

# Short inspection of Adult & Community Learning Service, Islington London Borough Council

Inspection dates:

2–3 December 2019

## **Outcome**

Adult & Community Learning Service, Islington London Borough Council continues to be a good provider.

## **Information about this provider**

Islington is a borough of sharp contrasts, with areas of high deprivation as well as pockets of wealth. The adult and community learning service, under the recently created People's Directorate, focuses on the council's priority of a fairer Islington for its residents.

The adult and community learning service operates from 18 community venues across the borough to teach a variety of courses. These are primarily aimed at supporting residents into work or better jobs. Courses range from entry level to level 2 in English, mathematics, information communication technology (ICT) and health and social care. In addition to this, the service offers a range of practical courses, such as do-it-yourself courses for women. The service also works with two subcontractors.

## **What is it like to be a learner with this provider?**

Across the wide range of courses taught, learners have a good experience. They like the small classes in local community venues near to their homes, such as in libraries.

Staff are friendly, care about learners and are always available to listen to learners' concerns. This helps to improve learners' confidence and levels of self-esteem.

Teachers know their learners well and are skilled at guiding each one to learn new knowledge and skills. For example, learners on jewellery-making courses are taught to create simple websites so that they can sell the items they have made.

Learners receive good advice on what courses they can do next. Teachers give good support to learners to search for jobs and complete application forms.

## **What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

Since the previous inspection, there have been substantial changes in the management of the adult and community learning provision. This has resulted in a refocus of leaders' and managers' work to ensure that the curriculum continues to meet the needs of learners and employers. They have introduced new programmes, such as English and mathematics courses for parents in local venues so that they can help with their children's homework. They have also developed courses that help unemployed adults learn new computing skills that enable the elderly to stay in touch with families.

The two subcontractors work effectively with the local authority to provide training for individuals who are not in employment. They provide learners with effective training to learn the skills necessary to work as a painter and decorator or to sell jewellery that they have made.

Leaders and managers have an effective partnership with the local authority, the National Health Service and care homes, through which they understand the training demands within the care sector. They are a partner, with neighbouring local authorities and employers, in the health and social care academy. Learners who complete the level 1 introduction to working in adult social care course have since gained employment in the care sector.

Leaders and managers have developed a range of effective partnerships to support residents of the borough. They work closely with the family information service to run a well-taught three-day introduction to childminding course. This has led to almost all the group progressing into childminding jobs. They also worked with Arsenal Football Club to deliver level 2 food safety qualifications for those who have expressed an interest in jobs in hospitality and catering. Individuals who successfully complete the course have good opportunities to work in catering outlets on match days.

Teachers plan and teach lessons effectively so that learners quickly gain the new knowledge they need to master a skill or achieve their qualification. In English for Speakers of Other Languages for childcare, teachers plan lessons which build learners' knowledge in a way that allows them to progress to level 1 childcare functional skills English qualifications. Mothers studying level 1 preparing to work with children in schools are taught valuable new skills in asking children open questions to encourage children to engage in groups. They also learn how children are taught mathematics at school so that they can support their own children.

Tutors produce helpful step-by-step guide sheets to support learners to commit information to memory. For example, learners recall key information they need to be able to insert text and design elements into PowerPoint presentations and to create a master slide. Learners also have access to good online resources and textbooks, which they use to revise.

A minority of learners struggle to maintain good attendance. This has an impact on the extent to which they learn and gain the behaviours needed for employment.

In a few subjects, tutors do not explain to learners how activities might relate to the working environment. For example, learners looking for employment in administrative roles lack sufficient knowledge about how to use presentations in interviews. As a result, learners do not understand the importance of specific activities they are asked to do.

Staff provide effective guidance to learners on their next steps and additional courses that might help them fulfil their aspirations. Employment officers at community venues help learners seek volunteering opportunities and future employment. As a result, learners know what to do to achieve their goals beyond the completion of their course.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers pay good attention to safeguarding. They have appropriate policies and procedures in place to deal with safeguarding referrals and issues. The designated safeguarding leads have developed appropriate links with children's or adult safeguarding boards.

All staff and students complete appropriate training in safeguarding. This includes understanding the dangers associated with radicalisation and extremism, and how to stay safe online. Staff have received specialist support to help identify and support those experiencing mental health issues. Learners know how to report any concerns they have. Learners know how to stay safe.

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

- Tutors should find out more about the reasons why a proportion of learners struggle to attend lessons and support them to improve their attendance.
- Teachers should ensure that they explain to learners how what they are studying relates to future job roles.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	53133
<b>Address</b>	222 Upper Street London N1 2UD
<b>Contact number</b>	020 7527 4500
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.islington.gov.uk">www.islington.gov.uk</a>
<b>Principal/CEO</b>	Linzi Roberts-Egan
<b>Provider type</b>	Adult and community learning
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2–3 March 2016
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	Arachne Greek Cypriot Women's Organisation K&M decorating

## Information about this inspection

The inspection was the second short inspection carried out since Adult & Community Learning Service, Islington London Borough Council was judged to be good in February 2011.

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. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including observing learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

## Inspection team

Steve Lambert, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca Jennings	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kanwaljit Dhillon	Ofsted Inspector
Joanna Walters	Her Majesty's Inspector

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