

Bromley by Bow

Focused monitoring visit report

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Last day of inspection: 2 May 2011

Type of provider: Voluntary organisation

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FOCUSED MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Context and focus of visit

Bromley by Bow Centre (BBBC) is a community organisation established in 1984 in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, East London. In 1998, the centre became one of the first Healthy Living Centres in the United Kingdom. The Bromley by Bow Centre is one of six community hubs in Tower Hamlets. The centre supports families, young people and adults of all ages to learn new skills, improve their health and well-being, find employment and develop the confidence to achieve their goals. Bromley by Bow Centre delivers a wide range of projects and programmes including adult and community learning and work-based learning. The Train to Gain contract is finishing and BBBC continues to deliver apprenticeships. Plans are in place to work in partnership with another East London provider to increase the size of the contracts and deliver work-based learning to local people.

At the last inspection in February 2009, BBBC's overall effectiveness was judged to be satisfactory, with satisfactory capacity to improve. One subject area was inspected, health, public services and care, and was judged to be satisfactory for both Train to Gain and work-based learning. This report focuses on the themes explored during the visit.

Themes

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What progress has the provider made in its self-assessment and quality improvement planning to drive improvements since the last inspection?	Reasonable progress
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At the previous inspection, four key areas for improvement were identified by the inspector. Reasonable progress or significant progress has been made in addressing all of these issues. BBBC continues to recognise that the use of data and management information is an area that requires further development due to the wide range of data currently collected and used for different programmes and projects.

At the previous inspection, the self-assessment report did not identify most of the areas for improvement found during inspection. The current self-assessment report identifies a number of areas for improvement. However, the report is too descriptive and detailed and does not clearly summarise what has been achieved in the last year and the evidence that underpins the strengths and areas for improvement. The quality improvement plan outlines the main actions planned to address the areas for improvement identified. This document is not used as a management tool to review progress throughout the year or to capture other actions identified during the year. Regular management and staff meeting are used effectively to monitor and manage ongoing developments and improvements to the provision.

Outcomes for learners

What progress has been made in improving success rates for adult learners since the last inspection? **Reasonable progress**

BBBC has maintained the high overall success rates on adult apprenticeships for child development and well-being with a success rate of 81% in 2009/10. The majority of learners are Bangladeshi women and this rate is well above the national average for Asian learners. The overall success rates for apprentices on health and social care has improved significantly from 57.1% in 2007/08 to 90% in 2009/10.

The success rates on Train to Gain programmes were not commented on at the last inspection as the programmes had been running for only six months. Overall, the success rates were above national averages, with 80% of learners successful within the timescales expected for 2009/10. However, the cleaning services programme had very low success rates as it was not possible to assess the self-employed learners when they were working in private homes. This programme is no longer offered. The successful Train to Gain programme in health and social care, with a success rate of 90%, has become an apprenticeship programme.

Quality of provision

What progress has been made in improving the planning of on-the-job training? **Reasonable progress**

At the last inspection, the planning of on-the-job training was inadequate. Processes are now in place to inform employers of the training and experiences learners need to gain while in the workplace. Contacts between employers and assessors are frequent and purposeful. Employers keep assessors well informed of on-the-job training taking place, although they do not always recognise everyday activities as training opportunities. A useful handbook produced by BBBC for employers, details roles and responsibilities and gives good and clear information about expectations, policies and procedures and the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) assessment processes.

Arrangements for sharing information on the topics learners cover during the off-the-job training sessions are satisfactory. Close contact with employers ensures off-the-job training can be linked to workplace activities. Where NVQ requirements cannot be met in the workplace, such as personal care within health and social care settings, volunteering opportunities are brokered by BBBC.

The level of employers' involvement in reviews of learners' progress is now satisfactory. BBBC encourages employers to give their views of learners' progress and respond to assessor feedback after each visit. While this may not always be formally recorded in review documentation, a record is kept by the assessor and placed in the learner's file.

What progress has been made to ensure sufficient work placements for health and social care learners?

Significant progress

An insufficient number of placements for health and social care learners existed at the last inspection. The number of placements has increased from three in 2008/09 to twelve in 2010/11. BBBC has now ensured a range of suitable work placements and learners are now satisfied with the range and type of placements available. A contact list is kept by BBBC to enable learners to select an appropriate setting if they have difficulties finding placements themselves. The assessor acts as a broker to carefully match learners' needs to care settings and employers. Since the ending of the Train to Gain programme, the need for placements has diminished as apprentices are all employed. Placements can still be used to ensure activities needed to fulfil the requirements of the qualification can be covered through volunteering opportunities.

What progress is being made to ensure the range of provision meets the needs of the local community and in particular English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) learners?

Significant progress

At the last inspection, arrangements to meet the needs and interests of learners were satisfactory. BBBC has made significant improvements in meeting learners' needs and has introduced a number of initiatives to improve the range of learning options for the local community. BBBC has reviewed the current range of courses and Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) qualifications with a view to providing suitable progression opportunities for learners. An equal opportunities and diversity marketing plan has increased the focus on ensuring the provision offers variety and accessibility to targeted groups. The learning ambassadors providing information, advice and guidance are particularly effective in directing learners to the most appropriate provision.

The locations and times for ESOL sessions are organised to best meet needs and the local area planning group ensures a good spread of levels and locations for ESOL sessions within the borough. BBBC is introducing a recently developed questionnaire to assess the needs of potential male ESOL learners. Excellent resources have been developed in partnership with the Primary Care Trust to aid tutors and health professionals in introducing serious health concerns to non-English speakers and those with low levels of literacy. These are so successful they are being distributed nationally.

Leadership and management

What progress has been made in increasing the analysis and use of data and management information?

Reasonable progress

The analysis and use of data were found to be limited at the last inspection. BBBC has recently reviewed the wide range of systems, data and management information it collects and uses to manage and run the different programmes and projects. Plans are in place to improve the collection and use of this information. Managers are

starting to use the qualification success rate data and national averages to review the performance of different groups on apprenticeship programmes. This builds on the ongoing analysis and monitoring of participation by different groups.

Managers use a wide range of detailed information and data effectively to improve provision for learners. However, insufficient comparisons are made with previous years or between different groups to understand trends over time. BBBC conducts useful analysis on observations of teaching and learning, although these findings did not form part of the self-assessment report. Managers are starting to analyse attendance rate data so that they can investigate the differences between courses, term times and trends over time.

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