

# Lambeth Adult Learning

Local authority

## Inspection dates

6–9 October 2015

## Overall effectiveness

**Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for learners	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- Governors, leaders and managers monitor well the effectiveness of provision, maintain high standards and secure improvements for learners.
- Governors, leaders and managers ensure that provision is matched well to local priorities.
- Managers ensure that the most-disadvantaged learners are effectively engaged and supported to achieve well.  
Tutors understand well the different backgrounds and needs of individuals and provide good support for learners.
- Tutors plan sessions well to ensure that the activities are relevant to learners and motivate them to learn.
- Learners enjoy their learning and participate well in sessions.
- Most learners develop well the skills and knowledge essential for work and further learning.
- Learners make good progress, often from low starting points; they achieve their goals well and many progress into further learning and employment.

### It is not yet an outstanding provider

- Managers have not developed a coherent plan to minimise the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Tutors do not always set and record learners' targets accurately at the start of courses, making it difficult to measure progress towards achieving them.
- Learners' development of English skills is too slow in a minority of sessions.

# Full report

## Information about the provider

- Lambeth Adult Learning is part of Lambeth Council's Children, Adults and Health Directorate. Learning programmes are delivered on behalf of the council by eight subcontracted providers at 130 different venues across the borough. Provision is targeted at those new to learning, with no or low levels of qualifications, and those furthest from the job market. The service's aim is to widen participation in learning and promote social inclusion.
- Lambeth Adult Learning attracts around 5,500 part-time learners each year, all aged over 19. Over 80% of learning programmes are non-accredited, with 20% leading to a qualification. Lambeth is ranked as the 14th most deprived borough in England and unemployment in the borough is 6.6% compared to the national average of 6%.

## What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Develop a strategic response to radicalisation and extremism so that managers can plan actions that minimise the risks to vulnerable learners.
  - Ensure that all tutors set and record clear, measurable and challenging targets for learners so that all, including the most able, make the best possible progress.
  - Ensure that tutors develop learners' English skills to prepare learners for their next steps in learning and employment.
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# Inspection judgements

## Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Governors, leaders and managers hold high ambitions for adult learners. They ensure that provision is matched well to local needs and priorities. The provision successfully re-engages local residents, many of whom have not been in learning for some time. In 2014/15 almost 60% of learners enrolled were unemployed and seeking work.
- Managers plan provision based on excellent local knowledge of the labour market and the needs of the different communities in the borough. As a result many of the most vulnerable learners are effectively engaged.
- Managers have successfully addressed the key areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection in 2010. Managers have maintained good quality of provision since that inspection, during a period of change and budget reductions.
- Managers hold providers to account for their performance and identify swiftly areas where performance begins to decline. Any underperformance is effectively tackled and managers support providers well to improve their performance. They link established providers with newly commissioned community-based organisations. This builds the capacity of newer providers well and helps them to meet the standards required.
- Senior managers have a good understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, through the implementation of rigorous and accurate lesson observations. Managers use the findings from observations to identify further training and support needs across the service and for individuals. This helps ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good.
- Managers collaborate very well with employers to help shape the curriculum offer. This leads to bespoke courses developed in partnership with employers and guaranteed interviews for learners who complete them.
- Managers have a keen eye on providing value for money. They successfully secure additional funding that strengthens support for learners who wish to set up their own businesses.
- Governors, leaders and managers have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. The self-assessment report draws on a range of sources. It identifies key areas for improvement that mirror those identified by the inspection team and informs improvement activities across the service.
- Managers are in the early stages of responding to the Prevent agenda. All staff have undertaken training on preventing extremism and radicalisation. However, managers have not conducted a sufficiently detailed assessment to minimise the risks to all learners.
- **The governance of the provider**
  - Elected members and senior officers know the service well and routinely hold managers to account for its performance.
  - When subcontractors consistently underperform and fail to make improvements, governors along with managers take decisive action to cease or reallocate the provision.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding are effective**
  - Appropriate policies are in place and safe recruitment practices are adhered to.
  - Learners feel safe in learning venues across the borough and learning takes place in a tolerant and respectful environment.
  - Staff act promptly and effectively in identifying and responding to safeguarding matters.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Tutors are suitably qualified and experienced. They help learners settle quickly into their courses and establish a very good rapport from the outset.
- Tutors understand well the different backgrounds and needs of individuals and ensure that these are met. For example, they refer learners with mental ill health to additional support services and promote the childcare provision so that parents can more easily attend family learning sessions.
- Tutors plan sessions well. They make very good use of learners' prior experiences and knowledge to help maintain the relevance of their learning and to apply new knowledge and skills in their daily lives. For example, in family learning, parents improve their own mathematical skills as well as learning how they

can use them to help their children with schoolwork. On enterprise courses, learners acquire a good understanding of legislative requirements, copyright, finance and costs.

- Most tutors make good use of the initial assessment of learners' skills to plan learning and set individual targets. As a result, most learners have a good understanding of what they intend to achieve during their course. However, a few tutors do not record learners' targets at the start of the course, and targets are not always sufficiently precise or measurable to help learners and tutors to measure progress towards them.
- In a few sessions, more-able learners do not have sufficiently challenging work to ensure they make the best possible progress.
- Tutors provide clear instructions so learners know what to do and what is expected of them. They often recap on previous learning and check that learners remember key points and terminology. This also helps those that were previously absent to catch up on work they missed.
- Learners develop their mathematical skills well. Tutors frequently include mathematics in vocational sessions, using exercises for calculating costs, proportions and measuring, in ways that are directly relevant to learners' lives.
- The development of English skills is not yet consistently good. Not all tutors promote the development of language skills sufficiently in sessions or correct learners' errors in spoken and written English. However, in many sessions learners improve their communication skills and confidence through class discussions and giving presentations to their peers.
- Many learners benefit from opportunities to acquire and improve their IT skills. Increasingly tutors encourage learners to use their smartphones to research and record information and for job searches, although this is not consistently well developed in all sessions.
- Many tutors effectively promote tolerance and understanding of different backgrounds and as a result learners work very well together in sessions. They show high levels of tolerance and respect for those who hold different beliefs and opinions to themselves. However, not all tutors capitalise on naturally occurring themes in sessions to develop learners' understanding of important current issues. In a few sessions, discussions remain at a superficial level.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good**

- Learners develop good skills and improve their self-confidence. They become motivated to learn and many become more active in their local community as parent champions promoting local services. Others have learnt how to register to vote and have done so.
- The provision of advice and guidance to learners is good and partners such as children's centres frequently signpost parents to adult learning. While on courses, learners receive good support and advice on their next steps.
- Learners develop their job-search skills well. For example, learners who are homeless receive good support with writing CVs and are effectively referred to training and job opportunities.
- The provision meets the needs of priority groups well, such as lone parents and learners with high-level social and emotional needs. For example, learners with learning difficulties improve their fitness and develop listening and spatial awareness. They love their dance classes and taking part in group activities.
- Employers are engaged well in delivery of the curriculum. As a result, learners have increased access to local work placements and, for some, employment in healthcare and construction. Employers, such as the local hospital and a housing association, regularly visit classes to promote opportunities for employment. This increases learners' knowledge of the skills that employers are looking for when they recruit new staff.
- Learners who are long-term unemployed receive very good support to develop their entrepreneurial skills and to move into self-employment. Mentors help learners define their business ideas and support them throughout the planning process and the launch of their own business. As a result, last year 32 learners started up new businesses.
- Learners report that they feel safe during sessions. Accommodation is routinely checked to help ensure it provides a safe environment for learners. Learners develop strategies to keep themselves safe, including of how to be safe on the internet. Staff collaborate well with other professionals such as social workers to implement plans to protect vulnerable individuals.
- Attendance in most sessions is good, and overall the attendance of learners improved in 2014/15. However, in a small minority of sessions the attendance of learners requires further improvement.

- The vast majority of learners in community learning complete their courses and achieve their individual learning and personal goals. Learners working towards qualifications also make good progress, often from low starting points. The proportion that complete and achieve their qualifications has increased over the last three years, with a marked improvement evident in 2014/15.
- There are no significant differences in progress or achievement between different groups of learners, and the 20% of learners who are from the most deprived wards in the borough achieve very well.
- Learners improve their mathematical skills, and those taking mathematics qualifications achieve well. Learners' development of English skills in sessions is not consistently good and in 2014/15 learners' achievement of qualifications in English required improvement.
- Many learners progress on to further learning, employment and other positive activities such as volunteering after completing their courses. In 2014/15 over half of all learners progressed to further learning. Around 15% gained full- or part-time employment, became self-employed or took up voluntary work. Many who have not yet progressed have health problems or caring responsibilities.
- Learners taking art and craft courses develop good practical and hand skills and learn to use equipment competently and safely. Many use their new skills to make well-crafted products for family and friends or for sale. In dance and health and fitness sessions, learners develop their physical fitness and body strength and know how to exercise safely. Learners who speak English as a second language develop good language skills quickly. This helps them integrate into their local communities and assists in their progression towards employment.

## Provider details

Type of provider	Local authority
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	5,663
Principal/CEO	Ms Lesley Robinson
Website address	<a href="http://www.lambeth.gov.uk">www.lambeth.gov.uk</a>

## 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	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)		370						
	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
Number of learners aged 14–16								
Funding received from	Skills Funding Agency (SFA)							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	■ Morley College							
	■ Communities into Training and Employment (CITE)							
	■ Lambeth Early Years							
	■ High Trees Community Development Trust							
	■ indepenDance							
	■ Kaplan							
	■ MI ComputSolutions							
	■ The Spires Centre							

# Information about this inspection

## Inspection team

Jon Bowman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Mercer	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philida Schellekens	Ofsted inspector
Marinette Bazin	Ofsted inspector
Carolyn Brownsea	Ofsted inspector

The above team was assisted by the head of adult learning as nominee, and carried out the inspection at short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of students and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
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