

Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute

Inspection report

Unique reference number: 52120

Name of lead inspector: Andy Harris HMI

Last day of inspection: 30 September 2011

Type of provider: Voluntary organisation

Address: 11 High Road
East Finchley
London
N2 8LL

Telephone number: 0845 871 4141

Information about the provider

1. Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute (The Institute) was founded in 1909. It is a charitable organisation, governed by a council. In 2007 The Institute relocated to East Finchley to a purpose-built arts centre with nearby leased general premises. The Institute has had significant financial challenges in recent years. Staff costs have been reduced and in September 2011 the council endorsed a proposal that could result in the sale of the arts centre.
2. Nearly all learners are over 19 years old. Historically, adult education courses have been designed to promote social and personal development, but this has been further developed in recent years with an increasing number of courses leading to qualifications aimed at supporting people in their professional development. The Institute also provided Skills for Life courses as part of the Train to Gain programme up to 2011, but this provision has now ceased.
3. The Institute is one of the largest providers of adult and community learning in Barnet. In 2009/10 there were around 6,000 learners and 13,000 enrolments. About one third of The Institute's income is obtained by a grant from the Skills Funding Agency. This is mainly for courses leading to qualifications, particularly in literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; this provision was directly inspected. The Institute also receives funding for courses for social and personal development (also known as adult education courses) from Barnet College. This is used to give appropriate concessions to some 550 learners of the 5,500 who might attend any of The Institute's 700 courses; a sample of this provision and its management was inspected. The remainder of The Institute's income comes from fees paid by learners or funds from external stakeholders.
4. The Institute provides training on behalf of the following providers:
 - College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London (literacy and numeracy)
 - Barnet College (courses for social and personal development).

Type of provision	Number of learners in 2009/2010
Provision for adult learners:	
Learning for qualifications	350 part-time learners
Learning for social and personal development	5,500 part-time learners – 550 in scope for inspection
Employer provision:	
Train to Gain	34 learners

Summary report

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

Overall effectiveness of provision	Grade 4
---	----------------

Capacity to improve	Grade 4
----------------------------	----------------

	Grade
Outcomes for learners	4
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	4
Safeguarding	3
Equality and diversity	3

Learning for qualifications

	Grade
Preparation for life and work	4

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of the publicly-funded element of The Institute's provision is inadequate. The main part of the funded provision which leads to qualifications in literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses is inadequate with some recent unsatisfactory outcomes for learners and, until recently, insufficiently rigorous management. Other courses leading to qualifications have outcomes that are generally either satisfactory or good and are being developed well. The small proportion of adult education course provision directly inspected was satisfactory, with learners achieving satisfactorily, good quality of provision and overall satisfactory management despite the difficulties being faced by all managers at The Institute.
- The standard of teaching and learning, while satisfactory overall, is variable. It ranges from outstanding in lessons with truly enthusiastic learners, inspiring tutors and good facilities, to unsatisfactory lessons with a limited range of whole-group activities, too much passive learning and insufficient attention to the needs of individual learners. The range of courses on offer is good and improving. Work with partners to develop appropriate courses is good.
- Leadership and management are inadequate overall. At the strategic level, senior staff and the council have spent considerable time and effort in trying to ensure that The Institute survives and maintains its original vision at a time when finances are threatening its continuation. However, insufficient attention

has been paid to the routine monitoring of outcomes for learners and quality of provision. Accurate data are not readily available on success rates in accredited provision, and this has hampered quality monitoring and improvement. Quality assurance and improvement systems, such as course reviews and a good system for observing teaching and learning, exist but have not been applied rigorously enough in recent months. Day-to-day management of some of the accredited learning, for instance the growing number of BTEC courses, is satisfactory. Senior staff at The Institute are aware of most of these problems and over the past year have been attempting to put in place more effective structures and systems.

Main findings

- The overall success rates for learners on the literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses have been unsatisfactory for some time, although the proportion of learners passing their examinations is improving. In the other, minority, of accredited courses success rates are generally satisfactory, with good results on some courses. Outcomes for learners on courses for personal development are satisfactory.
- Learners enjoy their courses. Those on personal development courses show a high degree of enthusiasm for their work, and learners who return year after year build well on their learning to show notable levels of expertise. Learners on literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses develop self-confidence and improve their social skills.
- Learners feel safe. The Institute provides a positive and supportive learning environment. Learners play their part in ensuring that lessons, particularly practical ones, are carried out in a safe manner.
- Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The best sessions are lively, well planned and tutors adapt well to learners' needs. In the poorer sessions, resources are insufficient to support a good range of learning activities, and too little attention is paid to individual needs, particularly for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Initial assessment is properly carried out and helps with the placing of learners on appropriate courses. However, the detailed results from this process are not used effectively enough to help learners understand the action that they then need to take to improve on identified areas of weakness.
- The Institute has an impressive range of adult education courses, allowing learners to build on areas of interest and also to challenge and extend their learning. The courses leading to qualifications, such as the BTEC in arts and media, are being developed well to provide a coherent progression route for interested learners. The literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses satisfactorily meet local skills needs.
- Partnership working is good overall. The Institute is flexible in the way it delivers courses, routinely taking them to employers' premises. The relationship with other bodies is professional; communication is good and informal feedback leads to improvements.

- Support for learners is satisfactory. The majority of The Institute's mature learners receive all the support they need from their class tutor. In specific cases of need a student support officer provides useful help and advice.
- Leaders, including the council, have for some time, reasonably, been very focused on strategic planning to maintain the viability and ethos of The Institute. However, leaders and managers have paid insufficient attention to the detailed monitoring and improvement of the quality of provision and outcomes.
- The management of literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses has been insufficiently rigorous; senior staff recognise this and have made changes aimed at ensuring improvements. The management of other accredited courses and of the social and personal development courses is satisfactory. Part-time working and reductions in staff mean that all managers have challenges in finding the time they need to complete routine tasks.
- Data have not been made sufficiently available to allow managers and staff to monitor and improve the provision. Senior leaders have been focusing on reports that were inappropriately based on achievement rates, rather than the lower success rates. Inconsistencies in published data have not been properly explored.
- The Institute has a satisfactory range of quality improvement procedures, but these have not been rigorously applied recently. The system of observing teaching and learning is good, but too few observations have been carried out. The self-assessment report on the accredited courses is based on limited evidence and data and has not led to proper action planning.
- The promotion of safeguarding and equality and diversity at The Institute are satisfactory. A growing range of learners are accessing The Institute's courses, although some discrepancies in performance between groups have not been fully analysed. The Institute meets government requirements for checking appropriate staff. Staff are aware of their responsibilities if concerns about safeguarding are raised and, when necessary, take appropriate action.

What does Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that arrangements to assess and improve the quality of teaching and learning are rigorously applied, are used for all tutors and carefully evaluated to identify trends and potential staff development needs.
- Ensure that all learning sessions are enhanced by use of a wider range of learning activities that better involve learners using up-to-date, relevant resources including the systematic use of information and learning technology where appropriate.
- Make sure that the processes used to support initial assessment and planning for individual learning lead to accurate, focused and effective targets being set to enable learners to develop self-evaluative skills.
- Ensure that the council, and managers at all levels, have enough information and capacity to monitor outcomes and the quality of provision and that challenging, but achievable, targets for improvement are set and met.

- Build on the revised approach to managing the literacy, numeracy and ESOL and other accredited provision to ensure that any problems are promptly identified and appropriate action is clearly planned and then monitored.
- Ensure that information on learners' outcomes is accurately entered into appropriate systems and that relevant reports are generated and used by staff and managers at all levels to monitor and improve provision.
- Make self-assessment, quality assurance and improvement planning a rigorous, structured and resourced part of routine work to ensure that any weaknesses in provision are properly identified and improvements made.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the whole ethos of The Institute, with learners being treated as mature people who want to learn
- interesting lessons with dedicated, expert and supportive staff
- the very good resources in the arts centre
- The Institute's flexible and supportive approach to learners who have difficulties in following a standard course
- the courses, such as ESOL, that help develop appropriate skills learners need to improve their lot
- the help, patience and support from the tutors
- the social interaction that the courses and The Institute offer, and rebuilding of confidence after illness, redundancy or bereavement.

What learners would like to see improved:

- some aspects of the accommodation, such as toilets, which are beginning to show signs of wear and tear
- more support in some of the larger academic classes
- the range of free courses.

Summary of the views of partners as confirmed by inspectors

What partners like:

- The Institute's helpful and professional approach to partnership working
- The Institute's aims and vision
- the quality and appropriateness of provision delivered on partners' premises.

What partners would like to see improved:

- nothing of significance.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 4

8. The Institute has not demonstrated, over time, that it has sufficient capacity to improve. Success rates for the main funded and accredited provision have varied, but generally have stayed low. Success rate data are not available to help managers monitor their provision. Cuts and changes in staff mean that some routine aspects of quality improvement, such as the self-assessment, the application of a system for recognising and recording progress and achievement, or observations of teaching and learning are not carried out as rigorously as previously. Most aspects have been graded as lower than the previous inspection. Senior staff are aware of these challenges and, as and when The Institute's future becomes more stable, intend to complete actions to deal with these problems.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 4

9. Success rates for learners on literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses are inadequate. This is the majority of the government-funded work. Published data for the years 2007/08 to 2009/10 show that success rates have been between 10 and 17 percentage points below rates for similar institutions. Long-course results have fluctuated from satisfactory to very poor, while short-course results have remained unsatisfactory. Full recording of 2010/11 outcomes had not been completed at the time of the inspection; initial analysis suggests that achievement rates have improved in most courses to satisfactory and good levels, but that success rates are still unsatisfactory. Despite the poor success rates, learners who remain on these courses gain great enjoyment and a sense of well-being in sessions. They improve confidence, develop new skills and improve their social interaction. A satisfactory number of learners progress to higher qualifications or employment.
10. In the smaller number of other funded courses leading to a qualification, success rates are generally satisfactory with some groups of learners, such as BTEC arts and media and a 2009/10 GCSE mathematics cohort, achieving very good results. Skills for Life courses offered to learners under a now completed Train to Gain contract had improved to a satisfactory level in 2010/11.
11. In the courses undertaken by learners for social and personal development outcomes are satisfactory. Learners enjoy their courses and achieve their personal goals. Some learners have been attending classes for several years but they are still improving their skill levels, completing ever more complex and challenging work. Despite some government subsidy, most learners are paying significant sums to attend courses and they show a real commitment and enthusiasm for learning at The Institute.
12. Learners feel safe at The Institute. They believe that the learning environment is safe and very welcoming. Staff and learners treat each other with respect. In the practical classes learners are aware of safe working practices and contribute

well to their own safety. Pressures on staff time mean that although basic health and safety checks are still being carried out wider risk-assessments are not done as regularly as previously.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

13. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most tutors are well qualified and enthusiastic about their subject. They work hard to support learners to achieve their goals and provide them with good feedback. However, the quality of teaching and learning is too variable. The best sessions are well structured to meet all learners' needs and tutors use a good range of resources and provide opportunities for very effective knowledge and skills development. For example, learners practise their language skills through carefully-planned activities such as role play, information seeking games and using audio clips. But some sessions are not well planned and rely too much on tutor-led learning and a narrow range of resources. In some sessions insufficient attention is given to the needs of individual learners, particularly for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, with too much passive learning. The use of information and learning technology overall is poor and even where computers are the focus of a session their potential is not properly exploited.
14. Subject-relevant initial assessment is used well to place the majority of learners on the most appropriate provision. However, for some learners, targets resulting from the initial assessment are not clear and precise and do not help them subsequently to measure their progress. Some learners following literacy, numeracy or ESOL programmes are not fully aware of group targets agreed at the start of courses. Individual learning plans are not used effectively enough to set specific targets for learners to encourage them to monitor their own progress and achievement.
15. The Institute has a good system for the observation of teaching and learning, but too few tutors have been observed in the past year. Managers use other sources of information, such as learners' feedback and course evaluations, to identify the development needs of tutors, but managers do not evaluate the findings to identify trends and training needs across The Institute.
16. The Institute meets the needs and interests of learners well. It has a very good range of programmes developed in response to learner and employer demands, with effective partnerships to meet specific needs such as those of teaching assistants who require qualifications to aid their career progression. The range of provision for social and personal development is particularly good; some aspects are especially imaginative with, for example, baking combined with learning how to run a small business. Classes are available at a range of times and increasingly in a range of venues to suit learners.
17. Support for learners is satisfactory with good support by tutors and some general help for learners including assistance to those entering education, those with transport difficulties and overseas learners with visa problems. A simple referral process aids learners identified with support needs, but general staff

training on how to support learners is informal and is mainly linked to individual cases.

Leadership and management

Grade 4

18. Leadership and management are inadequate overall. At the strategic level senior staff and the council have put significant and appropriate effort into maintaining the viability and ethos of The Institute over a period of years when poor finances have threatened its existence. However, this has left too little time to monitor, challenge and set targets in aspects such as success rates and the quality of provision. Reductions in staff numbers and hours worked have also put pressure on staff attempting to carry out routine management and quality improvement activities. In the literacy, numeracy and ESOL area there has been insufficient analysis of underperforming courses and too little action to improve matters. The Institute has recognised these problems and has set up a revised management structure to allow for more rapid and focused action. In other accredited courses management is satisfactory.
19. Management of the social and personal development courses is satisfactory. Managers in this area also face the same challenges as the rest of The Institute, but on a day-to-day basis ensure that an extensive programme is delivered satisfactorily. The Institute provides a very comprehensive programme of nearly 700 social and personal development courses. Learners are content to pay substantial sums to attend and routinely return to the courses, suggesting that they are satisfied that standards are being maintained.
20. Data are not readily available for managers and staff to monitor and manage their areas of responsibility. Returns on learners' performance are submitted to the funding bodies, but apparent discrepancies between the published data and The Institute's perception of performance have not been properly investigated. Where reports are made available to senior managers and the council the focus has been almost exclusively on achievement rates rather than the more important, but lower, success rates. A comprehensive system for recognising and recording achievement in non-accredited courses has been set up. However, staff do not apply this process rigorously or analyse sufficiently what the results may indicate.
21. Self-assessment and improvement planning are insufficiently rigorously applied. In December 2010 senior staff completed a self-assessment report to meet contractual requirements. However, it did not use data adequately, was based on limited evidence and did not lead to substantial action planning. Managers do identify, through other informal activities, aspects of the provision that require improvement and within the bounds of limited resources instigate improvements.
22. The Institute carries out its responsibilities to promote the safeguarding of learners satisfactorily. Criminal Records Bureau checks are carried out on staff working with young children and vulnerable adults. Staff are aware of their role

in helping learners with potential problems and use appropriate referral systems.

23. Equality and diversity are satisfactorily promoted, both within lessons but more obviously in the behaviours and actions of staff and learners alike. Since The Institute moved from Hampstead Garden Suburb a more diverse range of learners has been recruited than previously. Occasional analysis of accredited achievements shows some differences in results between men and women, and White British learners slightly underperform compared with others. This analysis has not led to detailed review and, if necessary, changes.
24. The Institute engages with users well to improve its provision. Partnership working is good, with very regular contacts and good, if informal, gathering of views leading to prompt remedial action if necessary. Views of learners are extensively gathered, partly through course evaluations. The quality of action planning following course reviews is variable between areas of provision. The many articulate learners on leisure courses make their views clear and elicit appropriate responses.
25. Over a period of several years The Institute has made considerable economies and savings, taking a decisive approach in such areas as rents, staff costs and course costs. However, at the time of the inspection planned improvements in the literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision had not enough impact on success rates to ensure these savings reflected satisfactory value for money.

Information about the inspection

26. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and one additional inspector, assisted by The Institute's director of curriculum, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of The Institute's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, comments from the funding body, 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.
27. Inspectors used group, individual interviews, telephone calls and emails to gather the views of learners. They looked at questionnaires learners and employers had completed on behalf of The Institute. They also visited lessons, assessments and enrolment sessions.

Record of Main Findings (RMF) Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute

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. **Social and personal development:** all adult safeguarded provision

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	19+ Learner responsive	Social and personal development
Approximate number of enrolled learners			
Full-time learners	0	0	0
Part-time learners	400	250	150
Overall effectiveness	4	4	3
Capacity to improve	4		
A. Outcomes for learners	4	4	3
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	4		
A1.a) How well do learners attain their learning goals?	4		
A1.b) How well do learners progress?	3		
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	3		
A3. Do learners feel safe?	3		
A4. <i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	n/a		
A5. <i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	n/a		
B. Quality of provision	3	3	2
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3		
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	2		
B3. How well do partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	2		
B4. How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3		
C. Leadership and management	4	4	3
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	4		
C2. <i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	4		
C3. How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	3		
C4. How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3		
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?	4		
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	4		

*where applicable to the type of provision

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231 or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk