

Elfrida Rathbone Camden

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 51701

Name of lead inspector: Alex Falconer HMI

Last day of inspection: 25 November 2010

Type of provider: Adult and community learning

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Information about the provider

1. The Leighton Project at Elfrida Rathbone Camden provides education and training for young people aged 16 to 25 years with mild to moderate learning difficulties. The provision, offered to twelve learners each year, is full time on Mondays to Thursdays during the academic year. The learners come from the London Boroughs of Camden, Islington, Hackney, Barnet, Haringey and Westminster and by and large reflect the ethnic mix of North London. The provision has recently expanded to incorporate a volunteering project in health and social care for disabled people aged 16 to 30 and a youth action group for young disabled aged from 13 to 25. All these are set within Elfrida Rathbone Camden, a voluntary sector organisation which provides a range of community facilities to promote the welfare and education of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and to support vulnerable children and their families.

2. The Leighton Project was set up in 1983 with the aim of providing young people with learning difficulties with the skills for independent living, to enable them to move into employment or further training. The mission of the project is 'to provide individually focused, community based support for the educational and personal development of young adults with learning difficulties'. The project was last inspected in November 2006 and was then found to be good overall. Achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management were all found to be good.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2010/11
Adult learner provision: Learning for qualifications	12

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 2
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Capacity to improve	Grade 2
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Aspect	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	1
Equality and diversity	1

Overall effectiveness

3. The provision for learners at the Leighton project is good. Learners make good gains in confidence and in skills for life. Success rates are very high and learners take part in a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, trips and work experience. Teaching and learning are good and learners benefit from sensitive and helpful personal support and guidance. Learners are safe in all that they do. Guidance for progression to further study or employment is very good. Leadership and management are good and there is a clear strategic vision which has been well communicated to stakeholders. Safeguarding is outstanding as is the promotion of equality and diversity. Staff regularly consult learners and act upon their views. Quality assurance identifies the key strengths and areas for improvement of the provision. Continuous professional development for staff is very good. However, the self-assessment report does not analyse teaching and learning rigorously enough and some quality improvement targets are imprecise.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good and success rates on the essential skills award (ESA) have been very high over the past four years. Equally importantly, progression rates are high. Learners progress to appropriate further education courses or specialist projects when they leave.
- Opportunities at the Leighton Project allow learners to grow in confidence, to develop at their own pace and to continue to develop their social skills.
- The safety of learners is given the highest priority. Consultations with learners and well-judged curricular activities help them to make informed choices about

their own health and well-being. Good opportunities for volunteering in the community ensure learners make a positive contribution.

- Teaching and learning are good and have improved. Staff know the learners well and provide good encouragement and a wide range of interesting activities.
- Relationships between staff and learners are good and a high degree of trust is evident. Learners progress well and take increasing responsibility for managing their own behaviour.
- Work experience opportunities are very good and help learners develop in confidence and autonomy. Learners find the practical opportunities provided by the volunteering scheme motivating and rewarding.
- The curriculum is flexible so that staff can modify it to respond to learners' needs and interests as learners develop. However, work is in progress to review the curriculum and replace it with a formally certificated programme.
- Care, guidance and support are good and learners are well supported to progress to further education or training. Learners benefit from good individual support and enrichment activities.
- Leadership and management are good. Senior managers and staff have set a clear strategic vision which has been communicated effectively to learners and other stakeholders. Governance is good and trustees understand well the project's key strengths and areas for improvement.
- Arrangements for keeping learners safe are outstanding. All staff have up to date criminal record checks. Teachers are fully supported in their work to ensure that learners are safe.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Equality and diversity are well promoted through an extensive range of visits and trips. Learners are regularly consulted and their representatives attend curriculum team meetings.
- Managers are well aware of the key strengths and areas for improvement that the project must make. Continuous professional development is very good. Lesson observations result in accurate evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. However, the self-assessment report does not analyse the quality of teaching and learning and targets in the quality improvement plan are imprecise.

What does the Leighton Project need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop ICT in the curriculum, differentiation in classroom work and decide upon an appropriate qualification to replace the uncertificated essential skills award.
- Ensure that self-assessment is well evidenced and draws on the outcomes of quality assurance, such as analyses of lesson observations, and the impact of targets set in quality improvement plans.
- Set specific outcomes in individual learning plans alongside targets for personal and social development, so that learners can achieve their full potential.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- teachers who treat them like adults and with respect
- the wide range of activities and enrichment available
- the good personal support and help with progress from tutors
- the friendly and safe atmosphere.

What learners would like to see improved:

- more music- and dance-based activities
- different sporting opportunities not just football
- more trips out
- more focus on English and mathematics.

Summary of the views of stakeholders as confirmed by inspectors

What stakeholders like:

- well-established community and partnership arrangements
- being consulted and helping to develop the provision
- the sensitive way that college staff deal with learners' personal circumstances.

What stakeholders would like to see improved:

- more communication about learners' progress.

Main inspection findings

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 2

4. The Leighton Project within Elfrida Rathbone Camden has good capacity to make and sustain improvements. All the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been addressed. Teaching and learning are good and literacy and numeracy activities are now better embedded in the curriculum. Support for learners is now good and learners enjoy beneficial and fulfilling work experience opportunities. Learning resources are good and have been improved and learners have much improved access to information learning technology (ILT). The promotion of equality and diversity in the curriculum is outstanding. However, while quality assurance is effective and accurately identifies key strengths and areas for improvement, the current self-assessment report does not analyse with sufficient rigour the quality of teaching and learning.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

5. Outcomes for learners are good. Over the past three years success rates on the essential skills award have been very good. In any one year there are around six second-year learners and all usually complete the award. In 2009/10, for example, one learner left early to take up a place at a local further education college, and all the others completed in the planned time. Equally importantly, progression rates are high. Learners take up places on appropriate further education courses or on specialist projects for those with learning difficulties.
6. Learners successfully improve their social skills and their skills for life and work during their time at the Leighton Project. Interesting and supportive visits and volunteering opportunities allow them to develop autonomy and to gain confidence in a variety of carefully chosen and safe situations. In addition, learners benefit from well-researched and relevant work experience placements. All these opportunities allow the learners to grow in confidence, to develop at their own pace and to continue in their development towards more independence.
7. The safety of the learners is given the highest priority by the staff and managers. Learners are safe in all the activities they undertake, whether it is cooking, taking part in sports or visiting museums or galleries. Teachers are ably supported in lessons and other activities by learning support assistants and volunteers. Appropriate consultations with learners and well-judged curricular activities help learners to make informed choices about their own health and well-being. Good opportunities to volunteer in the local community ensure that the learners are making a positive contribution.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

8. Teaching and learning are good and have improved over the past four years. Teachers, learning support staff and volunteers know the learners well and provide good individual encouragement and a wide range of interesting learning activities. Lessons are well planned to take into account the individual needs of the learners. Learners make good progress in lessons and practical activities, and achieve particularly good learning outcomes through enrichment activities. Sports activities, in collaboration with a Premiership football club, keep the learners active and aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles. Well-planned art, drama and cookery lessons also help the learners to develop their social skills and to explore their feelings.
9. Relationships between staff and learners are good and a high degree of trust is evident. The high level of support from teachers, learning assistants and volunteers enables learners to progress at their own pace and to take increasing responsibility for managing their own behaviour and social interactions. All lessons and activities focus on improving learners' social and communication skills. Teachers use media enrichment projects well to improve learners' information communication and technology skills. However, learners do not use ILT sufficiently in lessons to promote learning.
10. Work experience opportunities are very good and well-organised. Learners develop in confidence and autonomy whilst on work placements. The outcomes are well reviewed and reflected upon by the learners, staff and placement employees. Teachers assess learners' needs effectively at the start of their courses, and this effectively informs individual learning plans. They provide thorough induction, leading to well-considered personal goals and strategies for individual learners. However, teachers do not always record specific curriculum learning outcomes alongside personal development targets in individual learning plans. Teachers are skilled at behaviour management and quickly intervene to smooth out any misunderstandings or disagreements between learners.
11. The ESA curriculum meets the needs of the learners. It offers clear personal and developmental learning while maintaining the flexibility to respond to learners' needs and interests as they develop. Literacy and numeracy are now formally provided once a week and are more effectively integrated into the rest of the curriculum. In a minority of activities, especially starter activities, teaching is not always sufficiently differentiated to meet the full range of learners' needs. Teachers and managers are currently reviewing the curriculum and are actively seeking a certificated alternative to the ESA.
12. Awareness of cultural diversity is well embedded in the curriculum. Learners find the practical opportunities provided by the volunteering scheme and work experience motivating and rewarding. They enjoy working in these environments and develop good levels of vocational, social and personal skills as well as increased confidence and independence. Partnerships with local voluntary and community groups are outstanding and very well established.

Links with local employers are very beneficial and provide a wide variety of work experience opportunities for learners. Connexions staff provide learners with very good advice on progression opportunities. Links with local community groups and other education and training providers are also very productive.

13. Care, guidance and support are good. Initial guidance, recruitment and induction are organised well and help learners to settle in quickly. Staff provide good individual tutorial support and an effective programme of enrichment activities. Managers ensure that staff and learners receive valuable health awareness training. Staff are sensitive to learners' individual needs and personal support is of a very high quality. The impact of the support and understanding learners receive is evident in the enthusiastic way they participate in all aspects of the curriculum.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

14. Leadership and management are good. Senior managers of Elfrida Rathbone Camden are highly committed to the Leighton Project. They provide good support and direction for the staff and managers. Together with the project managers they have set a clear strategic vision which has been communicated effectively to learners, staff, parents, carers and partner organisations. Through developing more work experience and volunteering opportunities for learners and introducing interesting media projects, managers have set staff challenging targets that have brought about improvements in outcomes for the learners.
15. Governance is good. The board of trustees has recently been increased in number and the new trustees bring a wide range of experience and skills. Managers provide good information for board members, who have a clear understanding of the project's key strengths and areas for improvement. All trustees have completed disability and child protection training and some have developed curriculum links.
16. Arrangements to ensure the safeguarding of the learners are outstanding. All staff and volunteers working with the learners receive criminal record checks that are recorded on a central list to show that they are appropriately cleared for their work. Managers ensure that teachers are fully supported in their work by learning assistants and volunteers so that learners are safe in all that they do. Good supervisory procedures are in place to make sure that learners on work experience are fully supported. All staff receive detailed training in safeguarding and disability awareness. Personal safety and how to deal with bullying are well-integrated into the curriculum.
17. The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Teachers work hard to make sure that learners' ethnicity and origins are celebrated in the curriculum. Equality and diversity themes are promoted well through an extensive range of visits and trips. Learners' representatives have attended interesting and challenging conferences on human rights and getting the voice of disabled young people heard. In addition, staff have encouraged learners to use

electronic media to create and disseminate short films addressing important issues of inclusion for young people with disabilities.

18. Managers' engagement with learners to support and promote improvement is good. Staff regularly consult learners and have recently strengthened their participation in project decision making. Representatives of the learners attend and present learners' views at curriculum team meetings and the minutes are carefully written in a way that allows learners to follow developments. Following recent consultations more computers were purchased, media projects were initiated and more time was allocated for learners to update their curricula vitae following trips and work experience.
19. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Teachers and managers confidently review their performance each year and staff appraisals are up to date. Managers are well aware of the key strengths and necessary areas for improvement. Continuous professional development is very good and all staff have taken part in a wide range of training and development courses directly related to their responsibilities. Managers operate a well-organised programme of lesson observations, which results in accurate evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. However, the current self-assessment report does not contain any analysis of the findings of the lesson observation system. Targets in the quality improvement plan are insufficiently precise or systematic for managers to be able to measure accurately the extent of any progress. Managers are reviewing the curriculum, and are seeking a suitable certificated replacement for the ESA.
20. The Leighton Project represents good value for money. Learners make good progress and achieve well. Resources are good. Managers have recently improved and updated these judiciously within available budgets. Teachers are experienced and well qualified, and teaching assistants are encouraged to study for relevant qualifications. The project building is fully accessible to those with restricted mobility.

Information about the inspection

21. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector, assisted by the provider's learning manager, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from funding bodies, the previous inspection report, reports from the inspectorate's quality monitoring inspection, and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
22. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had recently completed on behalf of the provider. They also observed lessons, assessments and progress reviews. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in each of the subject areas the provider offers. The inspection did not include full cost provision.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Elfrida Rathbone Camden

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
Approximate number of enrolled learners at the time of inspection			
Full-time learners	12	4	8
Part-time learners			
Overall effectiveness	2	2	2
Capacity to improve	2		
A. Outcomes for learners	2	2	2
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2		
A1.a) How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2		
A1.b) How well do learners progress?	2		
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
A3. How safe do learners feel?	1		
A4. <i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2		
A5. <i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	1		
B. Quality of provision	2	2	2
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2		
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2		
B3. How effectively does the provider use partnerships to develop its provision to meet learners' needs?	1		
B4. How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to attain their learning goals?	2		
C. Leadership and management	2	2	2
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	2		
C2. <i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2		
C3. How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	1		
C4. How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	1		
C5. How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2		
C6. How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3		
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	2		

*where applicable to the type of provision

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