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Ms Jayne Deeley
Economic Initiatives and Skills Manager
Royal Borough of Greenwich
Town Hall
Wellington Street
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Dear Ms Deeley

Short inspection of Royal Borough of Greenwich

Following the short inspection on 17 and 18 May 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since the provider was judged to be good in May 2013.

This provider continues to be good.

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and managers have continued to ensure that adult learning programmes are aimed at developing the skills that local people need to take advantage of job opportunities in the borough and beyond. As a result, a high proportion of courses now concentrate on developing learners' skills to match the needs of the local job market. Learners from key target groups, such as those from the most disadvantaged areas, participate well in learning and most successfully achieve their goals. Learners:

- develop well the skills and knowledge they need to progress to further learning and employment, including their English and mathematics skills
- improve their health and well-being by taking courses
- achieve their qualifications successfully.

Many learners progress to positive next steps after completing their course. Last year, a third of those who were unemployed at the start of their course progressed directly into employment, and one in 10 progressed to further learning.

Senior leaders and managers involve employers, subcontractors and local authority partners effectively in developing the curriculum. Learning programmes reflect the key priorities of the borough, such as reducing poverty and the regeneration of local communities. For example, a do-it-yourself course for residents helps them carry out basic maintenance in the home, increases their independence and decreases reliance on their landlord.

The council makes a substantial financial investment in adult and community learning. This supports the development of the service very well and ensures that provision is located in venues easily accessible to local residents. Managers use additional funding well to increase staffing so that there is a sufficient number of staff to assure the quality of provision.

Managers have ensured that key strengths identified at the previous inspection have been maintained, including effective partnerships that support well the development of the curriculum and the good progress that learners make. However, progress in addressing a few of the key areas for improvement has been hindered as a result of necessary changes in leadership at one key subcontracting partner. New leaders are now in place and are working collaboratively and effectively with the council's leaders and managers to make the improvements needed.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and action is taken to safeguard learners. Managers regularly review the safeguarding arrangements of subcontracted providers and ensure that they adhere to safe recruitment and selection practice. Inspectors observed safe working practices at centres; staff react well when they identify safeguarding concerns.

Managers have responded effectively to the duty to prevent radicalisation and extremism and work closely with the local 'Prevent' coordinator. They have completed a risk assessment and developed an action plan to respond to the risks posed to learners by radicalisation and extremism. As a result, managers understand well the risks to vulnerable groups in the area and the links between extremist views and gang affiliation in some communities. However, planning to promote British values consistently across the provision is insufficiently well developed.

Inspection findings

- Senior leaders provide effective leadership of adult and community learning. They ensure that good links exist between key strategic projects and the service, such as the development of skills centres across the borough.
- Managers hold subcontractors to account effectively for their performance. They routinely and thoroughly review the performance of subcontracted partners using a good range of performance data and information.
- Senior leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of the provision. Through their evaluation of the provision, managers correctly identify the areas that need improving. There is a positive culture of continual improvement across subcontractors.
- Managers are increasing the number of providers who deliver adult learning on their behalf. In this way, the service meets a wide range of needs in the community and ensures that learners have access to a broad range of learning

opportunities and high-quality resources, including excellent digital media.

- Learners improve their self-confidence successfully. They develop useful networks with their peers and others. For example, the local food business network helps them to consider their next steps and improve their confidence in finding a job.
- Learners benefit from knowledgeable tutors who understand the local employment sector well. Tutors use their knowledge effectively to support learners' progress. For example on the food business start-up course, learners improve their knowledge of how to fund their business through crowd-funding.
- Managers have effective links with local employers and work well with partners including the job brokerage team to recruit applicants for vacancies in the local area.
- Managers implement a good range of initiatives that successfully attract new learners, for instance attendance at job fairs and visits to outreach centres. Short courses are successful in providing learners with an introduction to new vocational opportunities, for example in the construction industry. Learners often progress well from these into further learning, work placements and apprenticeships.
- Managers are improving the collection and use of data on the destinations of learners once they complete their course. The destinations of increasing numbers of learners are tracked and used to inform the development of the curriculum. For example, leaders have introduced short courses to meet learners' different abilities rather than see learners repeat the same course without progressing.
- Managers' evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is broadly accurate. They work effectively with new providers, for example through joint observations of lessons, which helps to build the capacity of staff and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. New tutors benefit from the individual support provided.
- Managers rightly identify inconsistencies in the quality of a significant minority of evaluations of teaching. There is no shared understanding between subcontractors of what constitutes good teaching, learning and assessment. In a few cases, observers' judgements are not securely based on relevant evidence and grades do not match the written evaluations.
- Managers undertake a range of actions to improve how well tutors record the progress of learners on non-accredited courses. Audits accurately identify where records are incomplete and managers give specific feedback to staff on what they need to do to improve the quality of individual learning plans. However, the quality of records showing the achievements of learners remains inconsistent. Not enough tutors effectively support learners' wider personal and social development.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- partners improve the consistency by which they judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to assure senior leaders of the quality of teaching
- tutors recognise and record the progress and achievement of learners effectively
- managers take more comprehensive action to promote British values further across the provision.

I am copying this letter to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jon Bowman
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, the economic initiatives and skills manager, as nominee, assisted one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Ofsted Inspectors. We met with you, senior leaders, managers, tutors and learners. We carried out lesson observations, took account of the most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. We used group and individual interviews and telephone calls to gather the views of learners and staff. We scrutinised data and information on the performance of the service and reviewed schemes of work, lesson plans, key policy documents and records of safeguarding concerns.