

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Wandsworth Borough Council**

**24 June 2003**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

## Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **Wandsworth Borough Council**

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## INSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Wandsworth Borough Council (WBC) has run the childcare training programme (CTP) for advanced modern apprentices within its leisure and amenity services directorate since 1979. It also offers privately funded training in childcare to adults, but this is not within the scope of the inspection. Wandsworth is the second largest borough in London. The leisure and amenities directorate was accredited with the Investors in People standard this year, although play and community services, within which CTP is situated, has held the standard since 1997. Investors in People is a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.
2. The team consists of a manager and two training officers, who are all full time, and one part-time peripatetic assessor. The manager reports to the deputy head of play and community services who is responsible for the strategic development of the provision. Responsibility for budgets, health and safety, equal opportunities and curriculum is divided between the full-time staff.
3. WBC funds its advanced modern apprenticeship training provision through the Central London Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Most learners come from the Wandsworth area. The 2001 census shows that the proportion of people from minority ethnic groups is 22 per cent, compared with 9.1 per cent nationally.

### SCOPE OF PROVISION

#### Health, social care & public services

4. There are seven learners on the first year of an advanced modern apprenticeship in early years care and education. Eleven learners have recently completed the second year of this qualification. All learners are employed and work in schools, nurseries, children's centres, or in family centres. They complete a written key skills assessment at the start of their training which is used to identify learning support needs. Learners attend off-the-job training in the training and assessment centre once each month for vocational and key skills sessions. The centre is a purpose-built training facility with disabled access and a new information technology (IT) suite. Progress reviews take place every 12 weeks and assessment visits take place each month.

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	9
Number of learner interviews	13
Number of staff interviews	14
Number of employer interviews	5
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	6

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, leadership and management are satisfactory, as are the arrangements for quality assurance and equal opportunities. Provision of early years care and education training is good.

## GRADES

*grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak*

<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	3

<b>Health, social care &amp; public services</b>	<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:	
Work-based learning for young people	2

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

6. **Achievement rates are good.** Framework achievements have improved year on year since 1999. All learners completed the framework in 2001-02, 7 per cent completed in 1999-2000, and 67 per cent completed in 1998-99.

7. Retention rates are satisfactory or better. Rates have improved consistently since 1998, and the rate was 100 per cent in 2001-02. However, for the current intake only just over two-thirds are still in learning

8. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Portfolios are well organised and there

is an effective monitoring system to record achievement of units. Practical skills are well developed.

9. Learners who complete the programme also achieve the key skills qualifications.

### **Quality of education and training**

10. **There is good support for learners.** Tutors provide regular personal support as part of the off-the-job training, and at other times when it is requested. Intervention by tutors has been effective in retaining learners who might otherwise have left.

11. **Assessment by direct observation is good.** There are frequent opportunities for evidence collection, and assessment of workplace practice begins early in the programme. Assessment feedback is detailed and clearly referenced to performance criteria.

12. There was no unsatisfactory teaching and learning in the two sessions observed. Tutors linked background knowledge with work practice effectively. Although the sessions do not reflect the needs of individual learners, additional support and time is given to those who need it.

13. Initial assessment in literacy, numeracy and IT is carried out, and the results are discussed and actions are agreed with the learner. However, there is slow progress in making key skills an integral part of the course. Additional specialist staff for application of number and IT sessions are planned for the next intake.

14. The training centre is a pleasant environment with a modern computer suite which is well liked by learners. The centre is accessible to learners by arrangement, whenever it is open. This includes limited access on some evenings and weekends.

15. **Progress reviews are inadequate.** Employers and learners do not clearly understand the process. There is little evidence of target-setting and checking of issues raised in previous reviews. There is insufficient information recorded on the document to help the employer allocate tasks to move the learners forward. There is no effective monitoring of the process.

### **Leadership and management**

16. **There is good strategic management aimed at widening participation.** Under-represented groups have been targeted, and partnerships formed with other services such as Connexions and youth teams to help the provider make effective links with under-represented gender and minority ethnic groups.

17. **The communication system is effective and democratic.** Meetings are timetabled to allow a rapid flow of information between executive level and individual teams. There are frequent and regular meetings, with succinct and useful action minutes.

## WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

18. Staff development is satisfactory in updating assessment qualifications and vocational knowledge. A range of development activities is effectively planned and reviewed in six-monthly appraisal sessions. Little staff development has taken place to develop alternative teaching and learning strategies.

19. Resources are satisfactory. The training centre is well equipped with a modern IT suite and a well-resourced teaching room. Staff have appropriate assessor and verifier qualifications and adequate vocational qualifications and experience.

20. Management of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory. There is an initial assessment, and communication and number skills are further developed in key skills sessions. However, there is insufficient use of initial assessment to target the individual needs of learners.

21. **There is no planned progression route to the advanced modern apprenticeship.** Currently, learners who are identified through initial assessment as having significant skill development needs are not able to start a foundation modern apprenticeship.

22. **There is effective implementation of equal opportunities.** Learners have a clear understanding of the meaning of equal opportunities and discriminatory behaviour. Rapid and effective action has been taken when discriminatory practice is identified in the workplace. Loans of equipment have been effective in overcoming the economic disadvantage of some learners. The training centre has a local accessibility award.

23. Policies and procedures for equal opportunities are satisfactory and comprehensive.

24. **Publicity for courses is clearly written.** Although some of the council's publicity is written in community languages, this is not the case for CTP. However, a translation service is available through the borough council.

25. **Data are not analysed for the benefit of learners.** Although data are analysed in terms of gender and ethnicity, there is no analysis of how these factors, or the results of initial assessment, have an impact on attendance, retention and achievement.

26. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. All staff were involved in the process and are familiar with the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Appropriate targets were set, with clear timescales. Many of the targets were met or alternative strategies identified. The grades in the self-assessment report matched the provisional inspection grades. Strengths and weaknesses sometimes matched those at inspection, although some of the strengths were considered to be no more than normal practice.

27. **The quality assurance manual is comprehensive.** Formal feedback is requested each year from learners and employers, but feedback is recorded rather than used effectively as a strategy for continuous improvement. There is good informal communication with employers to ensure that training objectives are understood and training is co-ordinated. Support is readily available from the provider and training objectives are understood.



28. All staff have an annual appraisal and a six-monthly review. Training needs are identified and are linked to performance-related pay with agreed targets. Trainers are observed regularly, but feedback is limited and is insufficient to effectively monitor and improve the quality of teaching.

29. Internal verification procedures are satisfactory. Staff attend training events which are offered by the awarding body. Assessor standardisation meetings are held regularly and are minuted. There are suitable assessment systems in place and monitoring arrangements are satisfactory. Portfolios are clear and well organised. However, feedback to assessors is limited and action points are not identified. There are good links with the awarding body and records of visits are satisfactory.

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

### **Leadership and management**

#### **Strengths**

- good strategic management to widen participation
- effective implementation of equality of opportunity
- effective and democratic communication system

#### **Weaknesses**

- insufficient analysis of data for the benefit of learners
- no provision for learners at level 2

### **Health, social care & public services**

#### **Strengths**

- good achievement rates for the framework
- effective support for learners
- good direct observation assessment practice

#### **Weaknesses**

- inadequate progress reviews

**WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL:**

- the tutors' ability to give them confidence and motivation to succeed
- the pleasant environment of the training centre and computer suite
- the personal support offered by tutors
- the support given to help them grow up and manage themselves and their time
- the fun they have while learning and achieving

**WHAT LEARNERS THINK WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL COULD IMPROVE:**

- the amount of access to the computer suite
- the time available for some units

**KEY CHALLENGES FOR WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL:**

- more effective individual progress reviews
- better use of data to benefit learners
- more key skills delivery and development
- more progression opportunities
- further development of alternative teaching and learning practice

## DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

#### Strengths

- good strategic management to widen participation
- effective implementation of equality of opportunity
- effective and democratic communication system

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient analysis of data for the benefit of learners
- no provision for learners at level 2

30. There is good strategic management aimed at widening participation, and this is partly recognised in the self-assessment report. There is a yearly strategic plan based on analysis of learner numbers and trends, which is effective in promoting developments. CTP is working closely with Connexions to target learners from the Asian community who are currently under-represented on the childcare programme. An advanced modern apprenticeship in playwork is planned to start in September 2003 which is intended to support WBC's need to develop its own staff as qualified playworkers. The recent loss of the foundation modern apprenticeship in early years care and education has led to constructive partnerships with Connexions and youth workers to explore running Entry to Employment courses to replace the foundation modern apprenticeship. It is too early to make judgements about the effectiveness of the strategy. However, the planning processes are thorough. Targets are set and at present they are quite challenging for the commercial aspects of the provision, but are less demanding for the government contract.

31. There is a very effective and democratic communication system which is recognised in the self-assessment report. Meetings are carefully timetabled so that there is a rapid flow of information between executive management, middle managers and individual teams. There are frequent and regular meetings to discuss curriculum developments and standardisation and assessment. Meetings are clearly and succinctly minuted and action is allocated to individuals. Appraisal takes place at six-monthly intervals, and it is a two-way process where staff are appraised by, and appraise, their managers. Inspectors were present at the annual awards evening and this showed effective communication of training possibilities to councillors and a wide range of local residents.

32. Staff development is satisfactory. There is a wide range of development activities, including training so that staff can take temporary promotions and gain extra qualifications. Development activities are effectively reviewed and planned in appraisal

sessions, and can also be requested at any time. There is a formal system for ensuring that development requests support the needs of WBC. However, little training has taken place on teaching and learning strategies to suit a range of learning styles, and there has been no training in the basic skills core curriculum.

33. Resources are satisfactory. The training centre is well equipped with an IT suite and there is a light, spacious and comfortable teaching room. It is conveniently based in shared premises with the local library, giving the potential for a wide range of reference sources. Staff have assessor and verifier qualifications and adequate vocational qualifications and experience.

34. Management of literacy, numeracy, language development is satisfactory. All learners have an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills, and the results are analysed then discussed and agreed with the learner. Key skills sessions further develop the skills, although there is insufficient reference to the individual needs identified in the initial assessment. This is recognised in the self-assessment report.

35. There is no provision for level 2 learners, and therefore no planned progression route onto the advanced modern apprenticeship. This is not recognised in the self-assessment report, although planning to overcome the problem is part of the development plan. Learners can only attend the course if they are employed in a relevant caring job. Learners who are identified as having significant skills development needs are not able to enter a lower-level course to prepare them for the demands of level 3. Previously CTP ran a foundation modern apprenticeship and they are currently exploring whether there are alternative ways of providing a progression route.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 3**

36. There is effective implementation of equal opportunities, and this is partly recognised in the self-assessment report. Learners have a good understanding of the importance of non-discriminatory behaviour, in terms of their job role and in terms of their behaviour to each other. Understanding of the concept is thoroughly explored in the initial interview and at induction. Work placements are also carefully checked for accessibility, and records are kept of the access problems in each work placement. Inspectors identified evidence of rapid and highly effective action being taken after a complaint on racism in a work placement. CTP were also able to loan a laptop computer to a learner who does not have access to a computer at home. This also helped the learner overcome spelling and presentation difficulties.

37. Policies and procedures for equal opportunities are satisfactory. WBC has a comprehensive range of equal opportunities and anti-harassment policies and all learners and staff have the policy and statements. Work placements are checked to ensure that they have a policy and understand WBC's policy. However, the language of the policies

and procedures is too complex for all learners to understand.

38. The new training centre has achieved a local award for accessibility. Although the centre is on the first floor, a platform lift gives access. There are two toilets for people with restricted mobility in the training centre. Although resources for learners with restricted hearing and sight are limited, CTP has links with the relevant organisations if further resources are needed.

39. Publicity for the courses is clearly written. Although some of the council's publicity is published in community languages this is not the case for CTP. However, WBC does offer a translation service should this be needed. At the time of the inspection extra language support was not being accessed.

40. Data are not analysed for the benefit of learners, but this was not recognised in the self-assessment report. While CTP analyses the of number of learners from minority ethnic groups and their gender, this is not broken down to see whether these factors influence retention, attendance and achievement. Initial assessment data are not analysed to identify the correlation between the skill level on entry with support needed or success on the course. With the small numbers currently on the course, good individual support ensures that problems are dealt with adequately.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Contributory grade 3**

41. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. All staff are involved in the process and are familiar with the 'Common Inspection Framework'. Staff are able to contribute to the report through formal and informal meetings. Appropriate targets are set, with clear timescales. Many of the targets were already met or alternative strategies were identified at the inspection. Some of the weaknesses in the report matched the findings of the inspectors, as did a few of the strengths. However, most were identified as no more than normal practice.

42. The quality assurance manual is comprehensive. Annual feedback questionnaires are given to learners and there are regular opportunities for informal feedback. Results are recorded and there is some analysis of information, but action points are not used effectively for planning. Questionnaires are also received each year from the workplace, but feedback is recorded rather than used effectively as a strategy for continuous improvement. There is good informal communication with employers to ensure that training objectives are understood and training is co-ordinated. Support is readily available from the provider and training objectives are understood. Regular team meetings are held and minutes of meetings are recorded.

43. All staff have an annual appraisal and a six-monthly review. Training needs are

identified and are linked to performance-related pay with agreed targets. Trainers are observed regularly, but feedback is limited and does not effectively monitor and improve the quality of teaching.

44. Internal verification procedures are satisfactory. Training needs are effectively identified to ensure that all internal verifiers and assessors have the appropriate qualifications. Staff attend training events which are offered by the awarding body. Assessor standardisation meetings are held regularly and are minuted. There are suitable assessment systems in place and monitoring arrangements are satisfactory. Portfolios are clear and well organised. However, feedback to assessors is limited and action points are not identified. There are good links with the awarding body and records of visits are satisfactory.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Health, social care & public services

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Work-based learning for young people	7	2

*The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:*

#### Strengths

- good achievement rates for the framework
- effective support for learners
- good direct observation assessment practice

#### Weaknesses

- inadequate progress reviews

#### Achievement and standards

45. Achievement rates are good and this was recognised in the self-assessment report. Framework achievements have improved year on year since 1999. All learners completed the framework in 2001-02, 7 per cent completed in 1999-2000, and 67 per cent completed in 1998-99. Since the programme started in 1997-98, all learners who completed the programme have achieved their learning outcomes.

46. Retention rates are satisfactory or better. For each intake from 1998-99 to 2001-02, the rates improved from 67 per cent in 1998-99 to 100 per cent in 2001-02. However, retention rates have decreased for those who started in October 2002, with 64 per cent of learners still in learning. CTP has a clear understanding of the individual reasons for all early leavers.

47. The standard of work by learners is satisfactory. Portfolios are generally well organised and there is an effective monitoring system to record achievement of units. Learners develop their practical work skills and confidence throughout the programme and their training improves their work practice.



The following table shows the achievement and retention rates available up to the time of the inspection.

LSC funded work-based learning																
Advanced modern apprenticeships (AMA)	2002-03		2001-02		2000-01		1999-2000		1998-99		1997-98					
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Number of starts	11		11				10		9		7				
Retained*	0		11	100			7	70	6	67	7	100				
Successfully completed	0		11	100			7	70	6	67	7	100				
Still in learning	7		0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0				

\*retained learners are those who have stayed in learning for at least the planned duration of their training programmes, or have successfully completed their programme within the time allowed

### Quality of education and training

48. There is good support for learners and this was recognised in the self-assessment report. Tutors provide regular personal support as part of the off-the-job training day and at other times when requested by learners. Additional training sessions have been arranged for learners who have fallen behind during planned training sessions. Intervention by tutors has helped to retain learners who might otherwise have left. Learners speak enthusiastically about the ways in which they had been actively supported and motivated to achieve.

49. There is good assessment through direct observation. This is partly recognised in the self-assessment report. There are frequent opportunities to collect evidence and assessment of workplace practice begins early in the programme. Assessment planning is effective and assessment feedback is detailed and clearly referenced to performance criteria.

50. The standard of training observed was satisfactory and tutors effectively link background knowledge to work practice. Sessions are planned and useful worksheets are available for each session on the content covered. However, session plans and training sessions do not reflect the needs of individual learners and some have fallen behind and have had to attend additional training to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the requirements of the programme.

51. Learners who complete the programme also achieve the key skills qualifications. All learners complete a written key skills initial assessment in literacy and numeracy at the start of their programme to help identify learning needs. However, there is slow progress in making key skills an integral part of the course. The present intake started key skills training five months into the programme. Worksheets and activities are related to the vocational area, but there is little enthusiasm for the subject from learners or staff. Scheduled training sessions do not meet the needs of individual learners in key skills and

some have had to attend extra sessions when they have fallen behind. Additional specialist staffing for application of number and IT key skills are planned for the next intake.

52. The training centre is a pleasant training environment which is well liked by the learners. Learners can make use of the resources during their time at the centre and can arrange to visit at other times by arrangement with staff. There are good IT resources and a fairly wide range of textbooks, but learners make limited use of the books as they cannot be taken out of the premises. However, all learners have access to resources from their place of work and some have used the local library resources. Most learners buy their own textbooks. Staff have adequate vocational qualifications and professional experience in early years care and education and are appropriately qualified as trainers and assessors.

53. Progress reviews are inadequate, but this was not recognised in the self-assessment report. Employers and learners do not understand the process or the paperwork. There is little evidence of target-setting and reviews do not refer to comments or issues from previous reviews. There is insufficient information recorded on the document for the employer to allocate tasks to move learners forward in their programme. There are no effective links made between on- and off-the-job training. New documents have been introduced recently to support the process. However, many forms have sections which are incomplete and some headings are interpreted differently by different people. There is no effective monitoring of the quality of this process.

### **Leadership and management**

54. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of equal opportunities as learners, as employees, and as it relates to their practice of working with children in early years care and education settings.

55. The internal verification process takes place after the completion of every three national vocational qualification (NVQ) units. Records are readily accessible. All staff are qualified internal verifiers, but most feedback to assessors is brief.

56. A system to review the quality of training sessions has been in place for a number of years. However, written feedback to trainers is very brief, is not graded and does not indicate training or further development to improve teaching practice.

57. Communication within the team is effective. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process, but the self-assessment report did not identify some of the strengths identified during inspection. The report also identifies a number of strengths which were considered to be no more than normal practice. The report identifies the key weakness which was also identified at inspection, but the actions taken for improvement have not improved the progress review process.