Universal Credit have returned to work, in particular younger people in hospitality and retail sectors. Job vacancies also rose at the end of the academic year, for example by 5% in June to July, with there being a higher number of vacancies than pre-pandemic, particularly in sectors that opened up due to lockdown restrictions being lifted, and also in social care and education.

Staffordshire has 2 universities - Staffordshire University and Keele University - as well as local colleges: Buxton & Leek College (University of

⁴ <https://www.stokestaffslep.org.uk/skilled-workforce/education-trust/>

⁵ <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Business/Documents/Covid-19/Staffordshires-Economic-Recovery-and-Renewal-Strategy.pdf>

Derby), Burton & South Derbyshire College, South Staffordshire College with campuses at Tamworth, Lichfield, Cannock and Rodbaston, and Newcastle & Stafford College Group. In addition, there is a range of independent training providers and employment support programmes available to residents.

Within this context, Community Learning has an important part to play in improving the lives of the people of Staffordshire. The acquisition of knowledge and skills is a key component of strategies to improve health, reduce independence, increase economic prosperity, address inequality, and realise aspirations for a better future.

1.2 STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Staffordshire County Council's vision (2018-2022) is:

To create a connected Staffordshire, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy.

The three outcomes are that people of Staffordshire will:

- Be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefit of economic growth
- Be healthier and more independent
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community

1.3 COMMUNITY LEARNING PURPOSE AND PRIORITIES 2019 – 2023

Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning Service's purpose is to improve people's lives through lifelong learning and training, leading to employment and or increased personal fulfilment, supporting the growth of Staffordshire's economy and society. The purpose of our Community Learning Strategy and Commissioning Plan is to provide programmes of learning that:

- align with Staffordshire County Council's priorities
- actively respond to a wide range of individual learner, family and community needs across all districts of the county
- engage with hard-to-reach learners
- develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds
- support individuals to progress towards formal learning or employment

- support individuals to improve their health and well-being, including mental health
- develop stronger communities
- maintain a balanced and wide-ranging high-quality programme offer
- can respond rapidly to local, regional and national priorities
- engage with the best local providers of adult and community learning

The Community Learning Service priorities are based on the needs of Staffordshire residents, with direction coming from the SSLEP, and the County Council's Strategic Plan and Skills and Employability Business Plan.

The overarching priorities are:

Equality and Inclusion: Widen participation in learning and promote social inclusion across Staffordshire.

Partners: Identify and work with the right delivery partners that will enable us to determine relevant and targeted programmes, to ensure that the needs of our learners are always put first.

Targeted Delivery: Prioritise and target delivery to those that are the furthest away from accessing education and activities that will have the most impact in order to provide accessible learning pathways.

Workforce and Employability: Embed employability skills throughout all curriculum pathways to support individuals to up-skill and re-skill in order to gain and improve employment opportunities.

Responsive and flexible: Be responsive to a fast-changing environment and offer flexibility to change direction if required. Delivery will be prioritised and located in areas where learners want to learn and within local communities.

Quality of Provision: Ensure that all programmes are of the highest quality to provide all learners with the very best opportunities to fulfil their full potential.

Innovation: All programmes are to align with demand and local, and national priorities whilst providing innovative curriculum capitalising on digital technologies.

Outcomes: To improve the learner journey, from recruitment and admission to achievement and progression in learning and beyond, supporting positive outcomes for all.

1.4 SERVICE DELIVERY PROFILE 2020-2021

Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning Service is a commissioning organisation funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency's Adult Education Budget (AEB), with a 2020-21 allocation of £1,506,285 for Community Learning and £115,759 for Adult Skills.

Staffordshire's Community Learning is predominantly delivered through a four-year Community Learning Framework Agreement (2019-2023), which was developed in conjunction with our previous learners and stakeholders and provides a broad range of curriculum areas to appropriately meet the needs of Staffordshire residents.

The service has a Direct Delivery Unit, and as a Prime Provider we have sub-contracted with commissioned suppliers including schools, colleges, third-sector organisations and local community groups to deliver a range of learning opportunities for adults aged 19+, families and communities across Staffordshire.

In 2020-21 the commissioned sub-contractors were:

Acorn Training	Pulse for Music
Aspire Training	South Staffordshire College
Bright Beginnings Family Hub	Spark, Burntwood
Buxton & Leek College (University of Derby)	Staffordshire Care Farming
Chase Aqua Rural Enterprise	Staffordshire Venture
Community Forest Services	Support Staffordshire
Dyslexia Association	Two Gates Primary School, Tamworth
Families First	Upper Moreton Rural Activities
Forest of Mercia	West Chadsmoor Family Centre
Fox Training Solutions	Workers' Educational Association
Gartmore Riding School	Victoria Primary School, Burton- upon-Trent
Growing Rural Enterprise	

The service provides a range of informal and formal learning programmes for adults across the County. Programmes support and develop individuals and groups for whom formal learning may have been a barrier in the past and works with them to build confidence and realise their true potential in a competitive world. For the most disadvantaged learners we offer engaging '*first steps*' learning opportunities as a way of increasing participation for people who are least likely to engage in adult learning.

Community Learning programmes are prioritised with funding directed towards sub-contractors who effectively target the following groups:

- Adults residing in the Staffordshire districts with the greatest concentrations of deprivation, worklessness and economic inactivity
- Adult males
- Parents/carers of underachieving children or who wish to develop their parenting skills
- Adults with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, including mental health issues
- Carers of adults with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, including mental health issues
- Refugees, asylum seekers and adults from Minority Ethnic Groups
- Care leavers
- Adults yet to achieve a level 2, or those with low skills in English and maths
- Digitally excluded adults
- Adults on low income and/or in receipt of state benefits
- Those who are unemployed and want to improve their chances of finding work by developing or acquiring vocational skills and knowledge and those wanting to re-engage with the STEM sector (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths)
- "New" adult learners (defined as those who have not participated in Community Learning programmes in the previous three years)

The Community Learning Framework consists of six curriculum areas:

1. Digital Skills
2. Employability
3. Family Learning
4. Leisure, Health & Wellbeing
5. STEM
6. Supported Learning

In addition, further learning is delivered through:

1. Community Learning Trust Responsiveness Fund
2. Wider Family Learning Grants to schools

The Direct Delivery Unit delivers accredited provision in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and IT, funded through Adult Skills AEB, and additional non-accredited Digital Skills learning.

Digital Skills

Courses that give learners the confidence to use the digital tools that are important to them. This could be to access local or national services, to communicate, to research, to store and present information, to use technology safely and to keep their family safe, to make the most of applications and use their potential to improve their lives in a variety of ways eg employment, shopping, creativity, leisure. Learners are supported to continue with further learning including accredited provision in IT, and to gain access to more employment opportunities.

Employability

This curriculum area is focused on up-skilling and re-skilling adults in a vocational context, including sector-specific skills, wider skills and the development of English, ESOL, and maths skills to support learners' employment opportunities for those who are unemployed or on a low income who want to improve their employment opportunities. Courses prepare learners and give them skills for work in various jobs and can include theory and practice, and hands-on job specific training for work, and progression onto accredited provision, volunteering and employment.

Family Learning

Courses that encourage family members to learn together to improve basic skills and skills to equip families to thrive. The courses support well-being, healthy lifestyles, mental health, fitness, family finances, accessing community activities and services, managing children's behaviour and development, transition from primary to secondary, understanding school curriculums and staying safe online. Adults are encouraged to pursue further learning in English, maths, IT, and opportunities in volunteering and employment.

Leisure, Health & Wellbeing

Courses which offer the opportunity to develop a new area of interest or hobby and take part in learning to support their health and wellbeing. For example, arts and crafts, photography, languages, horticulture, and wellbeing. Learners are supported to keep physically and mentally healthy, to develop their personal, social and employability skills and to become active in their communities with progression routes into higher level learning of the same subject, volunteering and accessing other services in their local community.

STEM

This curriculum area supports learners to up-skill and re-skill to gain and improve employment opportunities. STEM programmes are those that are deeply rooted in science, mathematics, engineering and/or are of technical or technology application. Learners acquire skills in a specific vocational area and are able to apply for jobs and/or progress onto relevant accredited provision.

Supported Learning

Courses for adults who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adults who have had long-term mental ill health who require more bespoke and supported teaching and learning. Courses make good use of subjects such as arts and crafts, healthy eating, gardening etc. as a vehicle for developing and practising strategies for improving mental health or for embedding functional and independent living skills. The courses help learners to lead healthier, happier, safer and more independent lives and give progression opportunities into further learning, volunteering and employment.

Community Learning Responsiveness Fund

The fund is for adult learning programmes delivered by third-sector organisations who have access to individuals in local communities. The fund supports a responsive approach to local emerging needs for targeted learners: carers, care leavers, asylum seekers, people with no or low qualifications, learning difficulties and disabilities, adults from ethnic minority groups and male learners. The courses are broad and varied and provide 'first step' learning experiences, skill development, including English, maths and IT, access to other local activities, volunteering and employment.

Wider Family Learning Grants for schools

The grants are made available for schools across Staffordshire who have identified a need to support families to learn together and are targeted at parents who are digitally excluded, where English is not their first language, families at risk, male carers, parents/carers of children with learning/physical disabilities, families with children who are underachieving, Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Groups. Family Learning courses are designed so adults and children can learn together, and enable adults to support their children's learning. Learners are more able to help their families to have a healthy and independent lifestyle, more able to engage their children in learning activities in and out of school, and have higher enjoyment of and aspirations for their own

learning.

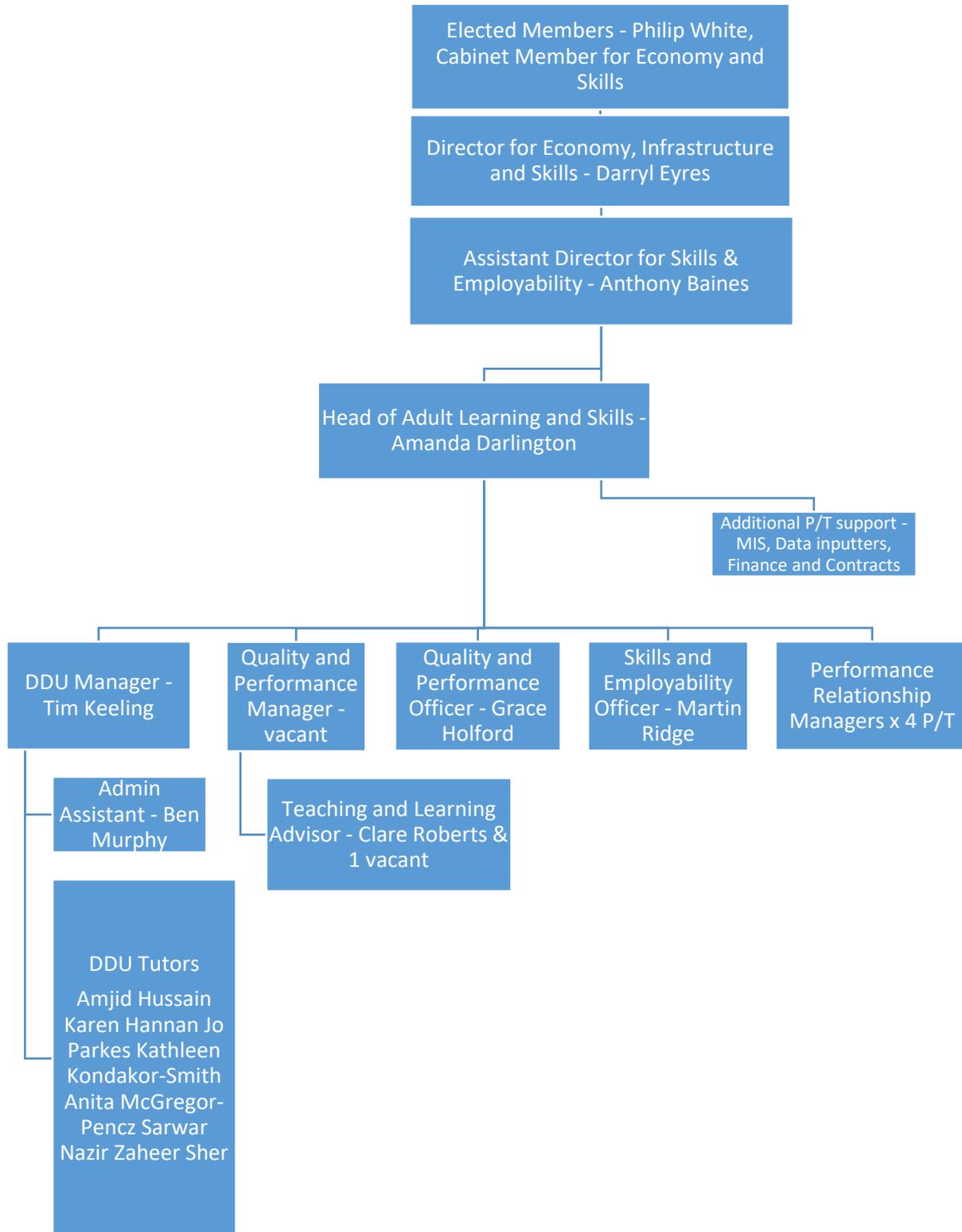
Direct Delivery Unit

The Service's Direct Delivery Unit delivers non-accredited courses in ICT and accredited provision in ICT (Entry levels) and English Speakers of another Language (Pre-entry to Level 1). The curriculum content for ICT gives learners with no or limited experience of ICT the skills they require for everyday use and basic skills required for work. The ESOL curriculum is targeted at those learners who wish to develop their use of the English language in speaking and listening, reading and writing to support them to be active in their community and make positive steps to employment.

Course delivery methods

In 2020-21, 58% of provision was delivered through online or remote learning including the vast majority of provision taking place in August-September 2020 and January – March 2021, when national Covid restrictions were in place. The remaining 42% was delivered face-to-face in colleges, schools, children's centres, care farms and community venues across the county.

1.5 STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICE STRUCTURE



1.6 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

The Community Learning Service Specification includes a Quality and Performance Framework which defines the criteria for high-quality provision and continual improvement. The Framework clarifies expectations of all provision, and supports continual improvement by laying out a process of continuous monitoring of and support for direct delivery and sub-contracted providers. There is regular reporting on performance and quality to the Senior Management Team and to leaders through performance reports, with scrutiny at Select Committee meetings. As a result, leaders have a good understanding of the service and can issue appropriate challenge and support to staff.

The Service strives to engage all staff in the quality assurance and self-assessment process. Tutors are expected to reflect on their practice and engage with action plans set following quality monitoring activity, as well as to contribute to Sub-contractor Self-assessment reports. Sub-contractor managers compile these reports, using data and other evidence, and formulate a Quality Improvement Plan for their own provision. Both reports and plans are moderated by the Community Learning Quality staff and feed into the Community Learning Self-assessment report.

Our 2020-21 Community Learning Service Self-Assessment report is based on service-wide data and other evidence, including learner feedback, information on learner destinations, course documentation, quality monitoring and other reports. Provider managers and Community Learning staff are consulted in the process of writing the report, and the final report is scrutinised and approved by the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee.

The summary of key findings is shared with subcontractors so they can understand how their provision contributes to the overall development of the service. The resulting Quality Improvement Plan for the service as well as sub-contractors' own Quality Improvement Plans are working documents which are updated through the following academic year to monitor and report on progress.

2 SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARY JUDGEMENTS 2020-2021

Graded using the 4-point scale:

1: Outstanding

2: Good

3: Requires Improvement

4: Inadequate

Education Inspection Framework Area	Overall Judgement
Overall Effectiveness	Good
Quality of Education	Good
Behaviour and Attitudes	Outstanding
Personal Development	Good
Leadership and Management	Good
Safeguarding	Safeguarding is effective

3 SUMMARY OF HEADLINE KEY STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

3.1 WHY STAFFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICE IS A 'GOOD' SERVICE

- There is clear leadership and governance, with a strong commitment to provide education opportunities to meet the needs of Staffordshire residents. Leaders and Council Members maintain highly effective and dedicated partnerships with a wide range of local and national partners, developing the local skills and digital agenda and supporting the sustainability of Community Learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic as we successfully respond, recover and rebuild services. As a result, the County Council continues to successfully raise local aspirations, enhances curriculum opportunities and is addressing the needs and priorities within its community and the local economy.
- The intent of the Service is well communicated to all stakeholders, with a broad curriculum offer and clear priorities, and there is effective financial planning to target the learners across the districts who will most benefit from Community Learning, supported by partnership working in communities. Leadership and management support of new methods of delivery have enabled sub-contractors to engage with learners who may not have participated otherwise.
- Highly effective safeguarding policies, procedures and partnerships promote and develop staff and learners' awareness of their safety; as a result, learners report they feel safe and are safe for classroom-based and remote online learning.
- The implementation is also good with very good impacts for learners:
 - Standards for teaching and learning are clearly communicated and learners benefit from an exciting range of learning experiences in a variety of well-equipped and resourced environments, including online and remote delivery.
 - Learners are well supported by tutors who understand their needs, are experts in their sectors and provide very good opportunities for wider skill development, including digital skills.
 - A large proportion of learners experience teaching and learning which is good or better, particularly in the STEM and Family Learning curriculum areas, and face-to-face Supported Learning, where delivery is often outstanding.
 - Learners are very happy with their experience, with outstanding rates of satisfaction and a wealth of positive feedback on the impact

- of their learning, which reaches beyond the original subject of the course, and often has a positive impact on other family members.
- Overall, learner attendance, retention, pass and achievement rates are excellent, and improved from last year. There has been a reduction in gaps in achievement for equality groups.
 - Learners have excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning and work well with their peers, supporting each other to progress.
 - Learners make very good progress in the development of their wider personal skills, supported by effective collaborative work and partnerships, and relevant information and advice about progression opportunities.
 - Strong governance, leadership, and management together with robust quality assurance and improvement arrangements ensure that the curriculum offer addresses local needs and results in good support for high-quality teaching, learning and assessment practices.

3.2 WHAT THE SERVICE NEEDS TO DO IMPROVE

- Use enrolment and destination data more fully, to evaluate how effectively we are reaching our target groups of learners, and how successfully they are achieving their ambitions.
- Increase participation by continuing to build on local partnerships, and ensuring that we support potential learners by offering a curriculum that is relevant to their needs, and that our learners have access to the best progression opportunities, particularly in the Digital, Employability curriculum areas and Adult Skills learning.
- Ensure that RARPA practices have been adapted to a consistently good standard across all curriculum areas and delivery approaches, and with all sub-contracted and Direct delivery provision.
- The vast majority of learners feel safe, but we need to reduce gaps across equality groups and curriculum areas to ensure that all learners in all curriculum areas know what to do if they do not feel safe, and that they understand how to avoid the risks of radicalisation and extremism. To do this we must continue to raise learners' awareness, using approaches that match abilities and which draw on naturally occurring situations in the classroom and online, using relatable language that learners can fully understand.
- Increase capacity to offer on-going mentoring and coaching support where teaching, learning and assessment is less than good, including sharing of good practice, to get back to a position where 90% of delivery is good or better.

- Work with local organisations to develop potential delivery partners in those districts which have not received the intended allocation, and to access learner groups in these communities.
- Increase attendance and retention for learners on Adult Skills and employability provision, including collecting more detailed data on the reasons for withdrawal.
- Continue to build on the improvements in the accuracy and use of data to ensure all officers and sub-contracted provider managers have timely access to, and make good use of, the data available, including feedback and destinations, to bring about improvements in the learner experience and impacts.

4 OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

The Community Learning Service is a good Service with the ambition and determination to become an outstanding provider of skills across Staffordshire, working in partnership with local stakeholders. The Service maintains a strong focus on providing good educational opportunities to meet the needs of Staffordshire residents and the wider economy.

The Community Learning Strategy and Commissioning Plan sets out clearly the County Council priority areas of Economic growth, Housing, Education and skills, Health, care and wellness and Children and families, and how the outcomes from Community Learning contribute to addressing these priorities. The document further sets out how each Curriculum Area contributes to the Community Learning outcomes.

This is reinforced through the Community Learning Specification which defines each curriculum area. The Community Learning Strategy and Commissioning Plan, and Specification documents set out the groups of target learners, with further information on district and ward level, and sub-contractors' applications are evaluated on this, to ensure that successful applicants have the capability to engage those who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate in learning. The Community Learning Trust Responsiveness Fund (CLTRF) and Wider Family Learning Grants for Schools (WFLG) specifications are used effectively to evaluate in-year applications, and the quality assurance process also ensures that there is close alignment of all provision to the intended Curriculum area descriptions and outcomes.

The CLTRF and WFLG funds are used to specifically reach out via community groups to ensure best use of public money. For example, in 2020-21 CLTRF funding was allocated, amongst others, to community-based organisations such as:

- West Chads Moor Family Centre, Spark and Bright Beginnings Family Hub who all work with families in priority wards,
- Staffordshire Venture who work with people with learning difficulties and disabilities,
- Pulse for Music who work with people recovering from addiction and long-term mental ill-health,
- Fox Training Solutions who provide employability courses

Of the total funding, 6.2% was allocated specifically through the CLTRF and WFLG funding. What's more, the majority of main framework sub-contractors also have strong ties with their local communities, for example Families First which operate in the children's centres around the county, and South Staffordshire, and Buxton and Leek Colleges. The

Direct Delivery Unit historically uses libraries and family centres to deliver IT and ESOL classes, including to a number of Syrian refugees, although most delivery in the last year has been online due to the pandemic. A number of sub-contractors are smaller, community-based organisations such as Staffordshire Care Farming, Growing Rural Enterprise, Chase Aqua Rural Enterprise and Upper Moreton Rural Activities. These sub-contractors are often able to offer their learners progression opportunities as volunteers either within the organisation as “learning buddies” or with other local organisations such as the Transforming the Trent Valley project. As a result, 55.9% of learners are agreed (mostly or strongly) the course had helped them to actively participate in their community or society.

Across the county, a high proportion (45%) of enrolments are from learners living in identified wards of deprivation, demonstrating that we are effective in reaching our target learner groups.

Feedback from learners shows that the move to online or remote delivery was successful in enabling more people to participate who had caring commitments, or who would otherwise not have been able to participate in classroom-based learning. These delivery approaches have also supported continued attendance and retention of individuals where circumstances, such as Covid-related issues, would otherwise have made it difficult for them to complete their learning. More work now needs to be done to determine how successful the Service has been in its implementation in attracting the participation of learners based on target groups such as employment status and previous qualification level.

Analysis of Pound Plus returns indicates a contribution of £228,967, approximately half of which is from fees and other incomes, mostly generated in the Leisure, Health and Wellbeing curriculum area. This enabled the Service to support fee remission for disadvantaged learners, and to offer smaller groups or taster sessions for learners with higher needs. Some sub-contractors decided not to charge fees where provision had significant wellbeing outcomes. The Pound Plus also evidences a significant contribution from volunteers supporting delivery to the tune of £84,559. The Service now needs to continue to analyse this data effectively in order to benchmark and evaluate accurately, to demonstrate the value of our partnership working and position within local communities.

The Community Learning Service works effectively with a range of local stakeholders to ensure that learners’ employability and wider personal skills are fully developed, and progression opportunities are accessible to learners. Leaders, Members and Officers maintain highly effective and dedicated Place-based partnerships with a wide range of local and

national partners, including a strong representation on the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and developing the local skills and employability agenda which in turn successfully raises aspirations, supports local needs and enhances curriculum opportunities within the local economy. There are further established cross-directorate partnerships with Public Health and Families and Communities and external partners to deliver a curriculum that addresses the main strategic priorities of the council and addressing the needs of Staffordshire residents. These partnerships have strengthened further during the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, driving forward the digital inclusion agenda with Staffordshire Libraries and other partners, and the provision of digital equipment to sub-contractors and learners who needed it.

Some sub-contractors such as Community Forest Services invite professionals to engage with learners through Q&A sessions, which increases learners understanding of employment in specific sectors. At the Provider Engagement Events, we have invited a range of relevant partners to speak directly to sub-contractor managers, such as representatives from Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce, National Careers Service, men's mental health charity Men Unite; the Assistant Director for Skills and Employability also attends the sessions to update sub-contractor managers on the local landscape. As a result, sub-contractors have good relationships with a wide range of partners, meaning they can effectively refer learners to further opportunities that are beneficial to them.

"The Community Learning Service is widely respected within the local community and partners commented on the high levels of professionalism and integrity the team display. Partnerships are collaborative with examples of interventions such as those supporting the Syrian community adding real value to those accessing the service. Tutors described the reputation of the Council as being strong and they feel a sense of loyalty and pride in being part of this. Partners described "working together" to support individuals as opposed to merely signposting or referring. These working relationships provide tutors with a fuller, more holistic view of the needs, starting points, and progress learners make." Matrix report, January 2021

Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) within the Service is good. The Quality Assurance Framework sets out clear standards for the Direct Delivery Unit and sub-contractors with monitoring activity, and clear guidance for tutors on the Teaching and Learning blog. This is supplemented by mentoring and coaching support for individual tutors or sub-contractors in-year where audits have highlighted concerns, to ensure that there is rapid improvement. The move to online delivery

has necessitated a change in approach for some sub-contractors where they may have been using largely paper-based systems in previous academic years.

Thus, a range of innovative RARPA tools have been developed and are in use during 2020-21, including the use of Microsoft and Google forms to collect regular learner reflections, and the use of Art journaling to support creative reflection with learners on wellbeing courses. Some sub-contractors used a bespoke app called Seesaw to effectively interact with learners and their carers to share progress and feedback.

The effective use of RARPA and Individual learning plans (ILPs) to set challenging learning goals for all learners, including the most able, has previously been an area we needed to improve, and, from analysis of quality monitoring activity, we can say that the majority of learners now experience effective RARPA practices to support their progress. However, with the move towards remote and online delivery we need to ensure that practices have been adapted to a consistently good standard across all curriculum areas and delivery approaches, and with all sub-contracted and Direct delivery provision.

5 SAFEGUARDING

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The Community Learning Service is committed to and promotes the safeguarding and welfare of all children, young people and adults in accordance with the Children's Act 1989, the Children's Act 2004 and section 175 of the Education Act 2002. Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty run through every aspect of the provision from specification and contracts, through compliance requirements and training, course planning and monitoring of delivery, learner voice feedback and self-assessment. Thus, there is a strong intent to ensure all our learners and their families feel safe and are safe

Leaders and managers have put in place comprehensive policies and procedures for Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty, and E-safety, that are understood by all and are effectively implemented and monitored. These are underpinned by a clear commitment to Equality and the wellbeing of learners and staff.

Policies and procedures are updated annually and in line with legislative requirements, and include a staff code of conduct and whistleblowing procedure. The Assistant Director for Skills and Employability is responsible for these, and they are cascaded to all sub-contractors and learners and available on the Service's website. There is a Safeguarding and Prevent action plan on which progress is reported to Senior Officers quarterly. Quality monitoring activities report on the effectiveness of safeguarding and good practice. This has resulted in a positive culture and ethos where safeguarding is regarded as an important part of everyday life across the Service.

The Community Learning Service has a well-qualified Designated Safeguarding Lead, who works collaboratively with local adults' and children's safeguarding boards, and is also a member of the Staffordshire Prevent Board. A deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is in place to ensure consistency of support. Subcontractor staff and learners know how to raise a concern, and receive effective support from the Designated Safeguarding lead, and local safeguarding leads within their organisation.

Timeliness to respond to safeguarding concerns raised is good. Records relating to concerns are completed in a timely manner and held securely. Learners and sub-contractors can also report safeguarding concerns via an online disclosure form.

Annual contracts are made with sub-contractors which contain comprehensive contractual clauses on safeguarding, the Prevent Duty, security of premises, modern slavery, whistleblowing, equality of

opportunity, health and safety and learner welfare. Sub-contractors who fail to adhere to these clauses will be in serious breach of contract and their contract will follow the termination procedure.

All staff are recruited following safer recruitment procedures and they, as well as provider staff, are subject to the relevant criminal records checks in line with their role.

Staff and tutors receive Safeguarding and Prevent Duty training at induction and regularly thereafter. All tutors receive safeguarding and Prevent training, including wider safeguarding issues at tutor inductions each academic year. All sub-contractors are required to provide evidence of safeguarding and Prevent training undertaken within their institution and delivery to learners is unable to take place without providing evidence to the Service. As a consequence, tutors are aware of their responsibilities in terms of safeguarding, understand the issues and are able to effectively raise learner awareness of both safeguarding and the Prevent Duty.

A number of sub-contractors have strong links with local agencies that support safeguarding practice, and have expertise in safeguarding and wellbeing issues. For example, Families First delivers parenting courses that are targeted specifically at families who are receiving support from tier 2/3/4 family support services. 94.1% of their learners were referred to the courses by 29 agencies or local safeguarding professionals as part of their individual plans for each family. The manager is a board member on each district 'Family Improvement Board' which also link to the Building Resilient Families and Communities agenda, and has strong relationships with local communities, local professionals such as social housing providers, Health Visitors, local community venues and smaller organisations such as specific faith groups. Other sub-contractors such as Chase Aqua Rural Activities, Growing Rural Enterprise and Staffordshire Care Farming work closely with local Mental Health teams to refer potential learners for wellbeing courses in order to support their wider support. As such, sub-contractors and tutors are well placed to understand safeguarding issues and, in many cases, can support learners to prevent potential safeguarding issues from developing.

Effective and informative induction processes across all programmes support learners' understanding of how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they don't feel safe. E-safety, Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty are covered at induction and learner resources such as handbooks, classroom posters and links to digital resources reinforce learners' understanding of how to protect themselves. Staying Safe Online information has also been added to the Online Course Directory. Tutors are prompted through the scheme of work to plan opportunities to discuss and embed understanding of safeguarding, online safety, the Prevent Duty and British Values. Discussions in lessons extend knowledge and

understanding using topical themes and local issues. Good practice, information and training opportunities are shared with sub-contractors and tutors through a dedicated termly Safeguarding Update, as well as monthly Provider Updates, and the Teaching and Learning blog, as well as featuring regularly on the Provider Engagement Event agendas, for example the SCC Education Safeguarding Lead attended in March 2021.

Our adult learners consistently demonstrate high standards of behaviour, as expected, and develop positive attitudes to learning, towards other learners and staff. Tutors support learners to be aware of preventing bullying, racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination, and know that immediate and effective action is to be taken to prevent and tackle any discriminatory and derogatory language or behaviours.

Teaching and support staff responded to the lack of visibility of our most vulnerable learners and their families during lockdown by keeping in regular communication and/or providing additional tutorial time to check on learner welfare. A number of learners report they greatly appreciated this additional support which helped them to stay safe and well.

As a result, nearly all learners (99.3%) state that they feel safe in the learning environment. The 2 individuals who reported not feeling safe did confirm that they knew what to do in this situation. Due to the anonymity of the learner feedback it is not possible to identify the individuals, but it is noted that they are on courses that target learners with mental ill-health, often anxiety, and in addition, that this provider has on a number of occasions confirmed actions taken to reassure individuals who initially felt anxious about returning to face-to-face learning.

99.3% of learners know what to do if they or others do not feel safe, with Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) learners slightly less likely to know (96%). Learner feedback results show that 95.7% said they were informed how to protect themselves from risks associated with radicalisation and extremism, up from 94% in 2019-20. Learners on Employability, digital and CLTRF courses are less likely to say they were informed (83-89%), and again, BAME learners were less likely to say they were informed (94%) and action needs to be taken to ensure that all learners across all curriculum areas are equally confident in this area.

6 QUALITY OF EDUCATION

6.1 CURRICULUM INTENT

At strategic level the commissioning and allocation process is strongly influenced by the local and regional priorities identified by the Local Enterprise Partnership and Skills Advisory Panel and the overarching outcomes of the Staffordshire County Council Strategic Plan. The Community Learning specification gives indicative funding allocations weighted to address these priorities, with a larger proportion of funding going to Cannock Chase, Tamworth and East Staffordshire districts as they had proportionally more Universal Credit claimants in July 2020, and higher numbers of adults without qualifications beyond level 2.

Through procurement, the Community Learning Service and sub-contractors respond well to the intent of the provision. Leaders, managers and teaching staff work effectively with stakeholders to shape how the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of learners and communities. Leaders, managers and sub-contractors have developed and maintained strong and effective partnerships with a broad and varied range of statutory and community-based organisations to gain access to targeted learners and use these partnerships well to develop programme content to meet the needs of learners. In addition, teaching staff fully utilise these partnerships to support the additional needs of learners and their progression routes, in terms of wellbeing, further learning, volunteering and employment.

A comprehensive range of policies and statements are made available to sub-contractors and their teaching staff to ensure there is consistency of expectation in key cross-curricular areas such as Information and Advice, Embedded Functional Skills including digital, and Learner Voice.

The quality of Information and Advice is consistently good with aims of courses and potential progression routes well communicated through our online course directory⁶. Whilst most learners hear about the course through word of mouth (53%), a further 22% cited social media and 21% websites. The standard information is supplemented by pre-course activity for more bespoke provision, for example consultation with referring partners, taster activities and dialogue in community settings with potential learner groups.

⁶ <https://staffordshirecommunitylearning.org.uk/>

High quality teaching and learning is at the centre of our Service. The Teaching and Learning Blog⁷ has extensive guidance for tutors, including policies and procedures, and sets out clear expectations in terms of course planning to build a curriculum that provides learners with opportunities to develop and retain knowledge, skills, positive behaviours and personal development for current and future learning, volunteering and employment.

Tutors are expected to focus on learners' next steps in learning and plan opportunities to encourage learners to access local and/or online services within their programme of delivery. Relevant information and advice sessions are planned into all schemes of work to enable learners to make positive choices.

A culture of inclusivity and meeting learners' needs underpins the work of all those involved in Staffordshire Community Learning. An Equality & Diversity statement sets out the Service's commitment and expectations, reinforced through sub-contractors' contracts. Expectations are shared with tutors and learners through the Teaching & Learning Blog and the Learner Handbook.

The Community Learning Specification 2020-21 clearly lays out expectations of delivery methods within the on-going pandemic situation, with the majority of term 1 provision planned initially to be remote or online delivery. The Service communicated evolving expectations in line with government guidelines as the academic year progressed, with the support of a comprehensive risk assessment document. This supported all sub-contracted providers and the direct delivery manager to assess the risks and put in place contingency and mitigation measures to ensure that delivery was at all times safe and appropriate to learners' needs. By taking these measures, sub-contractors were able to plan face-to-face delivery to support those learners most in need of face-to-face contact to combat isolation or to support their learning, enhanced by a continuing remote or online offer which maximised the benefits of digital learning opportunities.

A high proportion of tutors fully utilised their expertise and embraced the opportunity to innovate, exploring a range of digital tools to deliver learning, adapting their curriculum and resources and exploring new teaching practices and creative pedagogy delivery.

In planning a mix of remote and face-to-face provision, the Service has been able to reach out to new learner audiences and to continue working with more vulnerable learners during extraordinary circumstances.

⁷ <https://staffsacl.wordpress.com/>

6.2 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

The Community Learning Service communicated clear expectations to sub-contractors in line with national guidelines on face-to-face activity due to Covid rates during the year and required sub-contractors to make contingency plans to mitigate against the effects of disruption. At the start of the year the majority of provision was online, with some trials of face-to-face delivery where sub-contractors were in control of their venues, and where learners had most to gain from face-to-face delivery due to isolation. As the trials proved successful, face-to-face delivery was planned for the remainder of term 1, in line with guidance for education, although non-educational mixing was limited in November 2020. In January 2021 with the new national lockdown, face-to-face delivery ceased, and all provision was online/remote for the whole of term 2. In term 3, face-to-face delivery restarted with the appropriate risk assessment and control measures in place.

As of January 2021, the Community learning Service was able to offer SME grants and digital equipment grants to sub-contracted providers to support with access to digital devices and connectivity. A total of £34,986 towards was invested in over 40 ipads, 20+ laptops, and a wide range of ergonomic equipment and assistive technology devices, as well as dongles pre-loaded with data to support learners to engage with learning. The equipment has been loaned to learners, and as a consequence they were enabled to take part in online delivery and improve their digital skills.

The Community Learning service continued to support sub-contractors with advice and sharing of good practice to support the changes in delivery. This strategy was successful as it allowed there to be a continued offer throughout the year: 37% of enrolments were in term 1 and 3 each, with the remaining 26% of enrolments being in term 2. This compares with a pre-Covid pattern of approximately 40% of enrolments in term 1, and 30% in the following 2 terms.

"I took part in the classroom learning. Everything was done to make me feel safe. QR code, temperature taken, hand gel on the tables." Learner on Supported learning course

As a result of the Commissioning Plan, face-to-face learning takes place in local colleges as well as in inspiring venues such as care farms where learners learn to take care of the animals and connect with the natural environment around them. Learners have access to a wide range of specialised facilities such as IT suites, kitchens, pottery workspace, woodworking sheds, landscaped gardens and vegetable plots, poly tunnels, working farm, riding school, art rooms, portable digital music

suites. All venues are risk-assessed including for Covid-related hygiene measures, and are fit for purpose and well-equipped. Sub-contractors took effective measures to increase learners' confidence in returning to face-to-face environments by ensuring visible measures such as hand-sanitising and one-way systems. In addition, some sub-contractors recorded video to explain to learners in advance hygiene procedures such as taking temperatures on entry. Some sub-contracted providers support participation by arranging transport by mini-bus or taxi to more remote venues. Practical courses are very well-resourced, including remote delivery where sub-contractors have delivered packs of resources to learners to enable them to participate.

Provision is well time-tabled, and a range of delivery methods are used to cater to the needs of the targeted learners, taking place during the day as well as evenings, in intense blocks over the course of a week, or for shorter sessions once a week. Some online learning is synchronous with scheduled video meetings, whilst some remote learning is delivered as asynchronous learning, with materials sent to learners, and follow-up communication to check on learning and offer feedback. This flexibility has enabled people who would not otherwise have been able to participate due to caring or work commitments, to join courses and engage regularly.

Observation of face-to-face provision and joint evaluation of online/remote delivery evidenced that 85% of delivery is good or better, with 16 sessions being judged as outstanding and a further 12 as good. This is a fall from 88% in 2019-20. Where teaching and learning was less than good, support was put in place to ensure timely improvement. In addition to the observations and evaluations of online/remote delivery, unannounced class visits and audits of course documentation including individual learning plans are used to evaluate the implementation of teaching and learning. The following evaluative comments are based on evidence from these observations, class visits and audits.

Tutors have expert knowledge in their vocational areas and are passionate about their subject; they communicate well to inspire learners. For example, in the Direct Delivery Unit Family History course the tutor demonstrates extensive knowledge and experience using a range of online tools.

Learners take part in a range of appropriate initial assessment activities and tools to establish their starting points, for example in digital learning learners use a detailed diagnostic assessment to ascertain what they can already do. As a result, tutors know their learners well and have a good understanding of their needs, and motivations for learning. Tutors are

aware of learners' support needs and access to digital tools, and adapt their courses and resources accordingly.

Five sub-contractors accessed funding support from the Community Learning Service to purchase digital tools to loan to learners who lacked access to these, for example ipads, and data packages and accessible audio tools to assist learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Tutors have adapted course aims and content to take account of the current climate for example by putting in additional wellbeing support in family learning and addressing anxiety issues in Supported learning provision.

"Tutors are adept at engaging with learners at all levels of knowledge and expertise and they genuinely care about learners succeeding" Matrix report January 2020

Tutors plan courses well, incorporating a wide range of resources and active learning strategies, to give learners a rich learning experience, and the opportunity to develop new skills in a safe and supportive environment. As a result, learners are highly motivated, feel comfortable to seek clarification where necessary, and make excellent progress in their learning. They have confidence to use subject-specific technical vocabulary well and are often inspired to undertake further learning in their own time, as evidenced in social media groups and feedback comments.

Learners' recall and understanding of learning is monitored through regular and effective checks on learning, through formative assessment activities and questioning, and tutors build in opportunities to recall previous learning through well-designed courses. For example, effective questioning in Supported Learning sessions promotes active and inclusive discussion activities. In digital courses, learners practise and apply skills and knowledge from early sessions in later sessions, as a basis to move onto new learning. Learners on online/remote learning courses comment on the positive support they have received from weekly contact with their tutors via phone or messages. In a minority of sessions, tutors could make better use of questioning at the presentation/ demonstration stage of the session to elicit and reinforce learners' existing knowledge.

Tutors design learning to include activities where learners can apply their learning in real-life and work situations for example in STEM provision learners undertake benefit-risk assessments and work out costings for projects, and consider Health and safety and other legislation relevant to their subject. Learners on these courses benefit from guest speakers and other forms of interaction with vocational experts.

In online learning, resources are equally well-designed and exploited, with tutors using a range of online tools to facilitate learning such as whatsapp, padlets, jamboard, apps and webtools such as google or MS forms, as well as larger platforms such as Google Classrooms. In employability courses, tutors created an innovative digital escape room experience to check learners understanding of Key concepts. In many courses, learners have improved their digital skills through the use of a range of tools, as an unintended, but significant, benefit of learning. This has also led to learners completing more independent learning online, for example, on digital courses, by completing LearnMyWay e-learning modules.

Learning is enhanced by inclusive spaces where learners are supportive of each other. For example, in remote learning they support each other through WhatsApp groups, leaving comments and suggestions for other learners. In Leisure, Health and Wellbeing art classes learners effectively and constructively critique each other's work.

Tutors are attentive to accessibility and make excellent use of strategies and tools to support all learners to participate fully, for example in Supported Learning one provider uses widgets to support literacy for learners with learning difficulties, and another provider makes very effective use of bespoke technology to allow a learner with no speech to take part in sessions. Where necessary in online/remote delivery, tutors were able to give additional support to individuals to help them access learning for example providing 1-1 telephone support or tutorials so that learners could continue to engage with learning activities and to offer individualised feedback and support. Learner feedback comments are overwhelmingly positive, and learners frequently report that the tutor and peer support has made a large impact on their confidence, and self-belief, as well as challenging and supporting them to develop subject-specific skills.

"I enjoyed receiving feedback from others in the group and seeing how they approached the tasks. It gave me inspiration and some of the others' ideas were brilliant. I have found the activities really therapeutic, reducing my stress and anxiety levels during a difficult time. I enjoyed challenging myself as although I already enjoy craft, some of the activities would have previously been out of my comfort zone. Now I feel confident enough to approach them and undertake the activity." Learner on Supported Learning course

Across the provision most tutors include good strategies to develop English, maths and employability skills. Tutors embed these opportunities discreetly alongside subject content and provide appropriate support to their learners. For example, on a Supported Learning craft course,

learners make a price comparison on the expense of felted bees for sale on the internet, and discuss as a group. Learners on a STEM Plant Science course develop enterprise skills by looking at the cost and profit margins of products. More able learners use technical vocabulary confidently for example in Leisure, Health and Wellbeing Photography classes, and others are supported to improve their vocabulary by keeping a glossary of terms.

Learners are engaged in the Recognising and Recording of Progress and Achievement (RARPA) process through the effective use of a range of tools for formative feedback. Approaches are adapted to suit the delivery in different subject areas and with different learner groups, so that the process is embedded within delivery and learners are able to take an active role in planning and reviewing their own learning. For example, learners in Supported Learning use art journaling to support their reflection. Tutors discuss and negotiate course and individual learning outcomes with learners. In online delivery, learners often complete online forms to record their starting points and distance travelled at the end of courses, and tutors follow up with individual feedback via email or phone call. Learners on Family Learning courses delivered through schools make use of tools already in place in the schools, such as the Seesaw app to enable regular feedback between learner and tutor. In the best examples, learners are proud of their learning plans and excited to see tutor comments. As a result, learners make very good progress in their learning and are highly motivated and committed.

In a minority of sessions which are less than good, tutors have not clearly defined learning outcomes at key points in the course, meaning that learners' progress is not evident. Whilst they may enjoy individual activities, learners are not supported sufficiently to be reflective about what their next steps need to be.

In some cases, where this has been identified as an issue, Community Learning staff have put in place support and training for tutors to ensure that there is timely improvement, for example in Supported Learning. Continuous Professional Development in this area has been encouraged through the blog posts and sharing of good practice for all tutors to access.

The move to online/remote delivery has been a challenge as tutors have had to adapt their RARPA approaches to suit the new delivery methods; we now need to ensure there are consistently good quality approaches to RARPA in use across the whole provision.

6.3 IMPACT

Learner satisfaction is high and above the benchmark⁸ and has remained consistent with previous years, with a large proportion (99.4%) of learners stating they enjoyed their learning experience, had the help they needed to make good progress and achieve, received the help they required to understand what they could do next. Just over half (56%) of learners intend to participate in further Community Learning programmes, although this is a reduction on last year (63%).

This data is drawn from a survey which learners are asked to complete at the end of their course, and which gathers their views on the quality of their course, the benefits for their personal development and the overall impact of the course. 54% (1483) of learners who completed their course responded to the survey, which is slightly below the target of 60%. Learners were given the option to complete the survey online, meaning that tutors could not monitor completion as courses finished, whereas with the paper questionnaire completed in class used previously, tutors had been able more effectively to encourage learners to participate. Across the different curriculum areas between 54% and 69% of learners completed the survey with the exception of digital and employability courses where only 33-37% had completed it.

Of the total number of responses, 82% learners had added a comment to explain the impact of the course with the overwhelming majority of comments being positive. See Supporting Evidence.

One notable feature of the comments is recognition of the range of additional benefits to learners across curriculum areas for example learners on non-Digital courses having improved their digital skills, learners on non-Family Learning courses sharing their learning with family members, learners on STEM and Family Learning having gained communication and other skills for work and employment, and learners across the board having seen a positive impact on their mental wellbeing. A number of learners talked about the "life-changing" impact, or the course being a "lifeline" in the context of the pandemic and reducing isolation.

Another notable feature is that the impact of learning extends beyond those who are directly enrolled on the course. It is expected that Family Learning provision benefits the whole family, rather than just the adult learner, but learners also talk about sharing their new parenting skills with other adults in their family, or with their friends. A learner on a Leisure, Health and Wellbeing course reports that she will share her new

⁸ Lincolnshire Benchmarking data 2019-20

knowledge with the children and young people she fosters, and learners on Supported Learning courses have also reported sharing the activities and knowledge with other family members.

Learner Participation and Achievement Data

The use of data has improved, and there is now more consistency in the use of data for quality and financial reporting. The result is that sub-contracted providers are incentivised to direct provision as is intended in the Community Learning Strategy and Commissioning Plan and Community Learning specification, in other words directed at learners who are resident in the 8 Staffordshire districts.

From 2019-20 we collected data on learner district, and updated the definition for attendance (which had previously counted a Known/authorised attendance as an attendance). In term 3 of 2019-20 and 2020-21 attendance figures include asynchronous attendance where the tutor has evidence that the learner has completed the work, and the tutor has given feedback.

We now need to ensure we have data sets that are directly comparable from one year to another, and that evidence our target learner groups so that we can better evaluate the extent to which we are reaching and supporting those target learners. We also need to increase participation across the board.

Participation

	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Staffordshire Community Learners (rounded)⁹	2430	1820	-25%
Staffordshire Adult Skills learners (rounded)	170	80	-53%

The total number of Community Learning learners represent a drop of 25% on the previous year – this should be viewed within the national picture where the drop was 32% in 2020-21¹⁰, and it allows us to partially recover from our larger than average drop in 2019-20.

In Adult Skills there was a further significant drop of 53% in the number of learners compared to the previous year.

⁹ [Further education and skills, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

¹⁰ [Further education and skills, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

In terms of enrolments, the decline in 2020-21 was slightly smaller as many learners were able to progress internally and enrol on more than one course.

	2019-20	2020-21	change
Total Enrolments	3,711	2,943	-22%
Community Learning Enrolments	3,428	2,782	-18.9%
Adult Skills Enrolments (Accredited)	283	161	-43.1%

Online delivery represented 58% of provision and positively contributed to the end-year enrolment figure. We were successful in providing an offer that was accessible to learners, and reached out to new learner groups including those who had not previously accessed classroom-based learning, but found the flexibility of online delivery suited their needs. In Adult Skills enrolments were down 43.1% on the previous year; many learners in this area have low digital skills, meaning it was harder for them to engage with the online offer.

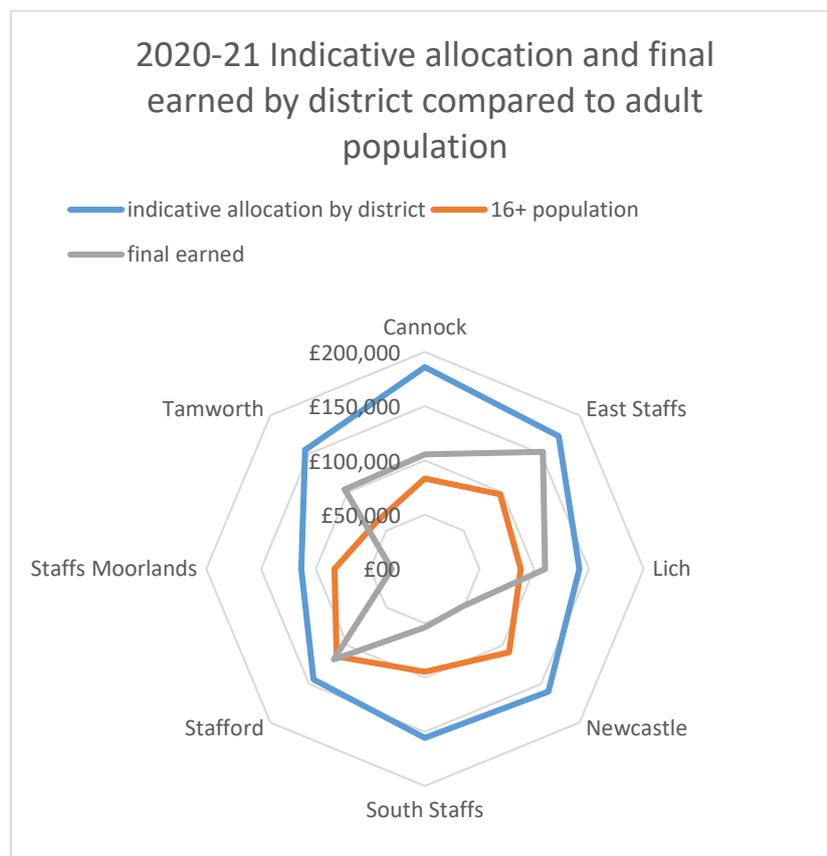
	2019/20	2020/21
Total Enrolments	3,711	2,943
Out of County	199 (5.3%)	110 (3.7%)
Staffordshire Enrolments	3,512 (94.7%)	2,833 (96.3%)

We aimed to focus funding on Staffordshire residents and to reduce the number of out of county enrolments during 2020-21 by paying sub-contractors based on Staffordshire district residency only. This resulted in a further reduction of 44.8% of out of county enrolments, meaning a greater proportion of funding is targeted at Staffordshire residents.

Participation by district

The Community Learning Specification 2020-21 states indicative funding allocations weighted to address identified priorities, with a larger proportion of funding going to Cannock Chase, Tamworth and East Staffordshire districts as they had proportionally more Universal Credit claimants in July 2020, and higher numbers of adults without qualifications beyond level 2. This aim was not fully realised. Whilst East Staffordshire and Tamworth, as two of the districts with higher levels of

need, actually received 115% and 94% of the intended allocation respectively, Staffordshire Moorlands and Newcastle received less than 40% of the intended allocation, with Lichfield and Stafford gaining from this. In-year contract variations mitigated to some extent the restrictions on funding allocations for example the Register of Training Organisations limits. However, the Community Learning service also needs to work with local organisations to develop potential delivery partners in those districts which have not received the intended allocation, and to access learner groups in these communities.



Further data below is based on enrolments of Staffordshire residents for whom sub-contractors were funded (learner starts resident in Staffordshire as defined in the Community Learning specification 2020-21) in order to retain the focus on the learner groups who the funding is targeted towards.

Ethnicity

	Asian	White British	White other	Any other ethnic group	Prefer not to say
2020/21 total starts = 2785	112	2,324	144	131	74
	4%	83%	5%	5%	3%

The majority of enrolments, 88%, were from white learners, while 9% were from all BAME categories. This is in line with the general Staffordshire population, showing a slightly smaller proportion of white learners in the last 2 years compared to 2018-19 when the percentage was 90%. It will be beneficial to track this data more actively when the 2021 census data is realised and gives a more accurate benchmark of the general Staffordshire population.

Age

	19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	65-99
2020/21 total starts = 2785	11	484	830	610	444	222	184
	0.4%	17.3%	29.8%	21.9%	15.9%	7.9%	6.6%

Since 2018-19 when older learners represented over 15% of enrolments, the proportion of enrolments made in 2020-21 made by learners aged 65 or over has dropped by 9% to 6.6% of the total, showing better targeting of funding towards provision aimed at supporting residents to progress into further learning, or work, or support their families.

Sex

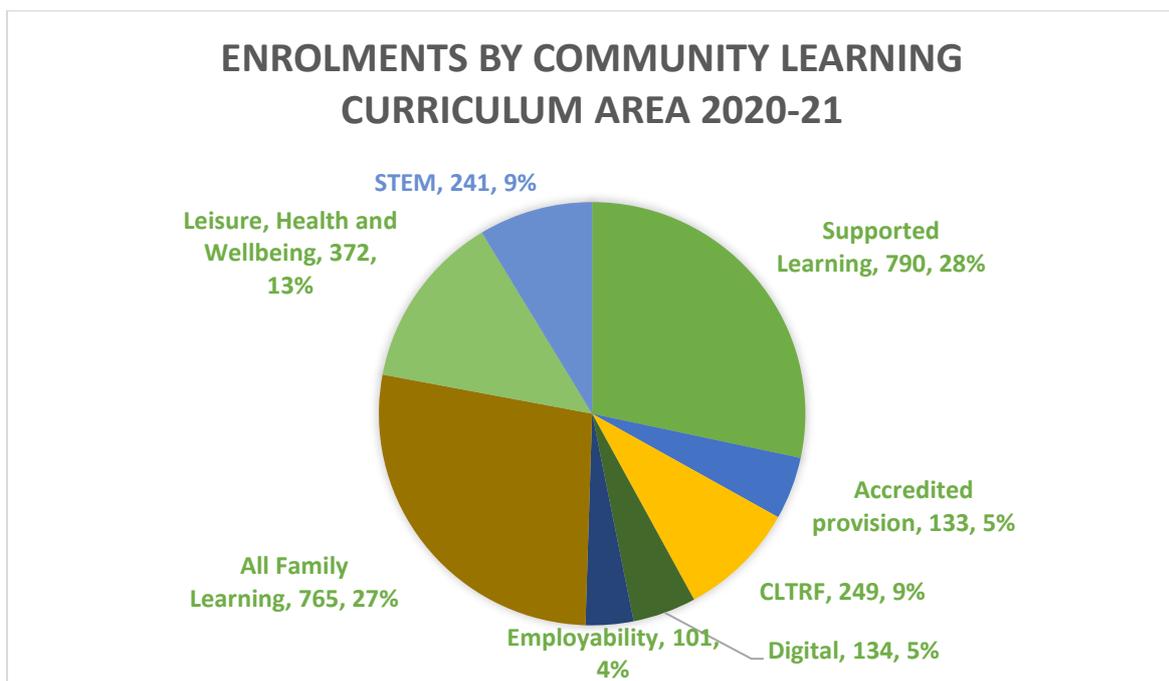
	Male	Female
Total starts = 2875	642	2,143
	23%	77%

Just over three-quarters, 77%, (2143) of enrolments were from female learners with 23% (642) being male. This is a reduction from previous

years from 25.7% in 2019-20 and 28% in 2018-19, and below the benchmark of 25%¹¹. Four providers had between 43-65% of their learners who were male, and successful strategies from these providers should be shared with others, particularly in Family Learning, to increase the overall proportion of males to be in line with the national benchmark.

Curriculum Area and Disability/Learning Difficulty

A high proportion of provision (28% enrolments, up from 21% in 2019-20) falls within the Supported Learning curriculum area, and a high proportion of learners (33%) of learners across all provision have a learning difficulty or learner disability, according to self-declaration at enrolment; this compares to 18% in national figures for Community Learning participation¹². This group were more likely to enrol on more than one course, attending an average of 2.13 courses, compared to 1.3 courses on average for learners without a disability, showing that the Service offers excellent progression opportunities and longer-term support for those who most need it.



Family Learning provision also increased from 22% to 27% of enrolments. Over half of these learners were highly targeted, being referred through safeguarding and early help channels, or schools, and the courses had a significant positive impact on the parenting skills of the adult learners,

¹¹ [Further education and skills, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics)

¹² [Further education and skills, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics)

and subsequently on family life. Even where learners were less targeted, qualitative feedback from learners demonstrated the positive impacts on wellbeing for parents and children, at a time when family dynamics and opportunities were being impacted by national lockdowns and restrictions.

Learner Performance Data

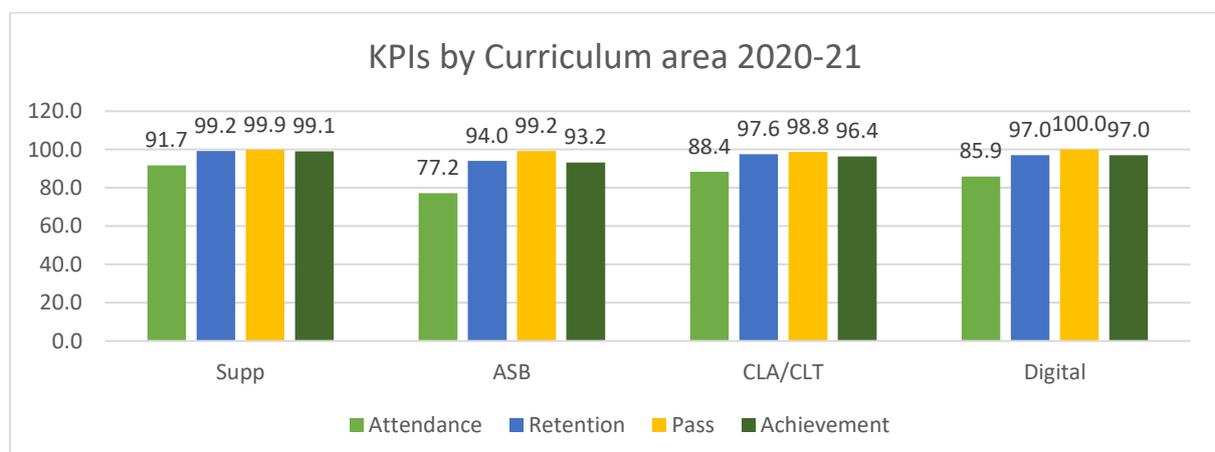
2020-2021	Attendance	Achievement	Pass rate	Retention
Key Performance Indicator	90%	94%	98%	96%
All provision	89.7%	97.1%	98.8%	98.3%
Community Learning	90.8%	97.3%	98.8%	98.5%
Adult Skills Accredited provision	77.2%	93.2%	99.2%	94.0%

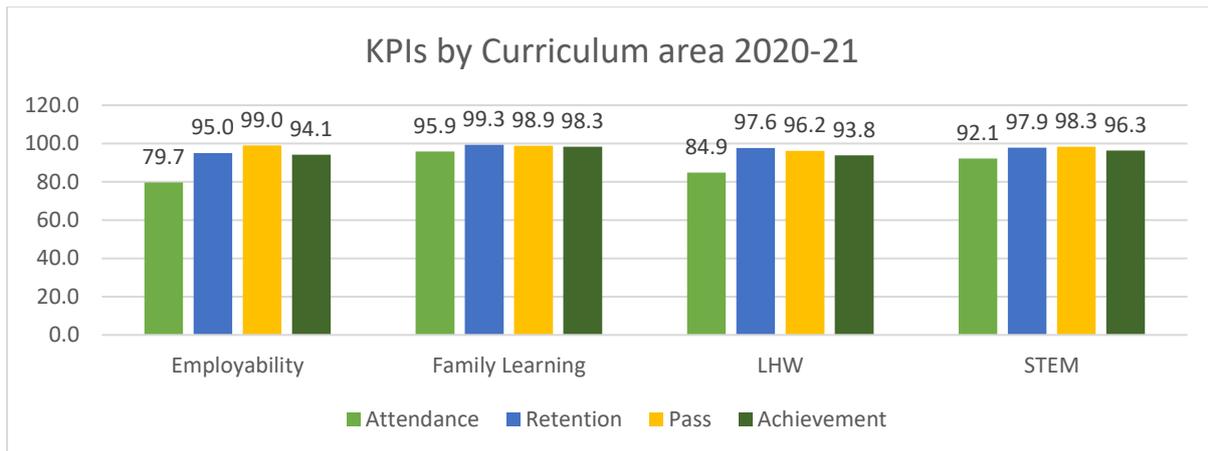
Attendance

In 2019-20, 193 enrolments of Staffordshire enrolments resulted in an attendance of less than 25% of their course, thereby not counting as a “learner start”, representing 5.5%. In 2020-21, this number had reduced to 48 enrolments, 1.7% of enrolments.

Of those who count as a start, the headline figure for attendance is 89.7%. In non-accredited Community Learning the attendance was 90.8%, however in Adult Skills it was 77.2%. This gap needs to be reduced.

Retention, pass rates and achievement





Retention - Community Learning

Headline retention in 2020-21 is at 98.5%, above our KPI of 96% and there are no significant gaps in retention between the different demographic groups.

This is also a significant improvement in terms of consistency on the situation in 2019-20 where some groups had retention rates as low as 80% (white, other) and 85.2% (BAME).

Employability courses had a slightly lower rate (95%) respectively, just below the Key Performance Indicator (96%). This curriculum area had also experienced the lowest rate of attendance 79.7%.

It seems likely that more flexible approaches to delivery including asynchronous delivery encouraged learners who had been absent at some point during their course, to return to their learning and eventually complete the course. This is backed up by a number of learner feedback comments which reference the flexible delivery, and the considerable amount of 1-1 support from tutors in addition to the group learning activities.

Retention - Adult Skills provision

Nine out of 10 learners on Adult Skills courses were on ESOL courses. Retention in 2020-21 is at 94%, below the KPI of 96%.

This area had an attendance rate of 77.2%, and learners' lower attendance is likely to have impacted on their ability to complete the course.

Good practice in supporting learners to complete their course must be shared and built on across the curriculum areas and sub-contractors so that consistency can be improved, in particular in the Adult Skills provision and Employability curriculum area.

Pass rates – Community Learning

The high pass rate for all provision has been maintained with 98.8% of learners achieving their course outcomes or passing accreditation, compared with 98% in 2019-20 and 98.6% in 2018-19. This is consistent across curriculum areas with a variation of less than 4%. There are no significant differences for different equality groups. Therefore, pass rates are excellent.

On non-accredited provision, robust RARPA audit measures validate the accuracy of the non-accredited pass rate.

One provider (34 enrolments) had pass rates which slipped below the trend; it will be recommended to take a proactive approach to checking consistency of RARPA practice and accuracy of data reporting with this provider, as observation of teaching and learning did not give rise to concerns.

What's more, it will be prudent to continue to monitor closely RARPA practice, particularly in online/remote learning, to ensure learners have SMART and/or challenging outcomes appropriately recorded so that learner achievement can be fully evidenced.

Pass rates - Adult Skills provision

80 learners took accredited assessments: 12 being IT qualifications accredited by TLM, which were delivered via online learning; and 68 learners made 121 enrolments in ESOL at pre-Entry to E2, again demonstrating a good provision of progression opportunities where most needed.

Around 80% of ESOL enrolments were through non-regulated provision, due to the low levels of learners at their starting point, and the inaccessibility of ESOL accredited assessments while local venues were closed in terms 1 and 2. Progress and achievement for these learners was measured through RARPA. ESOL learners in term 3 were able to complete accredited assessments.

Overall pass rates for accredited provision were excellent at 99.2%.

Achievement – Community Learning

Overall achievement in Community Learning is excellent at 97.3%, ahead of the KPI of 94%. There were no significant differences in equality groups.

There were differences according to curriculum area, but none significantly below the KPI, with Leisure, Health and Wellbeing having an achievement rate of 93.8% and Employability 94.1%, compared to

Supported Learning which had an achievement rate of 99.1% and Family Learning with 98.3%. In Leisure, Health and Wellbeing this was driven by the slightly lower pass rate, and in Employability by the retention rate, as discussed above.

Achievement – Adult Skills

Overall achievement in Adult Skills provision was just under the KPI at 93.2%, driven by the slightly lower retention rate, as discussed above. Actions need to be taken to improve attendance and therefore retention on these courses, to improve this outcome.

Learner Impact and Destination Survey

J2 Research conducted a telephone survey in November 2021 to determine learner destination and the impact of learning, in which 979 former learners participated. For comparison, similar information is provided for the previous academic years.

There is an increase in the number of people who are in employment following their course; this may be partly due to the lower average age of learners in this academic year. However, there are also higher numbers in volunteering and further learning, including amongst those who were not in work before the start of the course, indicating positive destinations for these learners.

There is an increase in the number of learners satisfied they achieved their main aim for joining the programme. The 2019-20 increases in learners feeling the positive impact of their course, as measured against some of the key aims of Community Learning, have been mostly maintained or further improved.

	2019-20	2020-21
Total Number of Learners	2540	1862
Surveys completed	1272	979
What are you doing now?		
Employment	43.8%	49%
Unemployed looking for work	6.5%	5.3%
Further study	3.9%	4.1%
Volunteering	2.1%	3.6%
Wider Outcomes		
Achieved main aim	89.8%	94.8%
Participate in society	50.8%	55.9%
Protect self from online/scams	31.2%	37.2%
Keep well	82.3%	82.3%
Pursue goals	68.8%	67.8%
Improve maths/English	21.1%	20.5%
More independent	56.7%	60.3%

7 BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES

Headline attendance 2020-21 jumped significantly for this year to nearly recover the pre-Covid situation at 89.7%. This can be explained by a number of factors, for example the increase in participation and attendance in Family Learning driven by Community Forest Services who had a large amount of online provision, and who refined their online delivery this year, leading to an increase in attendance from 79% in 2019-20 to 89% in 2020-21; also by the reduction in the size of Leisure, Health and Wellbeing learning and Employability which had previously had low attendance rates, leading to a smaller impact on the headline figure. Overall attendance is now within 0.3% of the Key Performance Indicator (90%) and is good.

However, 9 out of 23 sub-contractors did not meet the Key Performance Indicator. This particularly affected learners from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds (84.1%), and older learners (86%) and may well be explained by the Covid situation affecting learners' ability or confidence to attend. In addition, some of these were small sub-contractors with less than 20 learners who had learning difficulties/disabilities, so it is not necessarily appropriate to attribute these to a wider trend in the current circumstances, with the pandemic ongoing through the academic year.

On the other hand, delivery via asynchronous learning is likely to have supported learners to continue to engage in learning, albeit remotely, meaning that the lower attendance rates for these groups did not translate into lower retention rates, which stayed above 98% for all equality groups.

In terms of curriculum areas, Supported Learning, Family Learning and STEM all reached beyond the Key Performance Indicator, Employability improved from 57.4% to 79.7%, whilst Adult Skills provision reduced from 81.2% to 77.2%. Actions must be taken to improve attendance in these areas.

Evidence from quality monitoring activity suggests that the behaviour and attitudes of learners are very good, and this is backed up by feedback from learners themselves, based on the questionnaire learners complete towards the end of their course.

The vast majority of learners arrive in time for synchronous learning and prepared to start their learning; punctuality is good. Tutors have high expectations of learners, and learners generally are highly motivated and engage very well with the wide range of learning activities that tutors plan for them.

Tutors plan a wide range of teaching and learning activities as appropriate to the subject, to help learners understand how to study and make good progress. For example, in a Plumbing course, learners make their own notes on handouts with diagrams to support their understanding of legislative and regulatory guidelines, before they start practical work. Increasing use of online learning has facilitated learners to learn independently for example, to access a wide range of further reading materials, recommended by tutors using live links or QR codes.

Learners take on board the constructive feedback of their tutors and understand how this helps them to progress. 99.2% reported that they had the help they needed to achieve and make good progress. Through collaborative work, tutors create groups where learners support each other. For example, in online delivery they leave supportive and constructive comments for their peers' photos of work on social media posts; learners are clearly proud of their achievements. In Supported Learning provision in particular, tutors support learners to overcome anxieties in order to engage well, and learners demonstrate a commitment to doing this. In the best face-to-face delivery, there are clear opportunities for prominent learner voice, with learners contributing to the shape of their programmes.

"An extremely supportive environment where learners can express concerns openly and support each other. Learners are encouraged to share their learning, their achievements and how they like to learn. They share their experiences of learning online or in the classroom, the advantages and disadvantages, the challenges and how being persistent pays off." Observation report, SCF

Tutors are supported to set high expectations for learners, and to promote British Values, through the provision of a Learner Handbook which is given to all learners, and discussed at the induction stage of courses. The Handbook covers expectations, rights and responsibilities of learners, equality and diversity and safeguarding. In many courses, learners agree a "group charter" or set of ground rules. This also applies to online delivery, for example the padlet for Community Forest Services includes an "Ethos and Ethics" section with a framework of "Be Kind, Be Respectful, Think about the environment, Be safe".

As a result, learners demonstrate British Values in their behaviour; they report that they feel safe (99.3%), that the tutors ensure that all learners show respect for each others' views and ideas, and that the tutor listened to them and took note of what they said (99.6% each).

"The teacher had a brilliant ability to listen and open up discussions and to note learning in a way that didn't make anyone feel judged" Learner comment, Family Learning course.

Positive attitudes to learning are demonstrated by the fact that over 99% of learners enjoyed their learning, were happy with their tutor and would recommend their course to a friend. 56% of learners responding to the feedback survey said they intended to do more community learning in future, and in fact learners enrolled on an average of 1.5 courses each.

8 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Evidence from quality monitoring activity suggests that the personal development of learners is good, and this is backed up by feedback from learners themselves, based on the questionnaire learners complete towards the end of their course, and on the destinations survey, which is completed by telephone interview, up to 12 months after the course has finished.

Tutors are prompted to consider how their courses support learners to develop their wider personal skills through sections in the scheme of work, monitoring during quality visits, learner voice activity and CPD opportunities and discussion.

Learners report clear benefits for their personal development, with the most common being the opportunity to take part in new experiences (79%), improved wellbeing and health (65% and 34% respectively) and making new social contacts (44%). In fact, the learner comments reveal a common synergy between learning new skills and significant improvements in mental wellbeing, which has been particularly important to learners during the pandemic. In their comments, learners commonly report the wellbeing benefits of sharing their learning either with others on the course, or by passing on their new skills to family and friends.

Approximately 65 learners took part in focus groups during the year to explore their attitudes to digital skills. Overall, it was clear that learners felt it was important to strike a balance between courses offering an escape from everyday stresses in their lives including online issues, and courses that allow them to develop confidence in online safety and also an interest in developing their access to online services such as job searching, and paying council or car tax. Direct Delivery Unit Digital skills courses explicitly develop these skills, whilst tutors develop learners' digital skills and discuss online safety with learners across all types of provision, and 41% of learners reported via the feedback survey that they felt more able to keep themselves and their family safe.

"I made some nice things this term and really enjoyed using iPads with our art this time. ... we learn more." Learner comment on Art for Life (wellbeing), Supported Learning course.

Quality audits, class visits, online evaluations and observations evidence that all tutors plan for and embed British Values and the Prevent Duty into inductions and sessions. Most tutors make good use of natural occurring instances to raise awareness. 95.7% of learners said that they were informed about how to protect themselves from radicalisation and extremism, and 98.3% knew what to do if they or others on the courses didn't feel safe. As mentioned in the evaluation of safeguarding above, more needs to be done to ensure this is consistent across all curriculum areas and equality groups.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are a priority for the service, and tutors are prompted through the scheme of work to plan opportunities to discuss equality issues and British Values with learners on all courses. Learners are consistently respectful of each other and of staff.

"Excellent group dynamic and high expectations with strong ethos of inclusivity and opportunity from the organisation, and learners contribute to this through good attitudes and relationships" Observation report, UMRA

"Learners show appreciation of hidden abilities/talents and bring out the best in each other." Observation report, GRE

High levels of collaborative work and discussion activities ensure that learners' varied lived experiences are valued, and diversity is celebrated within groups.

"Tutors engage well with learners from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds. This results in learners feeling more able to 'open up' and disclose other areas of support not discussed during initial stages of the service resulting in potential barriers to learning such as housing being identified and addressed" Matrix report January 2021

Support for employment-related skills is good. In the feedback surveys, nearly two-thirds of learners across all provision (64%) report a development of their work-related skills, or functional skills in at least one area of the following: skills and confidence to progress in my job/career, ability to re-skills or upskill for work, or development of English maths or digital skills. This rises to 91% of learners on Employability provision, and 83% of learners on STEM courses. A further 8% across all provision feel more able to live independently or to take an active role in their community.

Learner feedback evidences learners gaining the confidence to enrol on further learning or starting their own business. For example, in the STEM provision, a number of learners talk about how their confidence has increased to a point where they are now making concrete plans to start their own business or CIC, and sometimes from a starting point of experiencing mental ill-health.

"The questions and answer sessions were fab as it gave an opportunity to ask the experts about the roles they do to give a good realistic idea of what careers are out there." Learner comment on STEM "Branch into Nature" course.

Provider staff have effective working relationships with local agencies to support progression into learning, and following courses, into further learning or support, for example Job Centre Plus, local BBO providers, and support agencies such as Malachi and Harvey Girls who offer family support. As a result, learners feel well supported by their tutors. The Learner feedback survey tells us that 99.1% of learners felt their tutor helped them to understand what they could do next. Over half of learners were intending to do more community learning (56%), particularly those aged over 60, or with a learning difficulty or disability. 8 individuals intended to progress onto a traineeship or apprenticeship, whilst 23 intended to start full-time further education. 5.3% of learners were looking for paid employment at the end of their course, based on the latest available data from the destinations survey 2020-21.

The Service maintained its Matrix accreditation in January 2021 with the assessor reporting effective practice in the areas of pre-enrolment information, initial assessment and induction. The report also comments that learners feel confident in making informed choices about their next steps, and that tutors are well informed about the starting points and progress of learners.

"Learners are provided with information about the requirements of the courses and expectations such as attendance, to ensure they are aware of what to expect once enrolled. Initial assessments ensure learners are enrolled onto the right level of qualification which helps to keep them motivated. Information on next steps and potential progression options is delivered as part of the course and revisited throughout. As a result of this many learners go on to either higher level qualifications, progress into employment or volunteering or take additional courses as with leisure related courses. Without exception, learners described a thorough process of induction which gave them the confidence to take the next steps"
Matrix report, January 2021

9 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leaders and managers have a clear vision to use Community Learning to achieve the Staffordshire County Council's objectives, with effective priorities and targeting of the provision to those who will benefit most from lifelong learning. There is effective communication of this vision to all stakeholders from Senior Officers and Members, to local partners such as the LEP and other County Council directorates, through to sub-contracted partners, referring organisations, other local providers, and learners themselves. This is achieved through Member Briefings Meetings, management meetings, social media and Newsletters, and provider meetings.

Senior Officers and Members have a clear and ambitious vision for the future of the Community Learning Service and are strong advocates of education and skills across the County. They provide clear leadership and direction to ensure community learning provision responds to local, regional and national priorities, collaborating with a wide range of local and national partners with strong representation and dialogue with LEP members. They provide timely support, guidance and resources to improve the reach and effectiveness of the Service. In a survey of tutor views, over 96% said they understand how their work relates to Community Learning and County Council priorities.

Senior Officers and Members effectively support and challenge the Service to maintain the quality and performance and to drive rapid improvements where required in order to provide the best learning experiences for learners. In-year, the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee, the Cabinet Member for Learning and Employability, the Director of Economy, Infrastructure & Skills and the Assistant Director for Skills & Employability have been instrumental in shaping the Service to align to the Council's strategic ambitions for promoting prosperity and economic growth. Comprehensive reports have been presented to Senior Leaders and Members, including the Cabinet member for Learning and Employability, to allow for further analysis, scrutiny and challenge, ultimately ensuring high quality learning, good value for money and good outcomes for learners.

The financial management of the service is good and is subject to regular budget reporting procedures. The management team is effective at responding to any external funding pressures to ensure the Service remains focused on priority areas whilst ensuring provision for all learners is accessible. In-year financial contract variations have been implemented resulting in funds being directed appropriately towards the identified local need.

There is a strong focus on the qualifications and professional development of tutors. All tutors are qualified to at least level 3 (Award in Education and Training), as well as having relevant English and maths and subject-specific qualifications.

Experienced Teaching and Learning Advisors provide professional support to promote good practice and to develop the skills of all teaching and support staff. Tutors access a broad range of high-quality training and professional development activities, covering additional safeguarding training, wellbeing and mental health, health and safety, and subject specific training. In addition, the Community Learning staff develop specific training resources, following analysis of the strengths and areas for improvement at observations and class visits, and including online live sessions for example a Show and Tell digital learning workshop, and Family Learning network for tutors. There has been a strong emphasis on supporting the development of digital and remote pedagogies during the academic year, and the aim is always to be supportive and motivating. When surveyed, 86% of tutors felt that leaders and managers in their organisation are considerate of workloads and well-being. There has been good attendance at the Tutor Induction Briefing which was delivered online to fully prepare and develop teaching staff for classroom, blended and online delivery of courses. Nearly 9 out of 10 tutors surveyed felt these opportunities and helped them to develop their professional skills. Consequently, the skills of tutor teams develop over time, and tutors are well-supported.

Managers and Officers have participated in a range of webinars delivered by HOLEX, Education Training Foundation, and Skills & Education Group, including participation in the HOLEX Digital ACE programme and mentoring. The learning from this activity has been cascaded pro-actively to sub-contractors and their teaching staff through coaching and mentoring, CPD meetings, an online social media closed group, sharing of best practice via Twitter and the Community Learning blog.

"The Teaching & Learning (T&L) Blog is well used by tutors and includes a wide range of information including, the vision of CL, key priorities, learner documents, good practice guides, CPD resources as well as relevant policies. Having all this information in one place and online is particularly useful and allows updates to be actioned quickly and efficiently. Many of the resources on the blog are used to support learners such as 'embedding equality & diversity' and results of focus groups, resulting in a consistent approach to service delivery." Matrix report

Relevant Learner Voice activities are planned on a regular basis, ensuring that learners' views are listened to and acted on. Learner feedback is gathered informally at quality monitoring visits and more formally through

a survey which learners complete towards the end of their course. A key performance indicator is set for the learner feedback response rate to be 60%; in 2020-21 we achieved a 54% response rate overall, although there were wide variations between sub-contractors, mainly due to the difficulty in monitoring online response rates in real time. The consistency of this needs to be improved. Learner feedback gathered through the surveys was overwhelming enthusiastic, with a wealth of additional comments testifying to the positive impact on learning (See supporting evidence section).

In addition, the Service plans Learner Voice focus groups or forums, centred on a different theme each year, which ensures learner's views contribute to the development of the Service. This year we focussed on digital skills as reported in the Personal Development section above. Some learners also complete a "Success Story" proforma where there have been particularly good outcomes for the learner. The handbook gives contact details for learners to make a complaint or comment on an ad-hoc basis if they wish. Officers and managers address these contacts following the County Council's procedure for responding to complaints and compliments. As a result, Community Learning staff have a good understanding of the learner experience at the various sub-contractors and in the Direct Delivery Unit, and are able to appropriately support or celebrate achievements.

The Service operates a well-developed and robust performance and quality assurance process to ensure contract compliance and quality of provision delivered by the sub-contractors and the Direct Delivery Unit. There is a comprehensive quality framework within a service specification, and a range of quality monitoring activities. In addition, all staff involved in the provision appropriately contribute to the self-assessment process and review of quality improvement planning. The self-assessment process and contract and performance monitoring procedures are systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive; performance data is used well to inform and improve the quality of provision. This results in all staff and sub-contractor staff having a clear understanding of the quality and performance in the areas they are responsible for, and how this relates to the County Council and Services vision and priorities.

The Community Learning team meet regularly and have monitored progress against the Quality Improvement Plan objectives during the year, meaning there is a strong focus on sustaining quality actions and continual improvement, for example by identifying strategies and support for sub-contractors in order to achieve the actions. As a result, attendance has improved, along with retention and achievement, there is better use of data, particularly in relation to equality groups and of Pound

Plus data provided by sub-contractors, and there has been an improvement in learners' digital skills and inclusion across all curriculum areas.

At the outset of the academic year, Senior Managers and Provider Relationship Managers communicate high expectations with sub-contractors during implementation meetings. In-year, contract performance and quality assurance are monitored and recorded through monthly dialogue meetings and termly reviews with subcontractors, with remedial actions identified and actioned. Contract performance is reported monthly to the Assistant Director, Skills and Employability and is subject to challenge and scrutiny.

Officers in each role across the Service are experienced, make valuable contributions and have well established working relationships with their sub-contractors and know the provision well. They share the vision, address under-performance, acknowledge good and outstanding practice, and fully embrace change and developments to support the sustainability of Staffordshire Community Learning. There is a regular schedule of monthly dialogue between provider relationship managers and sub-contractor managers. As a result, any concerns with performance and quality are addressed swiftly and clearly.

In addition to the existing quality monitoring and development activities, quality managers have developed the assurance of online and remote delivery. This has been robust and involved gaining access to online sessions, closed social media groups, online learning materials, learner work and ILPs, as well as professional dialogue and self-reflection with teaching staff which is captured in an online evaluation pro-forma. This has led to teaching staff receiving constructive feedback and sometimes further support and training from the Teaching and Learning Advisors.

These quality assurance interventions allow Community Learning staff to consistently evaluate the quality of teaching and learning against the quality framework set out in the Community Learning Specification. All aspects of quality assurance are reported on with appropriate RAG ratings and action plans. The Quality officers and sub-contractors work collaboratively to develop a quality learner experience. The impact of this is evident in the high quality of taught sessions, and through feedback from learners, standard of their work, their behaviour, and their success stories.

10 SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

10.1 LEARNER STATEMENTS FROM FEEDBACK SURVEYS

Adult Skills Accredited provision (ESOL)

Discipline during the learning process create good habit in my life. Supporting environment which was created help me feel confident with my study, I felt encouraged to ask questions. Thanks to this course I am better version of me then I was before. I am grateful for this opportunity to improve language.

I found a new and better job. My communication is better with English native people. I am more confident when I going to go at hospital, bank or choose different services.

In my opinion the courses like this are a great opportunity for learn how to better speak English, understand English people around me and also feel more connected with England.

Digital

The course was of huge benefit to me as my Word processing skills were very poor and I needed to upskill in connection with a forthcoming new job, so the timing and benefit of this course were ideal for me.

It has given me confidence on Excel where previously I was deterred from using it as felt out of my depth! Very beneficial + will help me improve @ work!

This was a very comprehensive course packed with practical tips on on-line safety and getting to grips with social media.

I started the course with an IT phobia, I now feel more confident that I can keep myself and my family safe.

The skills I have gained from undertaking the "Becoming confident with social media", has enabled me to be more effective and confident in my role as administrator of our local Royal British Legion Branch Facebook. The course content and method of delivery were superb. The instructor was supportive at all times, ensuring that myself and my peers were always treated correctly and equally - Many thanks needs to be passed onto [tutor].

Employability

The tutor has been amazing the whole way through. She has been giving us plenty of guidance, a lot of knowledge, and very fun video chats which we have all managed to make new friends. The google classroom chat, slides and presentation has been a great way to learn. And we even get some fun questionnaires at the end and some fun videos to watch and some extra research tasks that we can do if we wish.

The impact these 2 courses I have done so far has been immense in the best way possible! They have helped me feel much better about myself and have kick started a drive to better myself which I didn't have before.

Family learning

I have learned to practice taking a step back and thinking about how I deal with my emotions and how I can try harder, so that the children start to handle theirs in a better way.

Nothing but positivity has stemmed for me and my children from attending this course. I wish everyone was lucky enough to access it.

This course has helped me and my family so much. The way I have been with [son] has completely changed his behaviours. It's the only course that I have ever stuck with, it's really helped and I'm happy to join a new course next term. Thank you so much to [tutor].

The course has really helped me, and my future. I know that my little girl is having the best start in life. I have been so up and down, but the course has helped me to be a better parent, much calmer and more consistent, our family is much calmer and happier because of it.

I am so much more confident. I am aiming to get my Driving Licence because at the moment have to rely on public transport. I was linked to [worker] at The Training Initiative by [tutor] and have spoken to her a few times. I will hope to gain a Traineeship in Joinery as soon as a position becomes available closer to home. I am volunteering at a local Charity Shop for the time being.

We are Healthier Eating because I have reduced portion sizes and now my daughter doesn't throw food on the floor.

I feel a lot more confident now and this includes talking to people for work purposes too. I've improved my IT skills because we have used Teams, WhatsApp, email, attachments and sent photos.

It has helped the whole household to be a lot calmer. My child listens better now I communicate better with him. I have changed the way I discipline him, and I reward him a lot more. I also praise him more often than I did.

The course has helped me as a parent, I knew nothing when I started and was anxious and depressed. Through this course, I am now thriving and so are my family.

I'm glad it was a virtual course as I wouldn't have been able to attend a course due to my anxiety.

This has had a very positive impact on our household, as my partner had had to take time off work because of the stresses and lack of sleep. Now he is back to work, and we are moving forwards.

'I' is deaf, and [tutor] gave me many ideas to stimulate her other senses and tips to help communication ie eye contact and close face to face contact. The

Deaf Specialist Teacher has linked with [tutor] and she shared 'signing' to aid communication during calls and sent me hard copies to practice at home too.

Not only have I learnt things to help with my own parenting, I've also learnt skills to share with my friends who are struggling with their children's behaviour.

I now have regular contact with my children and while the rest of my life is tricky, the course has helped me to focus on being the best parent I could be.

I've got way more patience and understanding -knowing that every opportunity is a learning one too. I notice how others handle things as I did and at times feel happy to share tips.

Leisure, Health and Wellbeing

I have really enjoyed the course. Fabulous + inspiring content, well delivered with plenty of opportunity for stimulating discussion. Contribution by all.

New ideas and to focus on me-time, to help wellbeing, positive thinking and keeping a journal has helped.

It's been a lifeline having this course during lockdown. The WhatsApp group has been so supportive, and I have really enjoyed gaining new skills and trying new activities when the world was shut.

I enjoyed this course. Thank you for providing these lovely courses. I really enjoyed the padlet facility available. This was a lovely addition to the learning. I was able to read over the course information at my own pace and was able to seek a look at the following information to add my understanding and offer time to plan what to do the following week. The information and resources given was outstanding

I am going to keep on with what I have learnt and share my new-found knowledge with others including the children and young people we foster so I know the impact of what I have learnt will be massive in supporting them too.

STEM

The course gave me the opportunity to do things I would never have normally done. I used a lathe to make a pen and other items that gave me great satisfaction and I now take time out to do things similar at home.

The skills I've learnt have enabled me to set up a small online business selling craft items. I am now in contact with Shaw Foundation with a one-to-one mentor. To develop this. I see a future now rather than feeling pointless.

The tutors have given excellent feedback and advice throughout the course and helped me to put in place my next steps.

As a participant I felt included and met other people via zoom links. We all shared what we had made, and confidence was built by everyone commenting on the pictures shared. I developed lots of skills and this really helped with my wellbeing during a difficult time.

Everyone that sees my work, or pictures of my work during these times..... are always amazed by how professional they look.

It has given me the confidence that my passion, experience, and enthusiasm for further learning and training are enough for me to set up my own CIC. This feels like a turning point in my career and my recovery from mental illness.

It has helped me to get a better understanding of careers in environmentalism and it has resulted in me being offered a work-based traineeship.

A massive impact. Been a very emotional journey through illness and recovery. I've met friends for life who themselves have been through traumatic experiences. The staff and volunteers very empathic to each person's needs whilst encouraging new skills. Massive part in reclaiming my life.

I have found it incredibly difficult to find time for myself during the pandemic and juggling life and childcare. This course has encouraged me to put time aside for me, to feel engaged in something I love and to keep a hand in education and adult learning. I was able to build upon existing skills and try new approaches within the course and even involve my child in activities.

Supported Learning

The courses I have completed at UMRA, have changed my life. They've helped with my confidence, motivation & self-esteem. I would like to now move on to do some volunteering. I have a wealth of knowledge with flowers & would have to use my experience to inspire & help others. ...This course has really helped to remind me of what I am capable of. I realise I am very creative + hope to inspire others. It has helped with my motivation, especially important during this pandemic.

I have thoroughly enjoyed this course. It has been invaluable to my mental health during Covid lockdown. I have enjoyed all the activities and the equipment / items that were sent were fantastic along with clear instruction.

The course was excellent. The videos each week were very informative, and I learned a lot. The Facebook group was very supportive. The course wildly exceeded my expectations of what could be achieved with an online course.

Wellies has enabled me to keep on living during this difficult time: without them and their unique input during this time. with video chats and zoom meetings it's been very different / difficult at times, but this in itself has taught me new IT skills and a bit more computer confidence.

The course is great as it gets me out of the house + socialising staff are always so calm + friendly + helpful. We are always learning something new, building confidence, and also reminds me to be kind + patient to others when in class.

In particular really enjoyed the Asian art and learning more about the background behind it. I also enjoyed the social aspect of the course, meeting new people, sharing my work, and receiving feedback meant I felt very positive. I improved my digital skills on the course not having used some of features of Facebook before such as watch parties.

The course has given me the confidence to go back into learning and I am in the process of doing a web page to promote UMRA wellbeing and mental health courses. Because I am in a wheelchair I do not have to be limited, I have multiple disabilities - I cannot stand on my feet for too long and I never did that well at school. I have been able to clean out the hens, groom a Shire horse foal. I have had plenty of choice of activities to do. I have even sorted out the internet so that I can learn more. The course has inspired me to want to learn more.

I am close to my family, especially my mum so felt proud to tell her about what I've learnt and bring her things I've made as part of the sessions.

I want to try volunteering soon at a shop and this course helped me feel confident enough to do that.

Wellies is a family where are there to support each other, you can be yourself, no judgment is made. They continuously stretch & challenge me. I dislike the fact we can't be at the venue in person, but I love Zoom calls that we do - practicals are my favourite. I am becoming more confident and gaining new skills that help me mentally deal with life.

I have also been able to involve my young children in all of the activities, so their and my own wellbeing has been supported + improved.

CLTRF

I have thoroughly enjoyed this course and I feel I have taken more away from it than I anticipated before commencement. I was hoping to gain an understanding of dyslexia and how I could perhaps recognise signs or early indications in students but what I have actually gained in not only a wealth of knowledge and in depth understanding of the condition but also ways in which I could help learners who struggle with dyslexia. The course was taught at exactly the right pace and was very engaging so thank you.

This course has helped my writing and I am now writing match reports for Stafford Rangers – learner with disabilities/learning difficulties.

The course has helped me to become more confident following a recent mental health issue. I now feel myself again and the course and tutor helped me to do this. It has also improved my knowledge and skills in my voluntary work and given me confidence to pass on to others. I'm also inspired to follow a new career path in working with horses and vulnerable people.

Built confidence, knowledge of the horses, markings likes & dislikes. Very comfortable with horses. Excited to come every week.

I like [tutor] and [tutor] and doing the courses. I have written poetry. It is good fun. I have used the ipads and I can do it on my own now Learner's mum has asked to record that learner absolutely loves learning on these courses and continues the learning at home with his family.

I have to use my computer to speak but I am never left out of the learning. [Tutor] makes sure I am part of all of it

I'm very happy I enrolled for this course it's helped me in lots of way communicating, using apps on my phone and more supporting my daughter with using creatively, she also enjoys getting her pencil and paper out making designs with me.

I home-educate two of my children as they have extra needs, and this course has really helped me to help them with their learning. When my children are bigger, I'd like to work with children who also need extra help.

I have enjoyed myself on the [Family Learning] course. I found it interesting how much more I could do other than just read a book. My son used to get bored after a while when I use to read to him, ...now he stands right near me to look at the pictures and we have more of an interaction where he points at the pictures, and I ask him simple questions. I didn't always take part in the WhatsApp groups, but I did look at other students' ideas and learnt from them.

I have really enjoyed this course there was times where I could not join as I have children's appointments or poor internet connection, but work was always shared with me via the WhatsApp which I used to share my homework with, and I was confident to do that independently.

This course has helped me to establish a fitness routine that I intent to continue with now that the course has finished. I feel healthier and have changed my mindset in making healthier choices for me and my family.

10.2 STATISTICAL DATA AND CHARTS

The following data are based on learners who were resident in the 8 Staffordshire districts and who attended at least 25% of the GLH of their course, thereby counting as a “start” for finance purposes. This means actual numbers may vary slightly from the ILR return to the ESFA due to small differences in definitions.

Total learners and enrolments

	2019-20	2020-21	Change
Staffordshire Community Learners (rounded)¹³	2430	1820	-25%
Staffordshire Adult Skills learners (rounded)	170	80	-53%

	2019-20	2020-21	change
Total Enrolments	3,711	2,943	-22%
Community Learning Enrolments	3,428	2,782	-18.9%
Adult Skills Enrolments (Accredited)	283	161	-43.1%

	2019/20	2020/21
Total Enrolments	3,711	2,943
Out of County	199 (5.3%)	110 (3.7%)
Staffordshire Enrolments	3,512 (94.7%)	2,833 (96.3%)

¹³ [Further education and skills, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

Ethnicity

	Asian	White British	White other	Any other ethnic group	Prefer not to say
2020/21 total starts = 2785	112	2,324	144	131	74
	4%	83%	5%	5%	3%

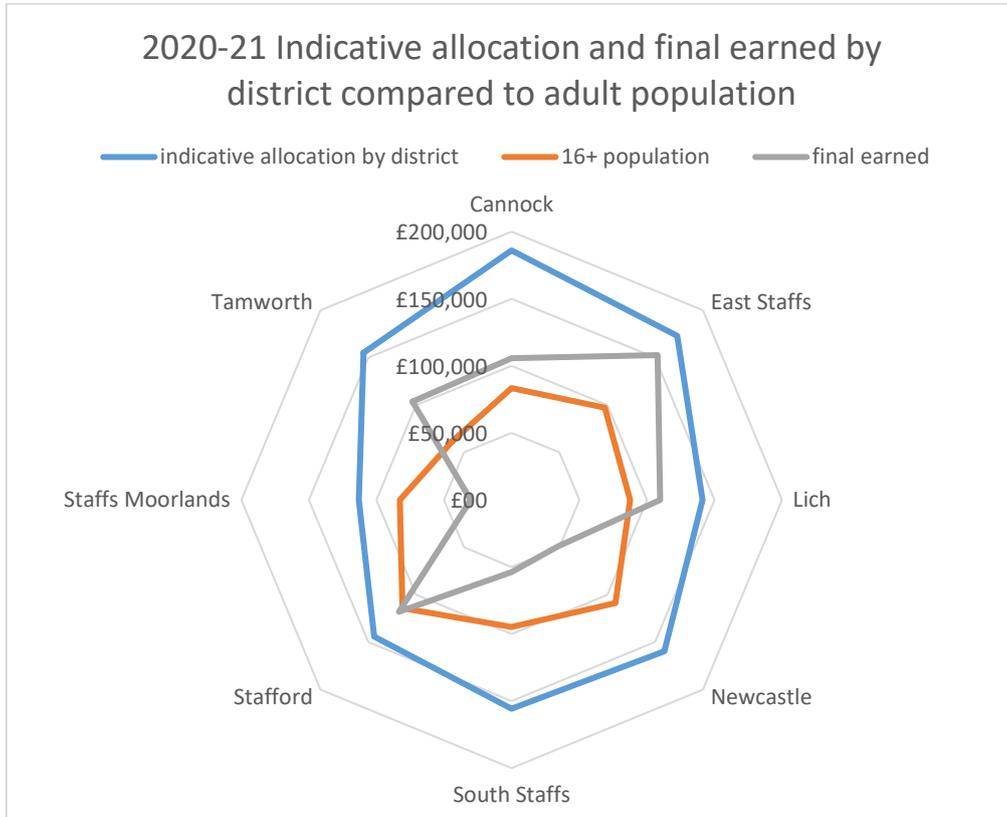
Age

	19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	65-99
2020/21 Total starts = 2785	11	484	830	610	444	222	184
	0.4%	17.3%	29.8%	21.9%	15.9%	7.9%	6.6%

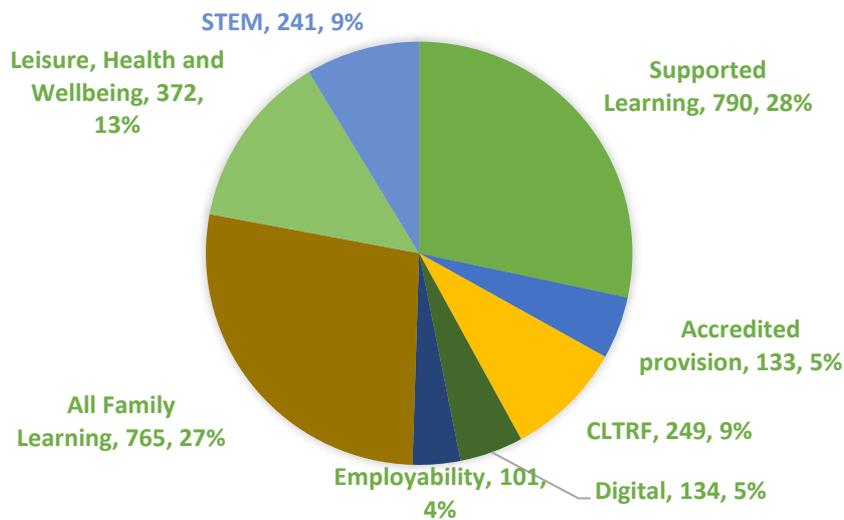
Sex

	Male	Female
2020/21 Total starts = 2875	642	2,143
	23%	77%

Indicative allocation and final funding earned by district, and compared to population

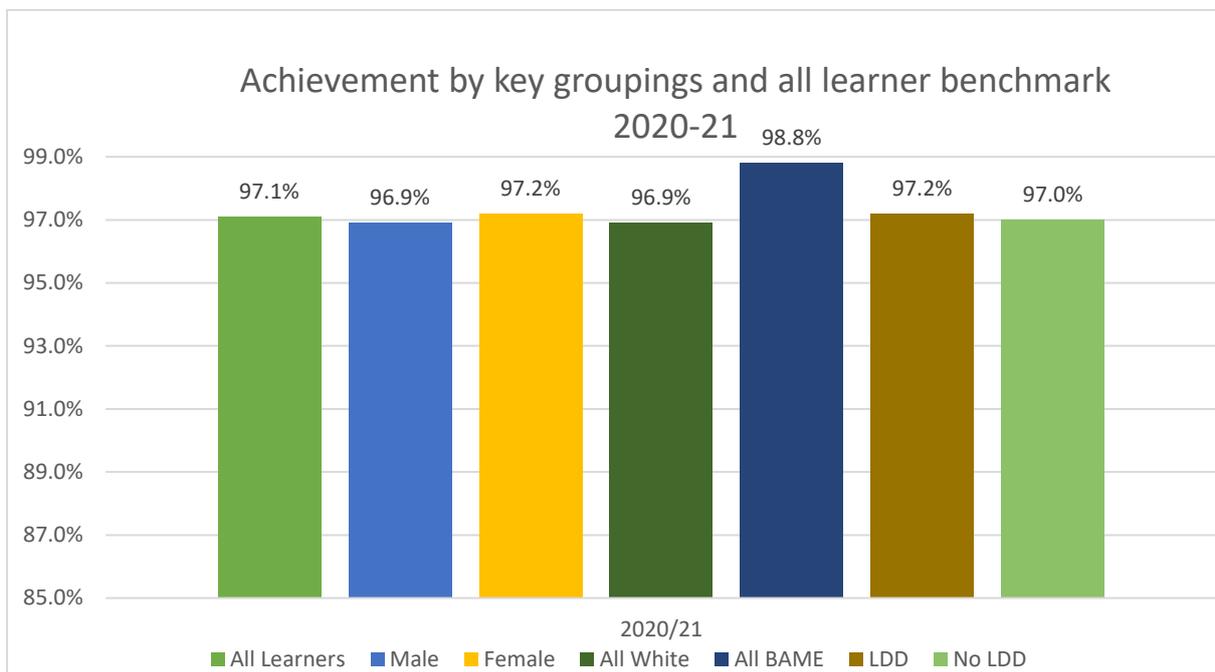


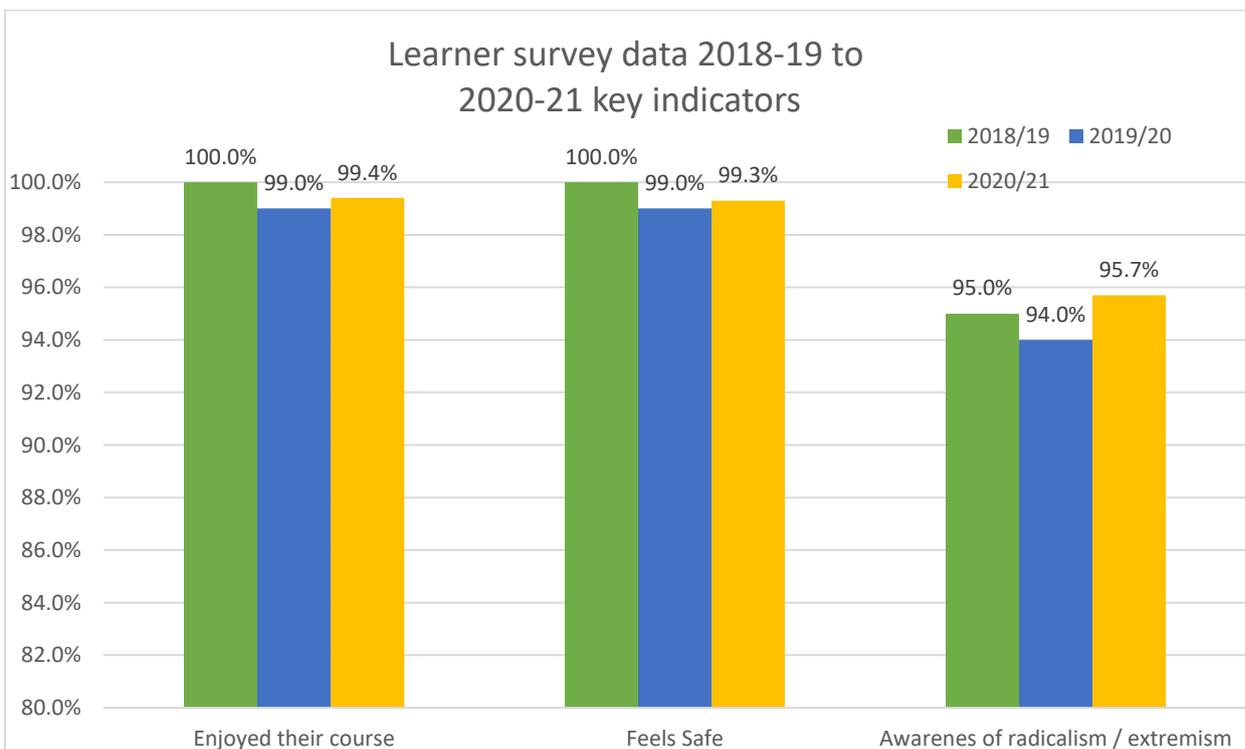
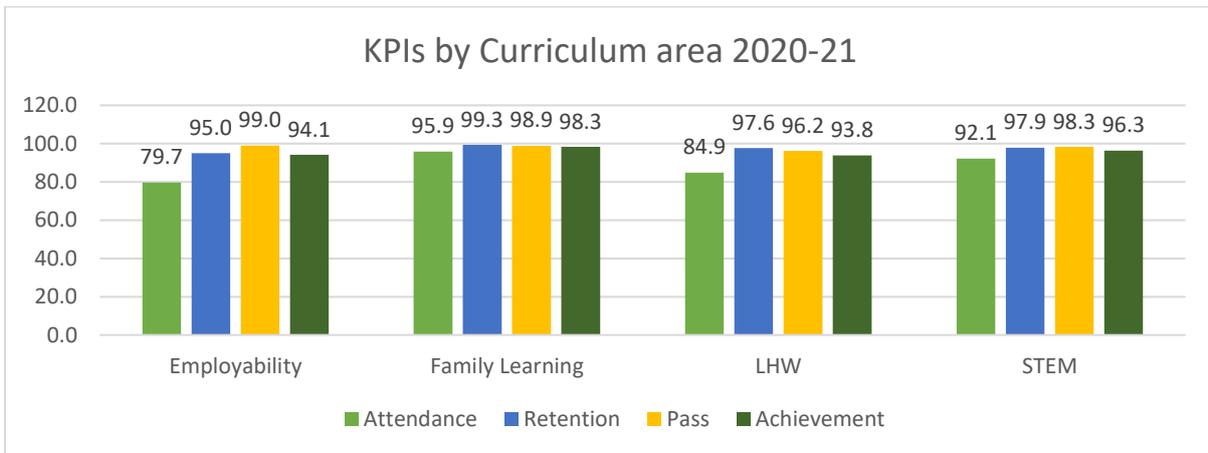
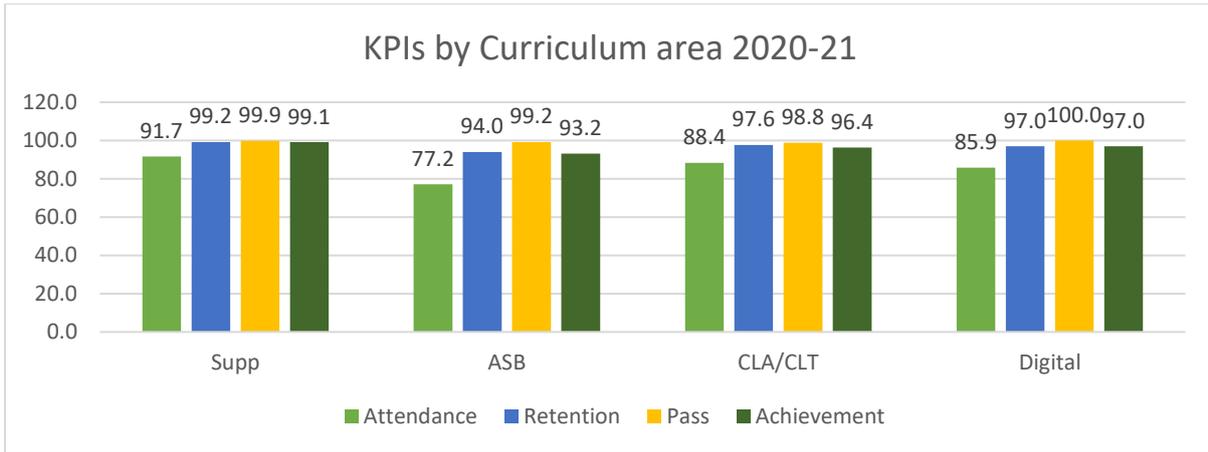
ENROLMENTS BY COMMUNITY LEARNING CURRICULUM AREA 2020-21



Key Performance indicators for learner achievement

2020-2021	Attendance	Achievement	Pass rate	Retention
Key Performance Indicator	90%	94%	98%	96%
All provision	89.7%	97.1%	98.8%	98.3%
Community Learning	90.8%	97.3%	98.8%	98.5%
Adult Skills Accredited provision	77.2%	93.2%	99.2%	94.0%





Learner destinations

	2019-20	2020-21
Total Number of Learners	2540	1862
Available for Survey	74.4%	80%
Surveys completed	67.3%	65.5%
What are you doing now?		
Employment	43.8%	49%
Unemployed looking for work	6.45%	5.3%
Further study	3.85%	4.1%
Volunteering	2.12%	3.58%
Wider Outcomes		
Achieved main aim	89.8%	94.8%
Participate in society	50.8%	55.9%
Protect self from online/scams	31.2%	37.2%
Keep well	82.3%	82.3%
Pursue goals	68.8%	67.8%
Improve maths/English	21.1%	20.5%
More independent	56.7%	60.3%