

Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Adult Education

Local authority

Inspection dates		17–20 March 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement-3
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider is good because:

- leaders and managers have improved the quality of education since the previous inspection and the proportion of learners who successfully complete their course has risen significantly
- performance management and professional development for teachers are strong; both contribute to more learners being taught well than at the time of the previous inspection
- changes to the governing body and the senior management team in the past two years have greatly improved governors' capacity to provide good strategic direction; they now manage changes and improvement well
- leaders and managers have developed and implemented a strategy that ensures the provision is highly relevant to the needs of the local population; they work closely with partner organisations to meet the needs of the community; family learning courses are used well to support the priorities of other agencies in improving the lives of local residents
- well-trained, specialist tutors teach English and mathematics well which leads to a high and increasing number of learners taking and passing their qualifications.

This is not yet an outstanding provider because:

- targets for learners on non-accredited courses, and a small number of qualification-based courses, are not consistently challenging; too many of these learners are not expected to achieve the high standards of which they are capable and a small number of learners do not develop their mathematical skills, or understanding of equality, sufficiently
- managers have yet to ensure that employers fully contribute to study programmes and apprenticeships in a way that enables learners to develop work-related skills quickly and consistently
- managers do not sufficiently use information about learners' destinations once they complete their course, or information about the participation in education of target groups of learners, to inform curriculum plans.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Ensure learners on non-accredited courses achieve a higher proportion of the learning targets they are set. These targets should be more challenging to ensure all learners produce work of a high standard and develop higher levels of skills and knowledge.
- Raise learners' understanding of all aspects of equality of opportunity through replicating the strong focus given to cultural diversity. Ensure learners who aspire to gaining employment develop the skills they need to communicate effectively with the wide range of people they will encounter in the workplace.
- Provide training for staff who are not specialist mathematics teachers so that they have the confidence and knowledge to improve learners' mathematical skills and understanding and promote improvements in mathematics effectively in their lessons and progress reviews.
- Ensure employers contribute more to programmes aimed at helping people secure sustainable employment by providing high quality work experience placements to younger learners and planning and agreeing challenging targets for apprentices.
- Develop measurable objectives for all elements of the strategic plan so that managers are held to account for how effectively they implement this plan.
- Collect and analyse data about the destinations of learners when they complete their course and use these to inform curriculum planning.
- Increase the pace at which the community learning provision is targeted to improve the life chances of people who are most disadvantaged and most in need of education or training.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
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- Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Council, through Kingston Adult Education (KAE), provides courses for over 3,500 learners, most of whom are adults on non-accredited, community courses. Over a third of learners are on courses leading towards qualifications; most of these study courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), mathematics, modern foreign languages, administration, finance and care. The largest subject area is arts, media and publishing with approximately one third of learners, the vast majority of whom are on non-accredited courses. Only 60 learners are on apprenticeships but this number is increasing each year. Approximately 20 learners aged 16 to 18 are on study programmes.
- Learners' outcomes have improved significantly over the last two years and are now good as a result of effective actions by managers. A high proportion of learners on apprenticeships and classroom-based courses now achieve their qualifications.
- Tutors monitor attendance well and take positive action to follow up habitual absentees. This has improved both attendance and the proportion of learners who complete their course.
- Qualification outcomes for 16 to 18 year olds have improved the most, mainly due to a very significant improvement in the proportion of learners completing and achieving English and mathematics qualifications.
- Qualification outcomes for adult learners vary considerably between subjects. The proportion of learners who complete and achieve qualifications in English and mathematics, childcare, information and communication technology (ICT) and assisting teaching is high. In floristry and A levels in modern foreign languages too few learners are successful. Managers have changed the schedule of assessments in floristry which has increased the proportion of learners passing

examinations in 2014/15. They have been less successful in improving achievements in A levels since many learners are content to complete the course without taking the final examination.

- Learners on non-accredited community courses mostly develop good skills and knowledge. Most tutors set them individual targets that are informed well by an assessment of their skills and knowledge when they start the course. Since the previous inspection, the quality of targets has improved resulting in most learners being clearer about the skills they need to develop and reflecting better on how successful they have been in developing these. Currently, learners are only expected to complete two thirds of their learning objectives in order to record an achievement. This is higher than in previous years but still too low.
- Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make very good progress and achieve well. However, only a very small number of people with learning difficulties and disabilities are enrolled on apprenticeships compared to other types of courses.
- Qualification outcomes for both male and female learners have improved but too few male apprentices are successful compared to female apprentices. Staff work well with employers to ensure most apprenticeships meet the needs of the business and the learner. However, in a small number of cases, employers do not provide sufficient support to their apprentice to make the most of opportunities to learn new skills in the workplace.
- Family learning courses promote the social and employability skills identified by health organisations and the local authority within the borough well. For example, groups of parents in areas with high numbers of obese children improved their cooking skills as a result of a series of courses commissioned by a Primary Healthcare Trust.
- Many tutors collect information about learners' progression to higher level qualifications and employment and managers have good examples of learners who secure employment or progress to further study as a result of their course. However, this information is not systematically collected by managers and is not used to improve provision further.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Good teaching learning and assessment lead to learners developing good knowledge and skills and achieving well. Many sessions are lively and learners are purposefully involved in enjoyable activities that help them to learn. Tutors use a wide variety of stimulating teaching methods that often inspire learners to produce high quality work. A large majority of learners benefit from the good support and motivation provided by enthusiastic and talented tutors.
- Tutors have improved their planning of learning, and now provide well-planned sessions that mostly take into account the useful information about individual learners they collect at the beginning of the course. However, a small number of tutors do not always use this effectively to tailor teaching to meet every learner's specific needs. For example, in ESOL programmes the work does not challenge sufficiently a few more able learners.
- The information, advice and guidance that learners receive is particularly good. Learners benefit from informative leaflets and helpful advice when they first contact KAE. Tutors offer timely information and guidance on progression routes to further training, education or employment which learners value. For example, expert guidance helps childcare learners make sensible decisions about career choices. Effective links with other agencies ensure learners have access to a wide range of support that helps them to take up the offer of education or training. For example children's centres, jobcentres and a minority of schools give advice and guidance to potential learners about how they might benefit from a course or the financial support they are entitled to receive.
- Learners make good and imaginative use of learning technologies and tutors encourage many to learn outside the classroom through relevant online resources. For example, in visual arts, tutors give learners electronic links to the work of carefully chosen artists who will inspire and develop their techniques.

- Most tutors correct written work well, particularly spelling, and give learners effective written and verbal feedback which enhances their development. Most tutors are adept at using questions to assess learners' understanding and skill development. Staff quickly identify if learners need extra help with their studies and provide these learners with good support.
- Learners and tutors mostly agree suitably specific and appropriate targets that, through careful monitoring, drive learners' progress. In apprenticeships, reviews are very effective but not enough employers are sufficiently involved in planning and agreeing targets. For a few learners, targets are not sufficiently specific. For example, visual arts learners complete tasks successfully but without appropriate measures to assess the quality of their work. In apprenticeships, although assessors frequently assess learners' work they do not monitor progress towards completion of apprentices' full framework sufficiently well to inform learners and employers.
- Well-trained, specialist tutors teach functional skills well which leads to a high and increasing number of learners passing their qualifications. Tutors mostly promote English well, for example administration learners applied their skills in English to produce a colourful and useful information leaflet which clearly explains to children the roles of doctors and nurses. However, with a few notable exceptions in visual arts and ESOL tutors are unsuccessful in developing learners' mathematical skills in too many lessons.
- Staff and managers provide learners with a safe and enjoyable environment in which to learn and strongly promote learners' social and cultural awareness. Learners feel safe and valued and the great majority of sessions take account of the needs of different groups of learners. Equality and diversity feature in all learning plans and managers monitor whether tutors promote these sufficiently during lessons. However, although much effort goes into promoting awareness of cultural diversity, tutors occasionally place insufficient emphasis on other aspects of equality, such as disability and gender, to prepare learners to deal with all the situations they will experience in their working and social lives.

Visual Arts

Community learning 19+ learning programmes

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are good because:

- learners improve their skills and the majority produce a high standard of creative work; learners proudly exhibit their work and a minority become self-employed or gain related employment in soft furnishings and photography work
- learners in ceramics attain high standards using creative techniques adroitly, particularly when throwing, coiling, cutting, slabbing and using different glazes on pottery
- tutors plan and use a range of highly stimulating activities and resources that fuel learners' creativity; they reinforce the value of diversity well; for example, through good use of film to introduce oriental weaving methods
- tutors motivate learners to improve their mastery of a range of techniques through positive feedback; fine art learners confidently experiment with abstract painting
- most learners and their tutors agree succinct short-term targets that enable learners to progress at an appropriate pace; a large majority of learners achieve these targets
- tutors rapidly gain an understanding of learners' previous experience, level of art skills and what they need to learn in order to improve their work; they focus well on teaching the creative techniques that each learner needs to develop
- learners practise English and mathematics frequently; they evaluate their work in detail using the vocabulary of art and design with tutors and peers, particularly in drawing, painting and

ceramics; in weaving learners practise mathematical skills well when setting up looms to create patterned textiles

- learners benefit from good personal support provided by tutors, particularly learners needing additional support; three of the six Korean learners in a floral design level 2 class received very effective support to develop the English skills they needed to gain high grades
- learners feel safe and tutors teach them well to develop safe working practices
- most tutors use their extensive subject knowledge to provide helpful guidance for learners who wish to extend their skills outside lessons.

Teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are not yet outstanding because:

- punctuality and attendance remain low in a few evening classes, particularly in drawing and painting
- assessment of learners' work is not always sufficiently critical leading to a minority of learners not being fully aware of the standards they should achieve, for example when inserting a skirt zip accurately
- information, advice and guidance are not yet sufficiently effective at encouraging members from deprived parts of the community to attend and benefit from learning an art form.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Good

19+ learning programmes

Teaching, learning and assessment in ESOL are good because:

- learners make good progress and an increasing proportion complete and achieve their qualifications and learning goals; they use their newly acquired language skills to communicate independently and to progress onto higher level courses and employment
- managers and tutors have high expectations of learners; as a result learners' attendance and punctuality in the vast majority of ESOL lessons is high; learners are keen to improve their language skills so they can, for example, communicate with confidence in the workplace and reduce their reliance on family members
- learners develop valuable life skills and communicate with greater confidence; for example, entry level learners talk confidently about a common topic for a prescribed length of time before answering questions from their peers
- learners seeking employment develop a good range of work-related language skills and benefit from volunteering in community settings to help them prepare for future employment, for example, in local charity shops, hospitals and care homes
- very skilled and experienced tutors carefully plan a range of stimulating learning activities and resources to meet the needs of learners with different abilities and skills
- tutors thoroughly analyse learners' skills and knowledge when they start their course; tutors are adept at using this valuable information to set short, medium and long term learning goals and clearly advise learners how to achieve their goals
- tutors use a good range of assessment methods and provide detailed feedback to learners; the standard of learners' work is good and learners are clear about what they need to do to improve their language skills; tutors create ample opportunities for learners to learn from each other and to correct their pronunciation and intonation skills
- learners develop their mathematical skills well, for example, by considering how to calculate salaries, estimate time, and state dates accurately

- learners receive good information, advice and guidance from specialist staff that prepares them well for future employment; well-established agencies and partner organisations provide extensive welfare support that helps learners to complete their courses
- learners benefit from recently introduced individual tutorials in which tutors closely monitor learners' progress towards the achievement of their qualification and goals
- learners understand the importance of diversity and cultural differences and they increase their awareness of the wider community; for example, they learn the language used to describe and celebrate Mother's Day in other learners' countries of origin.

Teaching, learning and assessment in ESOL are not yet outstanding because:

- a minority of learners are not consistently encouraged to learn independently and to make more rapid progress by completing additional tasks and more challenging learning activities
- in a few lessons tutors do not seize opportunities to monitor whether individual learners achieve specific short-term learning goals or make the progress expected of them
- learners do not develop sufficient knowledge of how to interact with the wide range of people that they may encounter and deal with in the workplace or in the wider community.

Administration, finance and accounting

**19+ learning programmes
Apprenticeships**

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in administration, finance and accounting are good because:

- apprentices and learners develop good book-keeping, administrative and customer service skills and a high proportion successfully complete their qualification as a result of well-planned training sessions and assessments
- assessors, teachers and employers support apprentices very well to help them improve at work and remain in learning
- administration apprentices develop a wide range of skills and make a positive contribution in primary healthcare workplaces as a result of the wide range of additional training provided by their employers, such as resuscitation and infection control
- assessors work well with learners and apprentices to plan challenging learning activities which improve the skills of the significant majority of apprentices; apprentices use the knowledge and skills gained in group theory sessions well to improve their contributions to meetings at work and the minutes they take
- assessors use information from teachers and employers, as well as their own observations in the workplace, to assess apprentices' progress, competence and knowledge well; their feedback is frequently constructive and supportive and helps apprentices improve
- apprentices achieve English, mathematics and ICT functional skills qualifications well, often at a level higher than the requirements of the apprenticeship framework
- apprentices' skills and confidence in using English and mathematics at work improve as a result of the high quality group and individual lessons provided by specialist tutors in these subjects
- assessors and specialist support staff give apprentices good advice and guidance to help them make decisions about employment opportunities, training and qualifications to meet their career aspirations.

Teaching, learning and assessment in administration, finance and accounting are not yet outstanding because:

- apprentices and their employers have insufficient knowledge of the amount of progress made towards achievement of their apprenticeship framework
- apprentices are not supported to continue the development of their English and mathematics skills once they have achieved functional skills qualifications
- assessors do not always check or extend apprentices' understanding of equality of opportunity sufficiently to enable them to fully understand how to provide good customer service to a diverse client group in primary healthcare; for example, apprentices lack understanding how to communicate well with clients who may be undergoing, or have completed, gender reassignment.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Governors and senior managers provide clear direction and manage improvements well. Changes to the senior management team and the governing body are having a positive impact as they have successfully implemented all the main areas for improvement since the previous inspection. As a result, the quality of provision in the majority of subject areas has improved and more learners achieve their qualifications. Where this is not the case, managers have identified what needs to improve and are taking appropriate actions. The senior management team have made a realistic assessment of the quality of provision and are clear about what they need to do to reach the high standards to which they aspire.
- Governors, leaders and managers clearly communicate the priorities for improvement to staff. A well-motivated staff team responds well and achieves high standards of teaching and learning. Changes in the governing body have greatly improved its ability to provide strategic direction and support to managers. Governors are better informed about performance and effectively challenge managers to raise standards. Managers have produced a well-articulated strategic plan. However, parts of this lack measurable objectives which inhibits judgements about the progress made so far in implementing it.
- Performance management of staff is strong and has contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching. Staff training to improve teaching, learning and assessment is comprehensive and aligned to the needs of individual staff. Managers know the priorities for training well as a result of a realistic understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The time they spend in classrooms and listening to staff and learners' views contributes well to this understanding.
- Managers hold individual staff to account for the progress and achievement learners make through regular and frequent reviews with individual staff. They use performance indicators well and focus on measurable improvement objectives, using up-to-date data to judge outcomes and progress made by learners. In most cases, these give an accurate position but in a few areas, monitoring systems need further development; for example, management systems to collect and analyse data about learners' destinations after learning are under-developed.
- Safeguarding is good. Learners feel safe, receive good support from staff and are protected by good safeguarding practices. Learners know what to do if they do not feel safe and staff listen and act on learners' concerns. Reporting, decision-making and the referral arrangements for safeguarding are managed to a good standard and the policy and procedures for safeguarding are thorough. Although staff carry out appropriate checks on workplaces, KAE's policy and procedures need to provide more detail of how these checks should be carried out.
- Staff, including the designated safeguarding manager, are trained in safeguarding appropriately and links with the local safeguarding board are good. Managers carry out necessary safeguarding checks on staff and volunteers. A policy and action plan to ensure learners are not

exposed to radicalisation is in place and staff have been trained to understand the role they can play in preventing radicalisation.

- Self-assessment and improvement planning is thorough and managed well with contributions from all staff and, increasingly, learners. Most judgements in the current self-assessment report are accurate but in a few subject areas staff are not sufficiently self-critical. Managers use staff training events well to ensure as many staff as possible contribute to deciding the strategies for improving provision.
- Good links with the local authority and other partner organisations contribute to courses mostly meeting local employment needs well. Local unemployed people gain skills for employment and progress to work or further training through strong partnership working with Jobcentre Plus. Managers have recently introduced a study programme for 16 to 18 year olds who are at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training) and a rapidly increasing number of learners are taking English and mathematics qualifications. However, managers have not yet encouraged enough employers to provide work placements, or insight into the demands of the workplace, for younger learners and apprentices.
- Managers ensure that courses support the local authority's priorities such as the promotion of health and well-being for local residents. Staff collaborate well with partner organisations to respond to local needs, for example, working with the local carers group to provide training to improve their caring skills. Many courses effectively support disadvantaged families, for example, the wider family learning sessions provided in children's centres. However, too few learners from deprived areas of the borough are sufficiently encouraged to study non-accredited courses.
- Learning centres provide a welcoming and harmonious setting for learning in which learners make good progress regardless of their background. Promotion of clear and well-illustrated messages regarding equality and diversity are evident throughout the centres. Clear policies provide staff with the confidence to take actions that protect learners from bullying and harassment.
- Leaders and managers have a clear strategy to use the service to improve the lives of the most disadvantaged people in the borough. While they have successfully increased provision for this group of people, the data they collect about the impact of learning on people's lives are underdeveloped.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames Education

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	2	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2
Outcomes for learners	2	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	2	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Visual arts	2
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	2
Accounting and finance	2
Administration	2

Provider details

Type of provider	Local authority							
Age range of learners	16+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	3554							
Principal/CEO	Ms S Burgess							
Date of previous inspection	October 2013							
Website address	http://www.kingston.gov.uk/adulteducation							
Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	9	544	48	351	6	72	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
	37	56	4	6	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16-19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
Full-time	-							
Part-time	-							
Number of community learners	2169							
Number of employability learners	50							
Funding received from	Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	N/A							

Contextual information

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames is located in Surrey and provides apprenticeships, adult and community learning, and study programmes for 16 to 18 year olds through Kingston Adult Education. Most courses are taught in two centres with family learning courses provided in nearly 30 community and education centres throughout the borough. The borough has one of the smallest populations in London with relatively low levels of deprivation. However, a small number of wards within the borough have a high concentration of disadvantaged residents and children on free school meals. Approximately a quarter of residents are from Black, Asian or minority ethnic groups. The proportion of residents who are employed in managerial, professional and technical occupations is high. The unemployment rate in Kingston is low and significantly below the averages for both London and England as a whole. The number of pupils in schools in Kingston attaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics is well above the national average.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Steven Tucker HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the Head of Service as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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