

The Adult College of Barking and Dagenham ACL

Inspection report

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Name of lead inspector: Tony Noonan HMI

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Type of provider: Local authority

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Information about the provider

1. The Adult College of Barking and Dagenham is a medium-sized college maintained by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. The college is located in the Skills, Learning and Employment Division of the Children's Services Department.
2. In 2009/10, the college had 3,639 learners. Around 50% of learners are enrolled for learning for social and personal development courses, 40% on learning for qualifications provision and the rest taking learning for qualifications programmes. The vast majority of learners are adults, approximately 80% are female and 42% belong to minority ethnic groups when learners on courses for English for speakers of other languages are excluded. Individuals considered by the Skills Funding Agency to live a disadvantaged area comprise 70% of learners.
3. The college provides courses in nine sector subject areas, primarily skills for life and work. Courses are delivered at four dedicated centres: the main site at Fanshawe Crescent, Marks Gate Community Complex, the Parsloes Children's Centre and Barking Learning Centre. Programmes are also taught in over 40 venues throughout the borough.
4. The college's mission is 'to provide lifelong learning opportunities for the community of Barking and Dagenham to enable the development of knowledge, skills, judgment and creativity throughout adult life'.

Type of provision	Number of learners in 2009/10
Young learner provision: Further education (16–18) Foundation learning	43 part-time learners 65 part-time learners
Adult learner provision: Learning for qualifications Learning for social and personal development	1,402 part-time learners 1,746 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	170 learners 213 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Grade 2
	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2
Learning for qualifications	Grade
Health and social care, and childcare	2
Literacy and numeracy	2
Learning for social and personal development	
Arts and crafts	3

Overall effectiveness

5. The college has made significant improvement since it was inspected previously and almost all aspects are now judged to be good. A very high proportion of learners complete their courses successfully. Many develop useful personal and employability skills to help them progress to jobs, further education or training. The college provides a safe and welcoming environment and learners thoroughly enjoy coming to college. Attendance rates are high.
6. The quality of teaching and learning is high. Teachers use information and learning technologies (ILT) well. Many lessons are enhanced by the good work of volunteers. However, more able learners are sometimes not stretched to their full potential. Staff are well qualified and receive effective training, although there is a shortage of tutors in some subject areas. Staff support learners well in their studies and assess their work satisfactorily. However, individual targets for learners on non-accredited courses are not personalised or specific enough. A broad range of courses is available for learners overall,

although provision in arts and crafts is limited. Good opportunities for learners are provided through the strong partnership work with many schools, children's centres and employers. Family learning courses are located throughout the borough and encourage participation of many learners living in disadvantaged areas. Too many courses are cancelled and there are waiting lists for courses in some subject areas, including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and arts and crafts. Care, guidance and support are good, although not all learners receive sufficient information and advice on progression and employment opportunities.

7. Hard-working managers and the governing body have a clear idea how to achieve further improvements. These messages are communicated well to staff who are fully committed to these aims. The promotion of equality and diversity issues is good and no group of learners perform consistently worse than any other. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of their learners and the self-assessment process is broadly accurate. Resources are good.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Retention rates are outstanding and learners' attendance rates are high. Success rates are good for apprentices and satisfactory overall for Train to Gain learners. Most work-based learners complete their qualifications within the allocated time. Progression into employment for apprentices is good and employers are highly satisfied with the standard of their work.
- Learners enjoy their studies and are proud of their achievements. They develop good personal skills and build their self-confidence and self-esteem as well as vocational skills in literacy, ESOL, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Learners are motivated to participate in further learning and develop employability skills to improve their prospects for employment.
- The college provides a secure and safe environment where learners and their children feel safe, welcome and well looked after. Many learners find attending the college helps them to overcome isolation, become socially active and improve their outlook on life.
- Most teaching lessons are fun and informative and learners gain knowledge and acquire new skills that they practise in their daily lives. Staff make effective use of ILT. However, tutors do not always take into account the needs of the more able and experienced learners and challenge them fully in lessons.
- Tutors participate with enthusiasm in the broad range of staff training available. However, individual learning targets for learners are not always specific and measurable or personalised on non-accredited courses.
- The college has extended the range of its provision and focused it closely on the strategic priorities, needs and interests of learners, employers and the local community. The expansion of work-based learning is particularly helpful to the local economy. However, provision in arts and crafts is narrow.

- Partnership working is good. The college works very closely with a range of partners from the public and the private sectors to provide learning opportunities that benefit learners. Very effective action is taken to widen social inclusion. Family learning programmes are available throughout the borough to encourage participation in education and improve social cohesion.
- Care, guidance and support are good. Learners are highly appreciative of the strong pastoral and study support they receive from all staff. Services such as the crèche and additional learning support play an important part in ensuring learners complete their courses successfully. Information, advice and guidance for learners on progression and employment opportunities are not fully integrated into all courses.
- Leadership and management are good. Managers have a clear strategic direction and the college benefits from an effective governing body. Communication is strong and staff meet regularly to share good practice.
- Procedures for safeguarding are good. Mandatory training for all staff has raised their awareness of safeguarding issues. Staff and learners have a responsive attitude towards safe working practices, safeguarding and health and safety.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Learners' outcomes and other indicators are monitored carefully by ethnicity, gender and disability and there is no underperformance by any specific group of learners. Targeted promotional work is having an impact in increasing the proportion of apprentices of minority ethnic heritage, the number of males studying health and social care, and ESOL.
- Quality improvement processes are thorough and have led to an improvement in performance in learners' outcomes and the quality of teaching and learning. Self-assessment procedures are broadly accurate and inspectors agreed with the main grades. Close collaboration with other adult and community learning services leads to effective peer review arrangements.
- The college provides good value for money. Resources are good and accommodation is generally of a high standard. Curriculum management is good and staff take the views of learners and employers seriously. Staff are well qualified, but some subject areas have too few qualified tutors. Learners join waiting lists for courses in ESOL and arts and crafts and too many courses are cancelled.

What does The Adult College of Barking and Dagenham need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning by ongoing staff training and providing more demanding tasks in lessons to stretch the more able learners.
- Improve the rigour and standards of non-accredited programmes by agreeing more specific and measurable individual targets with learners that are personalised and challenge them fully.
- Work effectively with more partners to extend the range of programmes to meet the growing demand for ESOL, and arts and crafts provision.

- Ensure arrangements for information, advice and guidance are integrated fully into all programmes to provide learners with all the information they require about opportunities for progression and employment.
- Improve curriculum management by ensuring all subject areas have sufficient qualified staff to meet the demand for courses, reduce learners' waiting lists and plan provision carefully to reduce course cancellations.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the friendly and welcoming atmosphere of the college
- the increase in self-confidence gained from learning new skills
- helping my children with homework and reading them a bedtime story
- the way teachers keep going back over topics until we understand
- how all staff in the college provide support and help
- getting the qualifications needed for a job.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the queues and amount of space in the canteen at the Fanshawe site
- the number of computers in some rooms
- more places in the crèche
- the way induction is organised
- the publicity for support and other services offered at the main site.

Summary of the views of employers as confirmed by inspectors

What employers like:

- the good communication and assistance given by college staff
- the benefits brought to our business by the apprenticeship scheme
- the way the college is responsive to our training needs
- the way staff review the progress of our trainees so effectively.

What employers would like to see improved:

- the links between the training provided at work and that carried out by the college.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

8. The college has improved its performance significantly since the previous inspection. Overall effectiveness, outcomes for learners, the quality of provision, leadership and management, and literacy and numeracy provision were all judged to be satisfactory previously, but are now good. Key areas of weakness highlighted at the last inspection are largely rectified.
9. The college has led several initiatives successfully. A merger with the borough's work-based learning provision was managed very well and the new learners and staff are now fully assimilated into the college. Improvements in accommodation at the main site include a new extension and refurbished beauty therapy salon. Strengths have been maintained and further developed, such as the college's impressive record for encouraging learners to volunteer to work in lessons and progress to become tutors. Quality assurance and self-assessment procedures are good. The college has a strong platform to continue its performance and improve further.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

10. Outcomes for learners are good and retention rates are outstanding. Learners enjoy learning and develop good employability skills including better use of the English language, literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills. They are proud of their achievements and are motivated to participate in further learning. All learners achieve outcomes regardless of their ethnicity, gender and disability and no groups underperform consistently. They are making the progress expected of them. Attendance rates have improved significantly since the previous inspection and are now good.
11. Success rates are good for apprentices and satisfactory for Train to Gain learners. Most complete their training within the planned timescale and learners gain the skills necessary to improve their chances for employment and so improve their quality of life. A significant number of learners progress to further learning and employment. The overall standard of work-based learners' work is good and this is appreciated by employers.
12. Parents and grandparents on family learning courses achieve very positive outcomes. They develop strong bonds with their children while working alongside them to gain new skills such as computing, baking, arts and crafts, and literacy and numeracy. They spend time productively with their children and rejoice in their outstanding progress in very short timescales.
13. Secure and safe learning environments enable all learners and their children to feel safe, welcome and well looked after. Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding and practise safe working practices.

14. Learners make informed choices about their own health and well-being. They develop a good awareness of drugs and the benefits of healthy eating and exercise and many adopt these practices in their lifestyles. Many learners overcome isolation, become socially active and improve their outlook on life.
15. Learners make a positive contribution to their communities. The college has a strong tradition of learners becoming volunteers with valuable skills to help learners in lessons.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

16. Teaching and learning are good. Learners gain substantial benefits from the highly-informative teaching sessions and gain knowledge and new skills. Experienced and well-qualified tutors understand the needs of their learners well. They use a variety of activities and techniques that are appreciated by learners. Effective use is made of ILT to enliven learning. However, tutors do not always challenge sufficiently the more able and experienced learners when planning and delivering lessons. On-the-job training and assessments are good and involve employers well. The individual targets agreed with learners on non-accredited courses are not always specific and measurable or sufficiently personalised.
17. Tutors and assessors are qualified appropriately or are working to gain teaching qualifications. They have a genuine desire and enthusiasm to improve their teaching and learning. A broad range of staff development initiatives keeps the skills and knowledge of staff current.
18. Assessment is satisfactory. Teachers use their relevant occupational experience and skills to provide learners with supportive feedback that highlights areas for improvement. However, spelling and grammatical errors are not corrected consistently. Apprentices make good use of on-line portfolios and make rapid progress to gain their qualifications. However, reviews of their progress are too often focused on measuring the completion of work rather than providing advice on how to improve standards.
19. The range of provision is good and meets the needs and interests of learners, employers and the local community. The college focuses on courses that develop the skills of residents of the local community and help regeneration in the borough. Learners and stakeholders speak very highly of the range of courses, easily accessible venues, convenient times of courses and the responsiveness of the college to establish new programmes or adapt existing ones. Provision for apprenticeships, literacy, numeracy, ESOL and family learning is wide ranging and has expanded recently. However, the provision for arts and crafts is narrow. Also, the high demand for ESOL classes, coupled with a shortage in qualified tutors, has led to course cancellations and learners on waiting lists.
20. A key strength of the college is the effective action taken to widen social inclusion. Family learning programmes are available in local venues in all parts

of the borough. They improve social cohesion and promote economic and social well-being by improving the literacy, numeracy and employability skills of learners living in some of the most disadvantaged areas. A pre-apprenticeship programme provides opportunities for young people who are not in education, employment or training to prepare for apprenticeships.

21. Partnership working is very strong and learners derive many benefits from the synergy and support arising from arrangements with a broad range of partners from the public and private sectors. Strong collaboration with 18 children's centres, local schools, the Small Business Support Service, the borough's Schools Improvement Service, Jobcentre Plus and employers result in improved referrals, support and an improved range of opportunities for learners.
22. Care, guidance and support are good. Tutors, classroom assistants and support workers are highly sensitive to the needs of learners. They ensure learners are integrated into their course well and enable them to combine care, work and study responsibilities. Initial assessment is supportive. Pastoral and additional support for dyslexia and other study needs helps learners to complete their courses successfully. Learners value highly the crèche provision at the main site. High quality information, advice and guidance are provided for apprentices and learners in some subject areas, such as ESOL. However, this is not available to all learners consistently when joining, during and on leaving their course.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

23. The head of service and highly committed senior management team have worked hard with staff and improved the performance of the college since the previous inspection. The strategic direction of the college is set out clearly in the business plan. Learner recruitment and other key targets are met consistently. The college contributes significantly to improve the employability skills and job opportunities for individuals in the local community. A very successful merger of the local authority's work-based learning provision has increased the number of apprentices significantly and the college leads the borough's apprenticeship programme very well.
24. Communication is good. Regular staff meetings take place where good practice is shared. Email is used effectively with the large number of part-time staff. Comprehensive staff training reflects the high priority given to staff development by senior managers. The college has a well-established strategy to encourage learners to volunteer to help in lessons and many of these individuals progress to become qualified tutors.
25. The college benefits from very effective governance. The governing body has a broad range of skills and experience, with representatives from the local community, industry, the borough, staff and learners. Through probing questions, governors provide a good level of scrutiny and challenge to the college's work, monitoring key performance indicators and financial matters

- well. Communication between governors, staff and learners takes place mainly through celebration events. Governors' attendance rates at meetings are low.
26. Procedures for safeguarding learners are good. The comprehensive safeguarding policy is reviewed annually. Senior managers and governors receive regular monitoring reports detailing any safeguarding issues and accidents. The main sites are welcoming and learners feel safe and are treated with respect. Risk assessments are carried out with appropriate control measures instigated when necessary. The two designated senior members of staff responsible for safeguarding arrangements have good links with local services relevant to safeguarding. All staff receive mandatory training in key aspects of safeguarding, including how to recognise signs of abuse and ways to respond to disclosures from learners. Appropriate action is taken when safeguarding issues are raised. Sound procedures are in place to ensure Criminal Records Bureau and other checks are carried out on staff, volunteers and employers where required.
 27. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The college meets its statutory duties for gender, race and disability. Managers raise awareness of new legislation such as the Equality Act 2010. Equality and diversity impact assessments are carried out, for example, of the college's apprenticeship scheme. The proportion of apprentices of minority ethnic heritage is higher than in most other London boroughs. Marketing materials are selected carefully to avoid portraying stereotypical images. The number of males in the college has increased, for example in health and social care, and on literacy and numeracy courses. The overall proportion of learners of minority ethnic background is much higher than the local population. Staff have extensive contacts to encourage learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to join programmes. However, courses aimed specifically at these learners are not listed in the prospectus, hence people with learning disabilities do not have this opportunity to learn about and choose courses for themselves.
 28. Key equality and diversity indicators, such as learners' achievements and complaints, are monitored closely to ensure there are no discrepancies in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability. No group of learners underperforms consistently. Learners who declare a disability, but then decline the offer of additional support, are offered the opportunity for support at a later date. The college is fully accessible to wheelchair users at all sites and outreach centres.
 29. Arrangements to gather the views of learners and employers are good. Learners complete questionnaires regularly which are analysed thoroughly. Telephone surveys determine the reasons why learners transfer or withdraw from courses. Staff meet and record the views of groups of learners and respond where appropriate. For example, they have changed the times of lessons to coincide with the opening hours of the crèche and extended the opening of the learning resource centre. Learners do not attend course meetings, but their views are gathered well during lesson observations and they inform the self-assessment process. Employers value the extensive contacts

they have with the college's business development unit and apprentices have considerable individual support from learning coordinators.

30. Procedures for self-assessment and quality improvement are good and have led to improvements. Management information is accurate and enables staff to monitor a broad range of indicators. The destination of learners, although often known by tutors, is not collated systematically by managers. Succinct reports inform senior management team meetings. Procedures for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are broadly accurate. Very detailed information is gathered during the observation of lessons, which is collated and analysed by managers. Inspectors agreed with most of the strengths and areas for improvement highlighted in self-assessment reports and the grades allocated to subject areas and aspects of provision. Strong collaboration with other adult and community learning services across East London provides very good opportunities for sharing of good practice and peer review.
31. The college provides good value for money. A skills audit for all staff is currently underway and staff are generally well qualified, although more staff require specialist qualifications, for example in numeracy. The service has made good investment in resources to raise aspirations in the community, including a new extension and refurbished beauty therapy salon at the Fanshawe site. However, insufficient computers in some rooms detract from the quality of teaching and learning in some subject areas, such as preparation for life and work. Staff are very aware of the need to maintain minimum class sizes to ensure provision is run cost-effectively.

Learning for qualifications

Other learning for qualifications provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: *information and communication technology; retailing and commercial enterprise; English for speakers of other languages; and business, administration and law.*

Health and social care, and childcare

Grade 2

Context

32. There are currently 164 learners in health and social care, and childcare courses. Some 118 are adults, around one quarter are from minority ethnic groups and about one tenth are male. Half of these learners are on full-time courses, around a quarter at Foundation level, and the remaining courses are vocational and part time. Learners who are not in employment participate in work experience.

Key findings

- Success rates are good overall. Learners enjoy their learning, make good progress and develop effective practical skills. The overall standard of written work in portfolios is satisfactory and in some cases good.
- Learners have good opportunities to improve their economic and social well-being. They are able to progress from Foundation learning onto vocational courses and many apprentices gain employment through their work placements.
- Learners feel safe at college and within their work placements. They understand their roles and responsibilities and know how to report and deal with any incidents.
- Teaching and learning are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Learners are confident and highly motivated to achieve. Lessons are well planned, with much informal assessment that promotes learning. However, in some sessions learners who complete early are not given further work to extend their learning and provide further challenge.
- Overall, assessment practice is thorough. Feedback is positive and tutors highlight areas for improvement for the learner. However, tutors do not correct spelling and grammatical mistakes sufficiently.
- Some learners have limited access to computers and too much learners' work is hand written rather than word processed. Learners and staff make little use of the college's virtual learning environment.
- The needs and interests of learners are met well. The broad range of courses provides good opportunities for progression and many learners progress from introductory courses, during which their literacy and numeracy skills are improved, on to levels 1 and 2 and even level 3 courses. Childcare learners often gain employment.

- Partnerships with local employers are good. Childcare courses meet the needs of employers and good collaboration helps staff to find suitable placements for apprentices. In many cases, apprentices gain employment in the same workplace after they are qualified. However, the college does not offer short courses, such as dementia awareness, to further enhance employability opportunities for learners.
- Support for learners is good. Tutors are highly committed to providing both academic and personal support to learners. Although formal tutorials are not timetabled, learners have individual meetings with their tutors when required.
- Curriculum management is good. Staff agree challenging targets for learners' outcomes and set comprehensive action plans for improvement. Learning coordinators work closely with teaching staff to monitor and review learners' progress.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well within lessons. Interesting and relevant case studies are explored, for example the health and safety issues associated with having someone in a wheelchair in a classroom. Many learners who live in very deprived wards are encouraged to participate and are fully engaged with their learning.
- Staff work hard to improve the quality of provision. Learners' views are collected regularly and staff take the issues raised seriously and take relevant actions. Regular staff meetings are held where action points are identified and addressed and standards of learners' work discussed. The self-assessment process is mainly accurate.

What does The Adult College of Barking and Dagenham need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that tutors meet the individual needs of the learners more fully by providing a broad range of challenging activities in lessons.
- Improve the presentation and standards of learners' work by increasing learners' use of computers when completing assessments and ensuring that spelling and grammatical errors are always corrected.

Literacy and numeracy

Grade 2

Context

33. The college currently has 305 learners on literacy courses and 275 learners on numeracy courses. Courses range from pre-entry to level 2. The majority of learners are on adult literacy and numeracy courses, but other provision includes Foundation learning programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The college also runs family literacy, language and numeracy courses in venues throughout the borough. Around 36% of learners are from minority ethnic groups and 29% are men.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. In 2009/10, overall rates of retention, achievement and success for both literacy and numeracy were good and showed a small improvement on the previous year. Entry level courses were particularly good with a success rate of 88% for literacy and 80% for numeracy. However, success rates of level 1 literacy and numeracy courses were lower at around 68%.
- Learners enjoy their learning and attendance is good for all courses. They make significant gains in confidence as well as progressing well through the different qualification levels. Learners achieve qualifications that enable them to progress to further training or employment. Many learners move onto the volunteering programme in the college and some then progress to becoming a tutor.
- Learners feel safe and the mutual respect and trust within the classroom enable them to take risks within their learning. For example, pre-entry level literacy learners feel confident enough within the group to read aloud in class. Tutors reinforce any health and safety issues at the beginning of lessons and ensure that the more vulnerable learners fully understand how to remain safe.
- Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is lively and engaging. Detailed planning by tutors and well-prepared training materials take account of the differing needs of individual learners. Initial assessment identifies the most appropriate course for learners and tutors use further diagnostic assessments to develop learners' goals.
- The recruitment process for tutors is very comprehensive and ongoing training ensures tutors are up to date with the latest developments in their specific subjects. All tutors either have, or are working towards, teaching qualifications, although a few do not have subject-specific literacy and/or numeracy qualifications.
- Learners use a Learner Record of Progress and Achievement to record their learning for each session and tutors carry out mid-term and end-of-term reviews, which effectively measure progress against the individual targets. Although the paperwork is comprehensive, some sections are complex and difficult for lower level learners to read.

- The wide range of courses from pre-entry to level 2 very effectively meets the needs of the diverse group of learners. In literacy, where appropriate, learners can work towards part of a qualification in a year and then complete it in following years. This is particularly successful for entry level courses. Learners work towards qualifications which will enable them to progress into further training and/or employment. Parents are more able to support their children's learning.
- The very effective partnership working with staff from schools and the borough's School Improvement Service delivers creative responses within family literacy, language and numeracy programmes. Work is targeted to areas of greatest need and evaluation of this work by school staff shows that there is a very good average increase in pupils' reading and numeracy skills.
- Care, guidance and support for learners are good. Initial assessment identifies any specific needs and volunteers or specialist staff work effectively with individual learners. Where there is a high proportion of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, an additional tutor is allocated to the lesson. Learners speak highly of the support they receive.
- Curriculum management is good. Managers set individual targets for learners' retention and success rates and they effectively support staff in their area. They take account of feedback from learners and partners and make adjustments to programmes to meet the needs of local people.
- Overall, resources are satisfactory. Some classrooms are not large enough if all the learners attend. Facilities in the computer rooms are good, but computers are not always available and have to be booked in advance. Some learners do not have enough access to computers.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good and a culture of mutual respect and responsibility is prevalent. The college has developed a wide range of resources to promote equality and diversity. Activities within lessons include work on different religions and cultures. The present proportion of males is higher than the national average and the numeracy programme is being redesigned to attract more men.
- The self-assessment process is good with termly and annual self-assessment reports for both literacy and numeracy. These include the views of learners and progress from the previous report. The business operational plan incorporates the findings from self-assessment and regular meetings monitor progress. Inspectors agreed with the judgements in the self-assessment reports.

What does The Adult College of Barking and Dagenham need to do to improve further?

- Review the language of the Learner Record of Progress and Achievement to make it more accessible for learners to read and use.
- Ensure that classroom sizes are adequate for the number of learners and the style of teaching.
- Ensure all literacy and numeracy learners have access to sufficient computers to support their learning during lessons.

Learning for social and personal development

Other social and personal development learning provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: *information and communication technology; retailing and commercial enterprise; sports and leisure; modern foreign languages; learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; and family learning.*

Arts and crafts

Grade 3

Context

34. Part-time programmes at entry to level 1 are available in sewing, interior design, flower arranging, sugar craft and personal development through art. The large majority of learners are female, with 70 learners currently taking art courses, 34 sugar craft, 17 flower arranging and 10 personal development through drama.

Key findings

- The outcomes of learners are satisfactory. High success rates are gained on both accredited and non-accredited courses. They are increasing for interior design and sugar craft courses and remain above 90% in floristry, but have decreased to 71% for watercolour programmes. Retention rates are good and 100% for interior design, floristry and sugar craft award programmes. Attendance rates are good at 87%.
- Learners often attend a series of short courses to build up skills in craft areas including sugar craft, flower arranging and interior design and make satisfactory progress in developing techniques. Some learners have career aspirations in these areas. Opportunities for progression within the college are limited. A small number of sugar craft learners progress to higher level external courses or are self-employed.
- Adequate information about safety and welfare is given to learners throughout their learning programmes. Understanding is tested and reinforced where necessary to ensure craft tools, such as glue guns, are used safely. Learners feel safe.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better lessons, learners interact well and attain a high standard of work. Tutors engage learners in relevant discussion about the techniques they are learning and give well-narrated demonstrations. Careful questioning informs tutors of the extent of learners' understanding from previous courses of floristry, see look and explore painting and sugar craft.
- Slower progress is satisfactorily identified by tutors and individual tuition is given effectively. However, in floristry, more able or experienced learners simply practise previously learnt skills and tutors do not adapt tasks to challenge them sufficiently.

- Initial assessment identifies effectively any prior knowledge and experience of floristry learners. Some learners record their personal goals in personal development plans, but the targets lack challenge and do not reflect the previous experience of learners.
- Care, support and guidance are satisfactory. Sugar craft tutors produce useful learning resources to support learning. Tutors use simple and clear language when explaining tasks to learners.
- Tutors are qualified for teaching and most remain active in their field of expertise. However, they do not always manage their allocated teaching rooms adequately to provide comfortable learning environments. Tables are left blocking access to sinks and running water. The temperature of rooms can be cold.
- A narrow range of provision is offered currently. The reason for this is partly attributed by managers to the difficulties in recruiting suitably-qualified tutors. Too many courses are closed due to insufficient learners enrolling, although the number of cancellations is reducing. There are waiting lists for current courses, particularly for the craft fashion award, sewing machine skills, and practical machine and hand sewing skills programmes.
- Learners come from a broad range of social and ethnic backgrounds. A high proportion of young Black males attended the level 2 media course in 2009/10. However, there is insufficient promotion of equality and diversity in lessons.
- Staff ensure they use learners' views effectively to inform the self-assessment report and course reviews. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. Termly meetings update tutors' understanding of college procedures and communication is good. The college supports tutors with their continuing professional development.

What does The Adult College of Barking and Dagenham need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring tutors set demanding tasks for the more able and experienced learners and agree more challenging targets with learners to enable them reach their full potential.
- Extend the range of provision to ensure learners have sufficient progression opportunities.
- Increase the promotion of equality and diversity issues in lessons by ensuring tutors set tasks and assignments that reflect the cultural heritage of learners more regularly.

Information about the inspection

35. Three of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the deputy principal, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and business plans, Framework for Excellence indicators, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's monitoring visit and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
36. Inspectors used group, individual interviews, telephone calls and e-mails to gather the views of learners. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had completed on behalf of the college. They also visited learning sessions and assessments and progress reviews.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

The Adult College of Barking & Dagenham

Learning types: 14 – 16: Young apprenticeships; Diplomas; **16-18 Learner responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses, Foundation learning tier, including Entry to Employment; **19+ responsive:** FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	16-18 Learner responsive	19+ Learner responsive	Social and personal development
Part-time learners	1,401	25	760	616
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2	2
Capacity to improve	2			
Outcomes for learners	2	2	2	2
How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2			
How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2			
How well do learners progress?	2			
How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2			
How safe do learners feel?	2			
Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?	3			
How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?	2			
Quality of provision	2			
How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2			
How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2			
How well partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2			
How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2			
Leadership and management	2			
How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2			
<i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?</i>	2			
How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2			
How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2			
How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2			
How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2			
How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2			

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