

# Millennium Academy

Independent learning provider

Inspection dates

3–9 March 2018

Overall effectiveness		Inadequate	
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate	Adult learning programmes	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate		
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate		
Outcomes for learners	Inadequate		
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Not previously inspected	

## Summary of key findings

### This is an inadequate provider

- Leaders do not evaluate the quality of provision accurately or identify suitable actions for improvement; as a result, the overall effectiveness of the provision for adults is inadequate.
- Directors and managers do not promote safeguarding effectively; teachers do not ensure safe working practices in workshops, and learners' insights into safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty are poor.
- Teachers do not identify learners' prior educational attainment. As a result, they are not able to evaluate well enough the progress learners make.
- Teachers provide poor-quality feedback, and learners are unclear about how to improve their work.
- Assessment practices and quality assurance of assessments are weak; on occasions, learners' work does not adequately meet the required standard or fulfil the assessment criteria of the course.
- Staff do not identify accurately whether learners have any additional learning requirements, and learners do not have sufficient access to additional learning support.
- Leaders and managers have failed to put in place a suitably designed staff development programme to rectify weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Governance is ineffective; there are insufficient checks to hold managers to account for ensuring high-quality provision, and the safety and well-being of learners.

### The provider has the following strengths

- Directors have designed a curriculum that responds to local and regional skills needs well in sectors such as care, electrical installation and plumbing.
- Directors have created a flexible evening and weekend pattern of delivery, which enables adult learners to study alongside their employment.
- Staff promote a strong ethos of tolerance in the training centre; learners from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds work harmoniously and productively together.
- On successful completion of their programme, learners improve their longer-term employment prospects, and many successfully find part-time or full-time employment in their chosen area of work.

## Full report

### Information about the provider

- Millennium Academy (MA) is an independent training provider offering accredited courses to adults in subjects including electrical installation, plumbing, gas, health and social care, children and young people's workforce, business administration, dental nursing and English. This inspection was of MA's adult learning programmes. MA is also a subcontractor for other providers; this provision was out of scope for this inspection.
- MA's main site is in Barking, in north-east London, but it also offers a small amount of provision in Birmingham. At the time of the inspection, lessons took place only at the Barking training centre.
- The London borough of Barking and Dagenham has significant levels of deprivation, in comparison to other London boroughs. It ranks particularly low on education and health outcomes, and on low pay. Nearly half of 19-year-olds lack level 3 qualifications, a higher proportion than in any other London borough.

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

- Directors should urgently review MA's policies, procedures and practices in relation to safeguarding, and how teachers ensure the safety and welfare of learners. They should then prioritise those areas of greatest concern, in particular how teachers make learners aware of the importance of safe working practices in workshops.
- Directors should review fully the governance arrangements to provide better support and challenge for leaders and managers, and introduce more stringent checks and balances, with a particular focus on quality assurance and safeguarding.
- Managers and teachers should review the assessment policy and processes; they should ensure that teachers only accept and pass learners' work if it meets the requisite standards for each qualification.
- Leaders should:
  - review fully the quality-assurance procedures
  - develop a more objective perspective on the quality of provision
  - design a suitable improvement plan, incorporating measurable improvement targets
  - identify which managers or staff will be responsible for each area of improvement
  - monitor carefully progress against the plan.
- Teachers should review the procedures used to assess the prior attainment of newly enrolled learners. They should then design work that will enable learners to make good progress, relative to their prior attainment, as well as implementing suitable procedures for tracking and monitoring learners' progress.
- Managers should introduce a process, so that teachers can identify those learners who may have additional learning-support needs and put in place suitable support mechanisms to enable them to succeed.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Directors and managers do not identify critically what needs to improve when reviewing the quality of provision. Quality improvement and performance management systems are too informal, unrecorded and unsystematic. Managers miss crucial weaknesses, particularly in the quality of teaching and learning, progress reviews and assessment. As a result, directors and managers have not set sufficiently thorough actions to raise standards effectively.
- Managers do not assure the quality of assessments thoroughly enough or take effective action when they have concerns. They miss weak assessment practice, for example when learners receive identical feedback from the same teacher, or submitted work fails to meet the required standard. Where managers pick up areas for improvement, such as the quality of feedback given to learners, this has not resulted in sufficiently effective staff training or development.
- During lesson observations, directors and managers identify clearly and carefully what teachers need to do to improve. They set teachers actions for improvement, but these have yet to result in coordinated staff development or training. Managers do not follow up whether teachers have addressed areas for improvement. Several key weaknesses remain, including teachers' weak questioning techniques, poor promotion of literacy and lack of challenge for the most able learners.
- During appraisals, directors make suitable reference to their findings from lesson observations. However, they do not refer to the previous appraisals and whether teachers' performances have improved. For example, managers continue to judge the performance of teachers to be effective during appraisals, even when important areas for improvement, including cases related to health and safety, have not been rectified. Managers do not challenge staff's unacceptable working practices firmly enough.
- Directors' and managers' improvement action planning is weak. Too often, they do not set specific-enough actions that are time-bound or allocate implementation and monitoring responsibility. The quality-improvement plan is too brief and lacks measurable targets. Even where targets are set, for example a minimum of 80% of observed lessons to be graded good or better, progress is difficult to measure as managers do not grade all the observations.
- Directors have not ensured that rooms in the training centre and learning resources are of a good quality. The general standards of decor and displays in classrooms are poor. Several workshops are cramped and do not enable learners to work safely.
- Leaders and managers recognise that the current systems for gathering learners' feedback need to be improved. Learners' feedback is largely positive. Directors have taken some action, which has helped teachers work with learners to improve their self-confidence. However, they have yet to address learners' concerns that they would like more help improving their English skills.
- Directors have developed a curriculum that focuses strongly on developing learners' vocational skills and knowledge, in response to regional skills shortages, particularly in the construction trades and the care sector. Directors have built in flexible study options,

which enable employed learners to learn in the evening and at weekends, which fits well with their workplace commitments and demands. As a result, learners gain the qualifications needed to improve their employment options.

- Staff promote a strong ethos of tolerance in the training centre. Learners from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds work harmoniously and productively together. Teachers encourage learners to collaborate and support each other well during group and paired-learning activities.

## **The governance of the provider**

- Governance of the provision is ineffective. Directors do not challenge or hold managers to account to ensure that they deliver high-quality teaching and assessment or accurately monitor quality improvements. As a result, leaders have taken too little action to raise standards.
- Directors have insufficient oversight or accountability for ensuring that learners are safe and safeguarding arrangements are effective.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding learners are ineffective. Directors and managers do not assess health-and-safety risks adequately in the training centre, particularly for safe working in workshops. During practical workshops, not all teachers promote best health-and-safety practice or ensure that learners follow the identified control measures to reduce risk to an acceptable level. For example, during an observed lesson, learners did not use blow torches safely and were not wearing suitable eye protection.
- Directors and managers do not maintain a sufficiently comprehensive record of teachers' training to confirm that all teachers have had recent 'Prevent' duty training. Learners' understanding of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism is weak.
- Teachers benefit from recent safeguarding training, but they do not explain or discuss this in a way that is sufficiently meaningful or memorable with learners. Where safeguarding is part of the learners' course, for example in dental nursing or health and social care, learners understand their roles and responsibilities well. On other courses, learners' understanding of safeguarding and the dangers of radicalisation and extremism is too superficial.

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

## **Inadequate**

- Assessment practices and the internal quality assurance (IQA) of assessments are weak. Assessors do not always make accurate assessment judgements, and on occasions they assess and pass work that does not meet the required standard or assessment criteria for the course. Staff responsible for quality assuring assessment do not conduct IQAs regularly enough and do not pick up anomalies in marking and assessment.
- Teachers' feedback to learners is often superficial, and learners do not know what they need to do to improve. Too often the feedback provided to different learners is identical and does not address their differing needs. Similarly, teachers set targets for learners that often do not specify the skills and knowledge learners need to develop to progress and

achieve.

- Teachers' progress-tracking of learners is rudimentary and does not include much information about the progress made by individual learners. In theory lessons, teachers' checks on learners' understanding are too infrequent. Often, learners sit passively in theory lessons; teachers do not check that learners have grasped the particular topic, and do not encourage learners to take notes.
- Teachers do not promote literacy skills well in vocational lessons. Too often, teachers make spelling and grammatical errors on the white board, on written comments to learners, and on handouts. Worksheets are often poorly designed and do not encourage learners to record the right level of detail. For example, in gas installation, teachers did not ensure that learners recorded on worksheets the level of detail necessary to explain the methodology or purpose of gas pressure and consumption calculations. As a result, a minority of learners made repeated mistakes.
- Accommodation and access to practical resources are often limited, relative to the size of the group. For example, dental nurses indicated that they do not have enough access to practical equipment. Teaching accommodation is generally functional, but often bare, with very limited displays of work or resources. This does little to create a stimulating and positive working environment.
- Teachers do not use skills assessments well to identify learners' current level of English, mathematics and information and communications technology skills at the start of their course. The information available does not enable teachers to place learners at the correct level. In addition, teachers do not use this information effectively to inform lesson planning.
- Teachers do not identify the additional learning-support needs of learners and provide negligible additional support. Teachers direct those learners who self-declare as having a learning difficulty or disability to an external agency.
- Teachers provide suitable initial information and guidance to learners about their courses; they explain to learners the expectations and requirements of each course, and what each learner will have to do to complete the course successfully.
- In practical lessons, teachers make effective use of demonstrations to engage learners and help reinforce the development of practical skills. Teachers also provide effective one-to-one support in these sessions where required. Most learners are keen and enthusiastic, and often ask insightful questions, which help advance their learning. For example, a group of learners discussed with their teacher whether they should formally gain permission in writing from customers to isolate electrical circuits, as they were concerned about possible losses, should a freezer be switched off for an extended period.
- In English lessons, teachers create a positive culture of mutual support and provide valuable verbal feedback and encouragement to build learners' confidence in the use of spoken English. For example, in one lesson the teacher effectively questioned learners and corrected pronunciations subtly but clearly, encouraging learners to repeat words until they had mastered them.
- Teachers readily rearrange plans to help learners to complete assessments and make themselves available for one-to-one support and tuition if required. Teachers provide valuable intervention to learners who are at risk of falling behind with their qualification

due to personal reasons.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

- Teachers' promotion of safe working practices in workshops is poor and, as a result, learners' general approach to health and safety is lax. For example, in plumbing, teachers do not ensure that learners wear suitable personal and protective equipment. In addition, the cramped nature of some of the technical workshops is not conducive to generating a safe and healthy working environment.
- Learners do not develop their literacy skills effectively. On occasions, staff use incorrect words or terminology in their verbal explanations for lesson activities. As a result, learners, many of whom have English as a second language, do not have the opportunity to develop their literacy and communications skills to an appropriate level.
- Learners' insights into safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty are poor. While learners have a basic understanding, staff do too little to raise learners' awareness, for example, of the risks associated with extremism and radicalisation. Teachers cover these topics briefly at induction, but seldom reinforce or extend learners' understanding in lessons.
- Learners are punctual and motivated. They come prepared to learn and behave well in lessons. Attendance is good in most areas; however, it is too low in functional skills English.
- Teachers work effectively with learners to help build their confidence and develop their practical knowledge and skills. For example, health and social care learners have gained an understanding of the theoretical and legal issues which underpin work in the care sector. This has enabled one particular learner to gain promotion to a supervisory role. Similarly, another learner has gained employment as a care assistant, having previously worked outside the care sector in a factory.
- Learners in technical subjects, such as electrical installation, plumbing and gas fitting, develop appropriate work-related numeracy skills. For example, plumbing learners developed confidence and competence in using complex calculations to determine the power consumption of boilers, while considering a range of factors which impacted on boiler efficiency.
- Most learners develop skills such as problem solving and personal reflection well. This helps them make a positive contribution in the workplace. Staff also support those learners who have not yet acquired their construction skills certificate scheme card. This helps those learners in the construction trades to gain employment in the industry.

## Outcomes for learners

## Inadequate

- Too often, learners' work does not meet the standards stipulated by the qualification or awarding body, even though assessors and IQA managers have confirmed that the work has met the required standard.
- Teachers do not evaluate the starting points of learners in sufficient detail, at the point of enrolment. As a result, teachers cannot identify the extent to which learners make progress relative to their prior attainment.

- Progress-tracking systems are rudimentary; teachers do not take into account learners' individual skills and needs sufficiently. In particular, teachers do not identify accurately whether learners require any additional learning support.
- While the proportion of learners who successfully achieved their qualification has been high in previous years, in 2017 it declined markedly, in comparison to the previous year. A minority of learners, particularly in gas fitting, did not achieve their qualification by their planned end-date.
- In 2017, there was a discrepancy between the performance of male and female learners, with a considerably higher proportion of female learners successfully achieving their qualification, relative to male learners. Leaders and managers have not taken any specific or decisive action to address this weakness.
- As a result of improving their knowledge and skills, and gaining a suitable qualification, learners improve their longer-term employment prospects and successfully find part-time or full-time employment in their chosen area of work. For those already employed, a high proportion indicate that successfully achieving their qualification has provided them with the opportunity to take on greater responsibility and work at a higher level.

## Provider details

Unique reference number	1237139
Type of provider	Independent learning provider
Age range of learners	19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	620
Principal/CEO	Benjamin Anokye-Yeboah
Telephone number	020 8591 8638
Website	<a href="http://www.millenniumacademy.co.uk">www.millenniumacademy.co.uk</a>

## Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level  Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	-	304	-	92	-	359	-	13
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	-	-	-	-	-	-		
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	-							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	-							



## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the director, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. 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

Peter Nelson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Rodgers	Her Majesty's Inspector
Francoise Beregovoi	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Barrett-Mold	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Cunningham	Ofsted Inspector

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