

# Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Council

Local authority

**Inspection dates**

25–28 April 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>			<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>	16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>	Adult learning programmes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>	Apprenticeships	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for learners	<b>Good</b>		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection			Good

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good provider

- Leaders and managers have successfully maintained good-quality provision since the previous inspection just over two years ago.
- Leaders and managers ensure that the courses offered reflect local priorities and meet the needs of residents well.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement of the service and take effective action to make improvements for learners.
- Managers and tutors carefully track learners' progress and put in place additional support where needed; as a result of this and good teaching, learning and assessment, learners make good progress and achieve well.
- The large majority of learners who take qualifications successfully complete their course; their qualifications support their next steps effectively in learning or employment.
- Tutors plan learning well, have high expectations of learners and motivate them to learn and make good progress.
- Learners make good progress in developing the skills and knowledge that they need to develop their careers and become more independent in their lives.
- Managers and staff ensure that learners develop a good understanding of British values and living in modern Britain.
- In a small minority of cases, tutors do not set clear enough targets for learners or check whether they understand what they are learning; this inhibits the progress of a few learners.
- Managers do not provide senior leaders with sufficient information to inform them of how well the service is performing against its priorities.
- Staff do not provide apprentices with timely information on opportunities to study at a higher level once they complete their apprenticeship.
- Not enough young learners on study programmes benefit from work-experience placements.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames provides adult learning, apprenticeships and study programmes for 16- to 18-year-olds through Kingston Adult Education. Most courses are taught in one main centre, with family learning and a small number of other courses provided in 40 other venues such as schools and children's centres. Since the previous inspection, the service has undergone a restructure that included a reduction in the number of management posts. The curriculum now comprises mainly courses that lead to a qualification and learning that is targeted at learners with few or no qualifications and those from disadvantaged communities. The apprenticeship programme has been extended.
- 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.

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

- Ensure that tutors:
  - set clear targets so that learners know what they need to do to improve
  - check that learners understand what they have learned to support their progress better.
- Improve the use of performance data by managers to inform governors and senior leaders better on the performance of the service.
- Ensure that timely discussions are held with apprentices so that they are aware of opportunities to study at a higher level and more of them progress to higher-level qualifications.
- Improve the proportion of learners on study programmes who take up work-experience placements in order to broaden their understanding of their career options and employers' expectations.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders and managers have successfully maintained the strengths and the quality of the provision since the previous inspection during a period of organisational change. They have developed a positive, open and cooperative culture that supports learners well to achieve their goals.
- Managers ensure that the quality of provision is good across the service. Adult learning programmes and the study programme are good and there is a growing and effective apprenticeship programme.
- Leaders and managers are highly ambitious for learners. They have developed a clear strategy that underpins effectively the development of the service. They are making good progress in targeting learning towards the local priorities of promoting the health and well-being of residents and in meeting local employment.
- Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the key strengths and areas for improvement of the service. Their self-assessment of the performance of the service is thorough and accurate and provides a sound platform for planning improvements.
- Leaders and managers are successfully tackling those areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection, such as involving employers in the development of the apprenticeship programme and targeting adult learning at those from the most disadvantaged communities.
- Leaders and managers successfully manage change and are developing the curriculum well so that it better meets the needs of local residents. There is now a higher proportion of learning that leads to qualifications and a good focus on developing the English and mathematics skills of learners.
- Managers successfully engage new learners through effective partnerships with a wide range of public bodies and community groups such as a local carers group, Jobcentre Plus, libraries and public health. New courses for residents with mental health concerns and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities improve the participation of learners from these groups and promote their well-being effectively.
- Managers have extended the apprenticeship provision through new business administration, childcare and teaching assistant apprenticeships specifically to meet the needs of the local health and education sectors. They are working closely with children's centres and schools to develop the family learning programmes on offer.
- Performance management arrangements ensure that teaching, learning and assessment are of a consistently good quality. The observation programme of teaching, learning and assessment is robust and linked well to the training and development needs of staff. Managers support and manage effectively staff whose performance falls below the standards required.
- Managers track the progress of learners effectively. They routinely collect and review data on learners' progress. They use this information well to put in place additional support for learners who are at risk of not achieving their goals. As a result, the large majority of learners receive good support, remain on track and achieve well.

- Managers ensure that tutors promote equality well and ensure that the diversity of learners and life in modern Britain is celebrated. Tutors facilitate regular discussions in lessons about different values and traditions that lead to a purposeful, vibrant and respectful learning environment.
- Managers regularly report to senior leaders and governors on the performance of the service. However, managers do not use a wide enough range of data and information to inform governors or senior leaders as to how well the service is meeting its strategic objectives.

### **The governance of the provider**

- Governance arrangements are good. Members of the governing body have a wide range of useful experience. They meet regularly and effectively scrutinise the development of the service.
- Along with governors, senior leaders in the local authority ensure that managers are accountable for the performance of the service. This helps managers shape service developments in line with the priorities for the local area.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Managers follow safe recruitment and selection practice. They undertake and record all pre-employment checks necessary to ensure that staff are suitable for their role.
- Learners know who to turn to should they be concerned about the welfare of themselves or others. They feel safe in centres and in lessons.
- Well-trained staff act promptly and effectively to safeguard learners' welfare when they have concerns.
- Managers have responded effectively to the 'Prevent' duty to prevent extremism and radicalisation. They ensure that British values are promoted well through service-wide projects and activities.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Tutors know their learners well and have a good understanding of their skills and abilities. They use this knowledge effectively to plan activities which meet learners' needs well. For example, in lessons for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, tutors plan activities which meet their wide range of skills and abilities; learners enjoy the activities very much and make good progress.
- Tutors have good subject knowledge and industry experience which they use skilfully to set activities in realistic contexts. For example, in a childcare lesson, tutors and learners relate safeguarding and health and safety to the childcare setting. They plan and risk assess a visit to a local children's farm and then carry out a site visit to ensure that everything is fully in order.
- Tutors use their assessment of learners' starting points effectively to place learners on the right course or programme. As a result, learners remain on and successfully complete

their course.

- Tutors work well with support assistants and carers in lessons. They create opportunities for learners to work independently and provide appropriate support if learners need it. For example, tutors on study programmes give clear direction to support staff on who needs support and how they should deliver it.
- Most tutors mark learners' written work well and give helpful advice on how to improve further. However, the correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar is weak and feedback is too brief for learners to know what to do to improve in a few lessons.
- In English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) lessons, tutors give learners good feedback on the accuracy of grammatical structure. For example, tutors monitor small-group discussions and put examples of learners' spoken language on the board, helping learners to reflect on their own use of language. However, tutors do not provide feedback consistently on intonation, stress and pronunciation to learners who find these aspects of English difficult, and this slows the progress that they make.
- Most tutors check learning effectively and extend learners' understanding of topics. However, in a minority of lessons tutors do not manage their use of questions well and, as a result, the same few learners respond, while others in the group have no opportunity to participate and get feedback on their answers.
- The quality of target-setting by tutors is too inconsistent. Many targets are too broad to be meaningful and describe activities rather than the skills to be learned. Tutors do not review targets with sufficient regularity. As a result, learners are not always clear how they can improve further.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

- Learners enjoy their lessons, develop their self-confidence and make good progress on their courses. For example, learners on childcare courses value their lessons, especially the opportunity to develop their understanding of theory. They look forward to their lessons and apply their growing understanding of childcare effectively in the workplace.
- Learning has a positive social impact on learners' lives. For example, learners who act as carers for relatives attend a Zumba physical exercise class. As a result, they benefit from improved physical and mental health.
- Staff and managers provide excellent pastoral support that helps learners with problems in their daily lives and supports well their attendance at classes.
- Managers and staff implement a good range of activities to improve learners' understanding of British values and to raise awareness of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation. For example, learners' views on British values are collated in the shape of a Union Jack that is prominently displayed in the reception area of the main centre. Staff and learners regularly use the flag as a starting point for further learning activities.
- Tutors on vocational courses teach health and safety well and have a particularly good focus on the reasons why this is important in the workplace. They use practical examples effectively to reinforce what being safe online means to learners.
- Following staff training and development activities, English tutors integrate mathematics well into their lessons. For example, a group of learners used statistics to inform a debate

on the effects of global warming.

- The development of learners' English and mathematics skills is good for learners on study programmes and in discrete adult provision. Learners benefit from additional support with English and mathematics and make good progress in developing their skills and knowledge. However, for those learners on apprenticeship programmes, English and mathematics are not made sufficiently relevant to the workplace and, as a result, learners do not always see the importance of developing these skills.
- Attendance is generally high in adult provision but is too low for a minority of learners on study programmes. Punctuality requires improvement in a few classes.
- The range of advice and guidance activities is mainly good. Learners value highly the specialist careers advice available. Advice before enrolment and placement on courses is good and ensures that learners are on the right course. Learners have access to good advice while on course, including on further study options.
- Tutors provide practical help for learners to pursue job opportunities. For example, job advertisements are displayed on the noticeboard in vocational classrooms, and tutors provide good practical advice on the quality of learners' curricula vitae. However, learners on employability courses are not sufficiently clear on their next steps after they complete their programme, and guidance to apprentices on progression opportunities is introduced too late in the programme.

## Outcomes for learners

**Good**

- Learners, many of whom have low prior educational attainment and few qualifications, make good progress.
- The large majority of learners across provision types complete their courses and achieve their qualifications successfully. Overall, learners achieve at higher rates than those at similar providers.
- Learners make good progress in developing the skills and knowledge that they need to develop their careers and become more independent in their lives. Those taking ESOL courses achieve well, and learners become more confident in managing their own affairs and less reliant on others to help them.
- Learners on family learning courses develop improved communication skills, which helps to enhance their self-confidence and self-esteem. They enjoy their learning and have a good appreciation of their role in supporting their children at home.
- A good proportion of adult learners who take GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics achieve high grades, and the achievement rate for those taking functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics is improving well.
- There are no noticeable differences in the achievement of different groups of learners. Managers have taken effective action through targeting additional support to learners to close the small number of gaps in achievement that existed last year.
- Many learners move on to positive next steps when they complete their courses, including further study at Kingston Adult Education (KAE) or learning/employment elsewhere. However, managers do not have information on the destinations of enough learners after

they leave KAE.

- In 2015/16 the achievement rates of study programme learners on their main vocational qualifications were below national rates, but current learners are making good progress towards achieving their qualifications.
- Apprentices achieve their qualifications well and in good time. However, too few apprentices achieve their mathematics functional skills at the first attempt and too few progress to a higher-level apprenticeship.

## Types of provision

### 16 to 19 study programmes

**Good**

- There are currently 23 learners on the study programme; they make up around 3% of all learners. The core vocational subject area that learners study is employability. They also study for qualifications in English, mathematics, ESOL and information and communication technology (ICT).
- The majority of learners have faced significant challenges in their lives, are vulnerable and have barriers to learning. The programme meets their individual needs well and they make good progress in developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes they need to make a successful transition to adult life.
- Highly effective assessment of their starting points enables tutors to provide learners with the support that they need to succeed. For example, additional learning support assistants are utilised well in the classroom and help the learners to participate fully in classes.
- Tutors have high expectations of learners. They deliver well-planned and interesting sessions with a good range of activities that engage learners and sustain their interest well. They encourage learners to improve their skills, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Learners develop their spelling and grammar effectively and receive clear guidance from tutors on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further. As a result, learners make good progress in the development of their language and writing skills.
- Tutors regularly review the progress that learners make and provide good encouragement to learners to help them succeed. As a result, learners make good progress towards completing their programmes and talk confidently about the progress they make. Learners value the support that they receive and speak very positively of their tutors and the care the tutors show them.
- Learners benefit from the good guidance and support provided by tutors to prepare them for their progression to further education and employment. The majority move on to further learning, and small numbers progress to a traineeship or apprenticeship.
- Learners are polite, behave well and are respectful to their peers and tutors. They benefit from studying in an adult environment and value the calm and respectful learning atmosphere at the main centre.
- Learners have a good awareness of how to keep safe, they feel safe at the centre, and

they know who to contact if they have any concerns.

- The majority of learners attend well. However, for a minority of learners, their attendance is poor.
- Enrichment activities such as job fairs, business start-up workshops and visits from employers enable young people to develop their awareness of the world of work. However, leaders and managers do not ensure that a sufficient number of learners benefit from work-experience placements to enable them to apply and develop their skills in a real work setting and make informed choices about their career options.

## Adult learning programmes

**Good**

- Adult learners account for the vast majority of all learners. Currently, there are almost 450 learners on courses leading to accredited qualifications and 150 learners are enrolled on non-accredited community learning programmes. Learners study a wide range of subjects, the largest of which are ESOL, English, mathematics and health and fitness. Courses take place principally at KAE's main centre, but also at a number of other venues and schools in Kingston upon Thames.
- The vast majority of adult learners achieve well and make good, or very good, progress in developing a wide range of skills. Learners are highly respectful, enthusiastic and passionate about the difference that learning makes to their everyday lives. They generally produce good standards of work.
- Tutors plan lessons well to ensure that activities build learning in a way that helps them to understand key concepts. They make good use of everyday examples to which learners can relate to contextualise their learning.
- Tutors take advantage of small class sizes to give learners good levels of individual attention. Tutors develop a detailed knowledge of learners' differing needs, and support them to work at a suitable pace and on tasks that are commensurate with their abilities. Learners are able to articulate clearly what they have learned since beginning their courses.
- Tutors provide very useful verbal feedback to learners individually in lessons. Learners feel comfortable in admitting when they do not understand key learning points and when challenging each other's, and their tutor's, answers and explanations. Learners are encouraged to solve solutions to questions and to have the freedom to explore different ways of arriving at the right answers.
- Tutors skilfully develop learners' English and mathematics skills in vocational lessons. Learners value the additional English and mathematics drop-in sessions they attend to help them catch up with any work they miss or to tackle work they find particularly difficult.
- Attendance at lessons for adult learners is generally very good. Where learners are absent for unavoidable reasons, tutors often provide them with updates on the work they have missed and what they need to do before their return. However, learners' punctuality is poor in a small minority of classes and tutors do not always challenge learners on the importance of arriving for lessons on time.
- Learning takes place within a strong culture of respect. Learners from a wide range of



backgrounds talk openly about different practices in their countries of origin and are very interested in exploring how this shapes attitudes towards, for example, mental health and suicide.

- Learners have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, both when attending classes and in the community. They understand the risks posed by extremism and the threat of radicalisation and are aware of who to contact if they have any safeguarding concerns. Learners appreciate the importance of British values within the multicultural communities in which they live.
- Learners benefit from good information, advice and guidance. They are very appreciative of the assistance they receive at enrolment in overcoming barriers to learning. The vast majority of tutors offer timely information and guidance on progression routes to further training, education or employment. However, learners on employability programmes are not sufficiently aware of the options available to them at other further education providers.
- In a few instances, written feedback from tutors on how learners can improve their assessed work is too brief. At times, learners do not receive sufficient guidance on how they can develop specific answers or parts of their work further.
- Tutors do not set sufficiently specific targets or review these regularly for a minority of learners. Targets often focus on the activities that learners will undertake, rather than the skills and knowledge they need to develop. Tutors do not always update learners' targets once they have been achieved. In a small number of lessons tutors do not check that all learners understand key topics or the meaning of important words.

## Apprenticeships

**Good**

- There are currently 95 apprentices, with three quarters at intermediate level and just over half aged over 19 years old. Learners undertake apprenticeships in business administration, customer service, childcare, ICT and teaching and learning in schools.
- The apprenticeship programme meets employers' and apprentices' needs well. Managers have good links with local employers, particularly in the health sector and the local authority, which they use well to promote apprenticeships and help employers fill job vacancies.
- Apprentices receive good information, advice and guidance prior to enrolling on a programme. Staff take care to explore apprentices' career goals and their existing skills and qualifications to match them to suitable courses and job vacancies. Apprentices receive good support to prepare for job interviews, and employers value the high calibre of applicants. Staff accurately assess apprentices' prior skills and knowledge and identify effectively their individual support needs.
- Apprentices make good progress in their job roles, learn new skills and take on more responsibilities. For example, they learn how to monitor payments, create invoices, use management information systems, provide good-quality customer service and deal with suppliers.
- Employers provide effective on-the-job training, support and supervision to ensure that apprentices settle into their job roles well and understand their responsibilities. Apprentices contribute well to the workplace and work professionally and to a good

standard.

- Apprentices significantly increase their confidence and skills such as teamwork and communication. They interact well with other learners, as well as colleagues and customers in their job roles.
- Employers contribute well to the apprenticeship programme, attending progress reviews to monitor the progress of apprentices, both in their jobs and in their qualification. For example, where an apprentice progressed to a level 3 apprenticeship, the employer agreed to provide additional job tasks and workplace projects to ensure that the apprentice would be able to achieve the higher-level qualification.
- Most apprentices take good advantage of off-the-job vocational learning workshops and independent study to increase their knowledge and understanding and apply this in their job roles well. For example, childcare apprentices improve their understanding of child development and how to adapt activities to meet the needs of individual children.
- Apprentices receive good personal support. Where staff identify that apprentices require additional support, they provide timely and effective help.
- The apprentices' coursework is of a high standard. They demonstrate their knowledge well and write good-quality and well-detailed case studies for evidence of their competence.
- Apprentices feel safe in the workplace and in learning, and have a good understanding of safe working practice and what to do should they have any concerns.
- Apprentices have a good understanding of British values; they understand the importance of freedom of expression, tolerance, fair treatment and the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Most apprentices receive clear and constructive feedback from assessors and employers and know what they need to do to improve their work. Employers provide regular feedback on performance at work, setting high expectations of performance. However, in a minority of instances, written feedback by assessors does not give sufficient guidance on what the apprentices need to do to enhance their work.
- Apprentices have a good understanding of their progress, and the majority of current apprentices are making good progress in their qualifications, with many ahead of target. However, a minority of apprentices are behind target in their main qualification.
- Staff introduce workshops for the small number of advanced apprentices too late in the programme. Apprentices who started their level 3 qualification in January are not due to commence their workshops until October, by which time they will be near the end of their apprenticeship.
- Apprentices progress well to permanent employment after their apprenticeship, with the large majority remaining with the same employers. However, too few apprentices progress to higher-level apprenticeships. Those who do progress mostly do so in the same job roles, rather than via a promotion at work. On a few occasions, staff plan for apprentices' job and career progression too late in the apprenticeship programme.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	54196
Type of provider	Local authority
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	2,500
Principal/CEO	Sam Burgess
Telephone number	0208 547 6742
Website	<a href="http://www.kingston.gov.uk/adulteducation">www.kingston.gov.uk/adulteducation</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 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	10	447	12	127	1	17	-	-
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	34	39	10	12	-	-		
Number of traineeships	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
Funding received from:	Education and Skills Funding Agency							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of service, as nominee. 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 learners 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.

### Inspection team

Jon Bowman, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philida Schellekens	Ofsted Inspector
Pamela Wallace	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Adkins	Ofsted Inspector

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