



## **Inspire Learning Self-Assessment Report August 2024-July 2025**

### **Mission Statement**

- *Why we do what we do:*
  - *“We believe in working with you to create opportunities to achieve your lifelong potential.”*
- *How we do it:*
  - *“Listening to you, we create high quality courses for you and your community, bringing us together in welcoming and friendly spaces”*

#### **Overview**

Nottinghamshire has a population of 857.013. A fifth of the population lives in small towns and villages with a population of under 10,000. Inspire provision operates throughout the county. 14% of Nottinghamshire residents live in the 20% most deprived areas in England. 7.5% of the working age population have no qualifications (against a national figure of 6.5% across Great Britain). Furthermore, whilst the national employment rate for people with Special Educational Needs is 4.5%, it is only 2% in Nottinghamshire.

Inspire was established in April 2016. This community benefit society delivers a range of services on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council. This includes delivering Community and Family (now Tailored) Learning, Accredited Adult Learning, Inspire College provision for young people and 19+ Advanced Learner Loans provision funded by a Department for Education (DfE) contract held by

Nottinghamshire County Council. We have a hybrid model of delivery for both adults and young people allowing a wide range of people to access learning in a way that suits them.

During the 2024-25 academic year, Inspire Learning directly delivered the majority of our Adult Learning provision. This provision is split into four areas: Health & Wellbeing, Employability, Family Learning and Groups for Learners with Learning Disabilities and Difficulties. Through this provision we aim to meet the diverse and changing needs of the communities across Nottinghamshire. We also worked with seven sub-contractors who delivered specialised provision in specific circumstances where we were unable to meet the local need.

Inspire College learners continued to have access to a variety of programmes across the county including vocational courses, Personal and Social Development and Traineeships. This provision is designed for those learners who otherwise would not be able to access a college place, thus minimising the number of NEETs in the county. In doing so, we engage with these harder to reach learners who have frequently had negative experiences in their previous educational setting. We create a positive learning environment for these learners through small class sizes and high levels of support which means that the majority achieve more success than they have ever achieved before.

## Grade Summary

Area	Grade
Overall effectiveness	2
Quality of education	2
Personal development	2
Behaviour and attitudes	2
Leadership and management	2
<b>Level 1 Self-Assessment Reports</b>	
Adult Provision	2
Education Programmes for Young People	2
Provision for Learners with High Needs	2

The table below shows the Service's grade profile for the last five years.

Area	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2	2	2
Quality of education (Quality of teaching, learning and assessment)	2	2	2	2	2
Leadership and management (Effectiveness of leadership and management)	2	2	2	2	2
Personal development (Personal development, behaviour and welfare)	2	2	2	2	2
Behaviour and attitudes	2	2	2	2	2

Inspire College	2	2	2	2	2
Adult Provision (19+)	2	2	2	2	2
High Needs		2	2	2	2

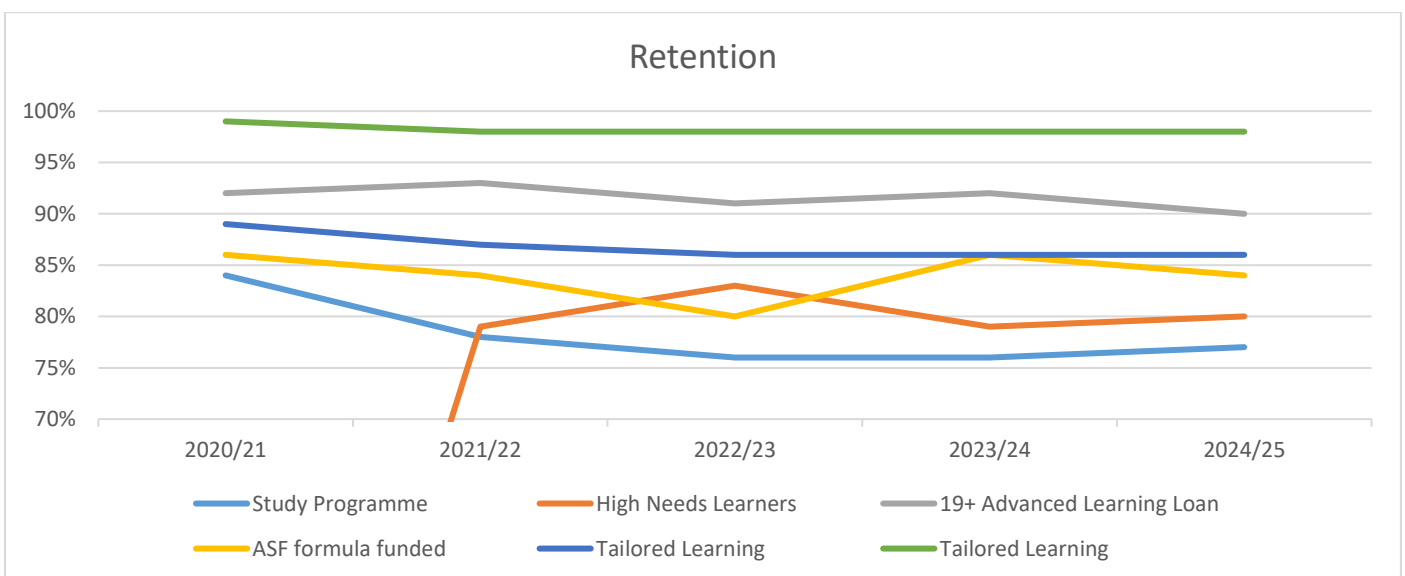
## Key Data

### Learner Engagement

Provision	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Study Programme	203	166	256	308	274
High Needs Learners	25	40	36	54	64
Traineeships	18	12	15	12	4
19+ Advanced Learning Loan	29	22	8	16	18
ASF formula funded	370	755	683	1083	1211
Tailored Learning (enrols)	2727	6957	6131	7660	7259

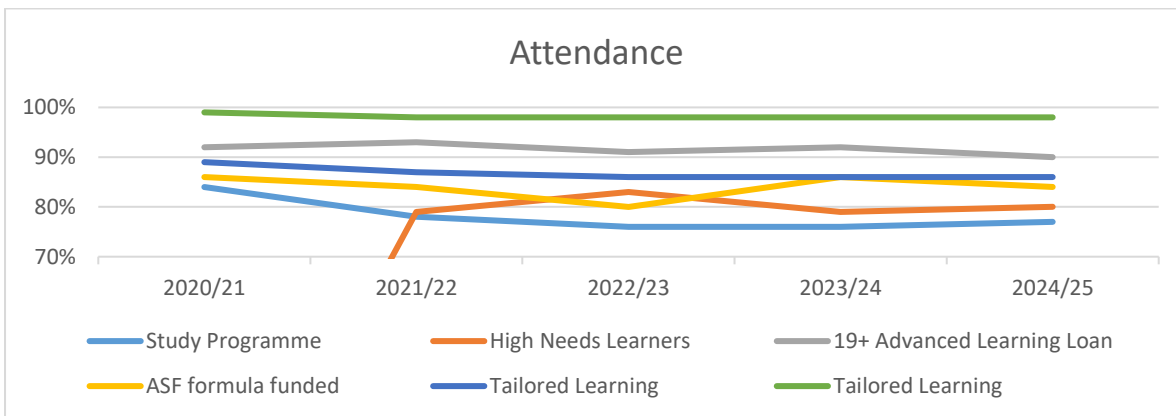
### Retention

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Study Programme	82%	84%	85%	84%	85%
High Needs Learners	96%	83%	92%	83%	93%
Traineeships	95%	93%	86%	84%	100%
19+ Advanced Learning Loan	96%	100%	88%	93%	89%
ASF formula funded	94%	97%	97%	98%	98%
Tailored Learning	99%	98%	98%	98%	98%



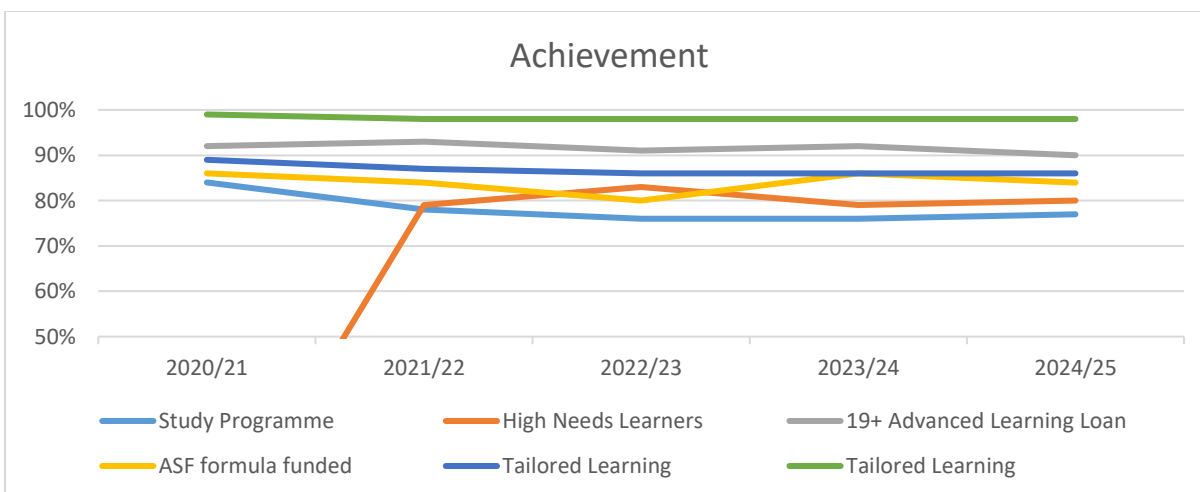
## Attendance

Provision	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Study Programme	84%	78%	76%	76%	77%
High Needs Learners	N/a	79%	83%	79%	80%
19+ Advanced Learning Loan	92%	93%	91%	92%	90%
ASF formula funded	86%	84%	80%	86%	84%
Tailored Learning	89%	87%	86%	86%	86%



## Achievement

Provision	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Study Programme	80%	82%	81%	80%	80%
High Needs Learners	96%	80%	85%	85%	85%
Traineeships	50%	79%	57%	79%	100%
19+ Advanced Learning Loan	96%	96%	88%	92%	89%
ASF formula funded	86%	87%	91%	91%	91%
Tailored Learning	94%	94%	94%	95%	95%



**Overall Effectiveness** is good

Inspire Learning on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council works to widen participation and engage the hardest to reach adults and young people into education by providing a welcoming environment that allows them to overcome their negative feelings around previous experiences of education. In many cases the young learners we work with are those which other more traditional providers would not enrol, giving them the opportunity to achieve their lifelong potential.

All areas of Inspire Learning/Nottinghamshire County Council's provision are good, with some outstanding elements.

The quality of education provided to learners across all provision is good. Leadership and management is highly effective and ensures that the curriculum is relevant and reviewed regularly so that the offer prepares learners for their future careers. Through attending Inspire, learners also develop skills outside of their learning programme, such as developing confidence and improving their social skills. Learners are respectful towards each other and their tutors and behaviour is good. All learning is delivered from well-resourced and welcoming venues and all learners feel safe. The unique delivery model where Inspire Learning works very closely with Nottinghamshire County Council's public library service and youth service ensures that all learners have access to learning in a place that is convenient to them.

For young people on Inspire College provision, learning is all to face to face and, despite the challenges and barriers they face, the vast majority attend full-time. Adult provision runs with a blended model of face to face and online which allows learners across the county to access learning in a way that suits their individual circumstances.

Arrangements for monitoring the safety and well-being of learners are thorough. Learners are very well supported and, through personalised learning plans and one to one reviews, Inspire College learners have the opportunity to raise any concerns they may have. The curriculum offer for adult learners continues to ensure that learners have access to a wider range of courses that support their mental health and well-being.

### **What is it like to be a learner?**

Learners benefit from a varied curriculum that helps them to progress within the labour market or to achieve other personal goals. Knowledgeable, friendly and supportive tutors are highly effective at delivering interesting sessions that engage learners particularly well. Many learners who attend courses have had difficulties with participating in learning in the past.

Learners are able to develop good skills and knowledge and, through attending courses, grow in self-confidence and self-belief. The intended outcomes of Inspire Learning's provision are not only qualifications and employability skills, but also better rounded and resilient citizens who are equipped for both the local job market and the challenges of adult life, by improving their mental health, enriching their human relationships and increasing their understanding of how to make a positive contribution to society.

## **Education Programmes for Young People**

Inspire College supports 16–19-year-olds (up to 24 with LLDD) facing challenges such as behavioural issues, learning disabilities, mental health difficulties, or barriers to education, employment, and independent living. Many have disengaged from mainstream education and lack confidence or qualifications. The college offers a diverse, engaging curriculum delivered by supportive tutors, helping learners develop skills, confidence, and motivation. Inspire Learning aims to improve employability and qualifications while fostering resilience, wellbeing, and the ability to lead fulfilling, independent lives.

In 2024–25, the college worked with 278 learners aged 16–24. Of these, 73% progressed into further education, apprenticeships, or employment, and qualification achievement rates reached 84%, returning to previous levels.

Students studied vocational, personal, and social development and employability courses across sites in Retford, Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Newark, Eastwood, Stapleford, Worksop, and Beeston.

## **Quality of Education**

### **What we do well**

1	Inspire College’s admissions policy and relationships with referrers and other stakeholder leads to widening participation across the county for learners who in many cases would struggle to access any other education provision.
2	The curriculum is planned to address barriers to learning from the outset, leading to strong engagement and improvement on previous attendance levels, and ultimately good achievement rates (80.1%) and sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning, independent living and employment.
3	A strong focus on Maths and English and its discrete delivery by dedicated staff results in strong achievement rates in both Functional Skills and GSCE resits, comparing very favourably to the national average. This is known to have a positive impact on the life chances of learners.

### **Key Areas for Development**

1	Learner ‘needs’ and ‘starting points’ could be better analysed upon enrolment and throughout the course, to better inform curriculum content. A key example would be Personal and Social Development /Employability programmes and the specific units chosen to meet the needs of the learners accessing those courses.
2	The use of target trackers and systematic target setting across the bases needs to improve, be more consistent and better involve learners in the setting and monitoring of these targets to improve understanding and progress against specific targets.
3	A lack of consistent, effective and timely assessment and marking across all provisions leads to an inconsistency in the quality and timeliness of feedback and learners not being given the tools to improve as quickly as they might.

## **Behaviour and Attitudes**

### What we do well

1	Staff set clear expectations around behaviour and routine from the start, and relationships between staff and learners are generally strong.
2	Staff and learners eat lunch together and participate in games and activities during this time which results in staff know everyone one site. Learners are discussed at communication meetings, so all staff are aware of any signs to look out for across the site. Lead attends each provision at least once a week and eats lunch with learners and staff.
3	Staff promote an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all learners, promoting difference as a positive and maintaining a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and intimidation. This allows learners to feel safe and protected from behaviour that have, in some cases, hampered their access to learning.

### Key Areas for Development

1	Attendance, while a small improvement on the previous year, still falls significantly below the organisation's target.
2	Mobile phones have still proven to be a disruptive issue in some bases, causing interruptions to learning.
3	There is a need for a more consistent approach, across ALL BASES, to extra-curricular activities and participation in group community/social action projects.

### Personal Development

#### Personal Development

##### What we do well

1	Pastoral support is excellent. Tutors know their learners well and are passionate about the work they do; they invest in them & their families, removing barriers that have in many cases have prevented previous progress in education.
2	Our programmes explicitly address learners' confidence, resilience and physical and mental health; this allows learners feel safe and confide in staff about personal/sensitive issues and equips them for employment and life outside of college.

#### Key Areas for Development

1	Although learners are assessed effectively as to their work readiness and appropriate next steps for work experience, not enough learners access extended individual placements.
2	The Personal and Social Development 'offer' is insufficiently current and bespoke. It needs review and examination, ensuring that its key elements are embedded across all provisions, not just PSD courses.

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## Leadership and Management

### What we do well

1	Regular Base Meetings are held to discuss and agree how to resolve any issues. Lead Tutors visit their Bases at least once a week and support Tutors with disciplinaries and the liaising with parents/carers and stakeholders.
2	The management structure within Inspire College allows staff access to the management team's processes through an open-door policy. Teaching staff feel comfortable in feeding back their thoughts and feelings on new processes which allows for timely action and intervention on issues affecting staff wellbeing and the quality of the service.
3	The TLC (Teaching and Learning Co-operatives) initiative enabled tutors to share best practice around setting lesson objectives and AfL, offering the most support to newer/less experienced staff.

### Key Areas for Development

1	Leadership engagement with learners and their parents/carers in monitoring quality and identifying appropriate improvements for the organisation is underdeveloped and could be improved.
2	Senior leaders' engagement with local employers/business leaders is underdeveloped and insufficient in its utilisation of their local knowledge in the formation of curriculum, thus enhancing the progression opportunities for learners.
3	There is an insufficient presence of senior leaders and managers in bases and classrooms which misses an opportunity to make both staff and learners feel valued and supported.

## **High Needs Learners**

**Inspire College** supports young people aged 16–19 (up to 25 years with an EHCP) from diverse backgrounds, many of whom have experienced challenging family circumstances and have wide-ranging support needs. Some of these needs relate to social, emotional and mental health (SEMH), as well as learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), low prior achievement, and a history of disengagement from previous educational settings. Several learners have been referred from alternative provisions or specialist schools and colleges.

At the start of their programme, most learners have not yet developed the literacy, social and employability skills needed to access the workforce, and in some cases, to engage effectively within their local community. This can also affect their continued access to education, health services, and their overall quality of life. Our purpose is to support our young people to holistically develop so they are able to recognise their full potential and to make positive steps towards success.

## **Quality of Education**

<b>What we do well</b>	
1	Inspire offers bespoke support and pastoral care, collaborating with external professionals to overcome barriers to learning and progression. Our functional skills teaching is responsive, using dyslexia-friendly materials and clear, accessible language.
2	Inspire continues to effectively utilise Individual Education Plans (although IEPs are no longer required by the SEND Code of Practice) to support target setting, track progress, and increase learner, family, and carer understanding and investment in the behaviours needed to meet these targets via a Target Tracker (TT).
3	Most learners, 85% achieve their main qualifications and progress to positive destinations, including mainstream colleges, Supported Internships and employment.
4	High expectations for HNLs are evident in attendance management, full access to the curriculum, community work experience, career events and mock interviews.

## **Key Areas for Development**

1	IEP targets do not always align with individual EHCP outcomes, including Preparing for Adulthood, and could be better broken into short-term, learner-friendly actions recorded in TTs throughout the year.
2	Staff do not consistently focus on the continuous development of learners' independent study and life skills, including increased use of Assistive Technology.

## **Behaviour and Attitudes**

### What we do well

1	Most HNLs demonstrate positive behaviour and attitudes, arriving on time, preparing for sessions, and showing respect to staff, visitors, and peers. They build and maintain positive relationships over time. Learning packs, including laptops, support learners stay organised. Many regularly use them to build IT skills and confidence, both with staff and independently.
2	Learners take pride in their work, presenting it through exhibitions and termly reviews to peers, staff, and where possible, the wider community.
3	Staff provide excellent pastoral care, nurture respectful relationships by modelling respectful behaviour and challenging inappropriate comments that promotes learners' understanding of diversity and inclusion. EDI is embedded throughout the programme and is explicit within the curriculum.

### Key Areas for Development

1	In some cases, learners are overly dependent on learning support staff to prepare for sessions and access material/resources.
2	Attendance, at 80%, needs to improve so that learners benefit from all aspects of the curriculum and prepare for sustainable employment.
3	In places, learners' targets are not sufficiently ambitious or clear, and could be better broken down into smaller, time-specific, achievable chunks.

### Personal Development

#### What we do well

1	Staff enable learners to participate in quality community projects and where appropriate, individual work placements. This enables learners experience real world value and feel useful. High expectations are consistently set for HNLs in relation to their engagement with the curriculum and work experience.
2	Staff provide extensive pastoral support to overcome barriers to engagement, achievement and personal development by supporting them to explore progression routes, create CVs, explore learner interests, personal values and strengths/areas for development.
3	All HNLs participate in inclusive career events that take place throughout the academic year. To enhance learner experience, staff differentiate and support where appropriate.

#### Key Areas for Development

1	Not all learners experience, or have access to, in-house activity clubs and group visits to educational settings that explore and develop progression routes and interests. Additionally, there is an inconsistent recording of progression/transition plans within IEPs which reflect visits and pathways that have been explored.
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2	Inconsistent focus on Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) themes to develop healthy living, independent living skills and staying safe in the community (e.g. the importance of engaging in health check-ups, healthy finances, knife crime, the dangers of gambling, domestic violence, gaming and payday loans).
3	Some learners do not engage in individual work experience placements that link with their interests and vocational pathway.

## Leadership and Management

### What we do well

1	Leaders and managers are responsive to the increasing need for HNL support staff, and their development and confidence to work with more complex learners.
2	Staff have strong relationships with local authorities and external agencies and are also developing links with other providers to strengthen transitions, progressions to increase opportunity and reduce the risk of young people becoming Not Engaged in Education, Employment and Training (NEET).

### Key Areas for Development

1	Leaders and managers could have a clearer and deeper understanding and knowledge of the emerging complex and specific needs with which our learners present, in order that CPD remains sufficiently responsive and timely.
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## Adult Learning

Inspire adult learning offers place-based provision across Nottinghamshire. It delivers both tailored learning and accredited qualifications. Accredited work is directly delivered, as is the majority of its tailored learning. However, £300,000 of the tailored learning provision is delivered by subcontracted partner organisations across the county, helping Inspire to reach communities of learners they might otherwise not.

Inspire adult learning offers a mixed and broad programme of work which ensures core provision across all seven districts of Nottinghamshire, which is then enhanced with a local offer, responding to local demand, priorities and needs.

Inspire's priorities include reaching individuals in the most disadvantaged areas of the county, filling local skills gaps, increasing qualifications and work confidence, working with learners to build

confidence and good health and wellbeing, as well as working with learners to build stronger and more resilient communities.

## Quality of Education

What we do well	
1	An ambitious curriculum designed to meet the needs of a broad range of learners.
2	High-quality provision to engage and meet the needs of disadvantaged learners.
3	Engagement to effectively extend provision and aspiration in local communities.

Key Areas for Development	
1	Streamline and simplify the enrolment system.
2	Further develop local partnerships and community links to ensure provision reaches more deeply into local communities, meeting locally-evidenced needs.
3	Further develop tracking of progress and progression.

## Behaviour and Attitudes

What we do well	
1	A supportive and respectful learning environment leading to learners feeling safe and valued.
2	Clear expectations around behaviours, with learners encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.
3	High expectations of behaviour and outcomes with the modelling of respectful interactions. Learners show pride in their achievements.

Key Areas for Development	
1	Despite high retention and successful outcomes, adult learning continues to show some stubborn patterns of lower attendance.

## Personal Development

What we do well	
1	Learners are supported to build confidence and knowledge to support their health and wellbeing.
2	Information, advice and guidance offered to all learners, supporting the planning of progression and next steps.
3	Learners are supported to develop and reflect on personal targets in their learning.

### Key Areas for Development

1	The need to find ways to systematically evidence the impact of learning on wellbeing and confidence.
2	Ensure that all learners are encouraged to build on individual target-setting to help plan next steps.

### Leadership and Management

#### What we do well

1	A culture of high expectations and standards underpins quality learning and supports successful outcomes for all learner groups.
2	Continuous improvement supported by a culture in which staff are encouraged and supported to work independently.
3	Robust implementation of processes of change where these are necessary to meet need and ensure development, improvement and relevance.

### Key Areas for Development

1	Where changes are implemented, the need to ensure that support and training for staff is implemented in a timely and effective manner.
2	Improved use of data across the wider team to identify and to inform change and improvement.