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Mr Darren Purdie
Curriculum and Quality Manager
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Dear Mr Purdie

Short inspection of Havering Adult College

Following the short inspection on 11–12 October 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 October 2014.

This provider continues to be good.

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and managers have maintained good standards of provision and addressed key weaknesses effectively. Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, a weakness in 2014, is now supporting learners well to become more independent. Managers and partners continue to work together to ensure that the curriculum is planned effectively using the good knowledge that they have of their communities.

Leaders and managers create a positive and purposeful culture with the continuous improvement of the provision at its core. They are ambitious for their learners and take well-considered actions to improve the experience of learners. For example, they have increased staffing in key areas so that the college remains in a good position to maintain improvements. The number of student services advisers has increased and an additional curriculum development manager post has been established to develop the breadth of the curriculum on offer.

Senior leaders and managers know the strengths and weaknesses of the college well. Their own assessment of the performance of the college is thorough and robust. Middle managers, who are passionate about what they do, provide very effective support to staff and make good improvements to the provision. They use management information and data regularly to review performance and take timely action to remedy any weaknesses. For example, managers frequently scrutinise attendance data, identify any courses and learners where attendance is declining, and take effective remedial action. As a result, the large majority of learners attend

regularly and achieve well. Learners enjoy their learning and hold their teachers in high regard.

Managers have a good track record of increasing learner numbers and ensuring that each year a very high proportion of those joining courses are new learners who are taking their first steps into or back into education. A high proportion of learners progress to other courses during the year. They often start with short introductory courses before moving on to more substantial courses that lead to qualifications.

Managers still need to address a small number of areas for improvement. These include developing a more carefully planned approach to promoting British values, implementing measures that provide greater scrutiny of the college's performance by the local authority, and developing measures to further improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and action is taken to safeguard learners. Safe recruitment and selection practice is in place across the college. Managers have good oversight of safeguarding arrangements and record safeguarding incidents well. Managers ensure that they understand the individual welfare needs of learners before they start their course. This helps managers put in place additional support to meet learners' needs. Managers share information with teachers so that they are well placed to support learners where there are safeguarding concerns. When teachers and managers need to take action to protect learners' welfare, they do so swiftly and effectively.

Managers ensure that staff are trained in understanding their responsibilities in carrying out the duty to prevent radicalisation and extremism and to promote British values. Teachers include these themes when planning learning. However, managers are not successful enough in developing initiatives that engage learners and help them consider radicalisation, extremism and British values in the context of their lives.

Inspection findings

- Governors have overseen a period of good progress since the previous inspection. Senior managers know the sector well and are accountable to the cabinet member for children and learning. Managers keep the lead member up to date on key developments by providing concise monthly briefings on the college's performance.
- Inspectors saw little evidence of wider scrutiny and challenge to managers on the college's performance at a senior level, such as through the local authority's overview and scrutiny committee.
- Managers implement a thorough procurement process that ensures that prospective subcontractor partners meet the standards set by the local authority

and are aware of the expectations on them.

- Managers maintain a good overview of the performance of subcontracted partners. They regularly hold subcontracted partners to account for their performance through monthly monitoring meetings that consider a wide range of data and information on the performance of partners. Managers take effective action where partners fail to maintain high standards and do not demonstrate their capacity to improve.
- Managers successfully support subcontracted partners to build their capacity to deliver good-quality learning through, for example, access to training and development opportunities. As a result, all current subcontracted partners perform well.
- Arrangements to maintain and improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are effective. Curriculum development managers take pride in supporting their staff to improve. Their judgements on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are broadly accurate.
- Since the previous inspection, managers have introduced a new scheme for observing teaching and learning that has a good focus on developing teachers' skills. Managers observe all teachers annually. Managers provide effective staff development opportunities that promote good-quality teaching, learning and assessment. This enables high numbers of staff to gain relevant qualifications including qualified teacher status.
- Managers, in their observations of lessons, do not focus sufficiently on the main features of teaching, learning and assessment. After observations, teachers receive too many small improvement targets rather than the key actions they need to take to help learners progress more swiftly.
- Supported by good training opportunities, teachers set appropriate targets for learners on non-accredited courses, and record their progress and achievement well.
- Managers monitor the quality of target setting effectively. They support teachers to improve their assessment strategies through individual coaching and encouraging the sharing of good practice at team meetings.
- Teachers take a pride in the progress and success of learners. Teachers encourage learners to progress onto further courses to extend their knowledge and deepen their understanding. For example, learners on the teaching assistant course take additional courses in behaviour management and dyslexia that deepen their understanding beyond their initial course of study.
- Leaders and managers develop the curriculum well in response to local and national needs. Their detailed understanding of their communities, based on local demographic information, helps them plan courses effectively. For example, the family learning programme, a 'kitchen social', provides healthy eating and living workshops during school holidays to combat holiday hunger for children living in poverty.
- Managers make good use of the available resources to meet local needs and respond effectively to the changing demographic profile in the borough. For

example, managers have increased the number of courses for English for speakers of other languages to meet the growing population of new arrivals to the UK.

- Managers work effectively with others in the education service to ensure that headteachers are aware of, and involved in, planning new courses. For example, last year, managers and school staff developed phonics and literacy courses to prepare children better for their first experiences of school.
- Managers forge a wide range of partnerships that ensure that the curriculum taught reflects the priorities of the local authority. For example, managers have increased the courses taught for learners with health needs and those who are unemployed.
- Managers have made significant changes to the provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As a result, learners develop well the skills they need to become more self-sufficient in their lives. The large majority of learners now travel independently to learning, which was not the case at the time of the previous inspection.
- Managers have reorganised the teaching team to remedy the weaknesses in teaching and learning identified at the previous inspection.
- Teachers plan the involvement of learning support assistants (LSAs) in classes well. LSAs intervene effectively when learners ask for help and support, rather than offering to answer or complete tasks for them. LSAs are well qualified and, as a result, they now fully understand their role and responsibilities.
- Managers have designed the courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in response to learners' needs. They have reorganised the timetable so that courses are available throughout the year and learners can attend at times and days that suit them.
- As a result of good teaching, learning and assessment, learners make at least expected or better progress. Learners work at their own pace and have their progress and achievements recognised through nationally accredited qualifications. Their success is celebrated well at the annual award ceremony with learners from across the college.
- In a minority of instances, learners' own support staff do not encourage learners to do things for themselves. This impedes the development of the independent living skills that learners need.

Next steps for the provider

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- to accelerate improvements, they fully utilise the existing scrutiny processes to challenge managers so that the college's performance becomes more effective
- they develop initiatives that help learners consider British values and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism in the context of their lives
- in their observations of teaching, learning and assessment, managers

concentrate on the main features that will support the progress of learners.

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 quality and curriculum manager, as nominee, assisted two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Ofsted Inspector. 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.