

Inspection of Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College (RHACC)

Inspection dates: 14–17 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Adult learning programmes	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

In October 2017, Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College (RHACC) was formed through the merger of Richmond Adult and Community College and Hillcroft College. RHACC is a specialist designated institute of adult education and has two campuses. The Parkshot campus is located in central Richmond. The Hillcroft campus in Surbiton also offers a residential curriculum for women. At the time of the inspection, there were approximately 6,943 learners.

Programmes are offered across RHACC from entry level 1 to level 5 in a range of subjects. These include English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), art and design, access to higher education, counselling, and accounting and finance. Specific programmes are taught for adults with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

RHACC subcontracts part of its provision to London Learning Consortium, which provides a range of level 1 and level 2 programmes in health and social care, learning support, information technology, and skills for employment.

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

Learners, who come from a variety of social and ethnic backgrounds, arrive at an open and supportive environment. They are challenged to do their best by tutors who have high expectations of them, know them well and are sensitive to their needs. As a result, many learners develop their confidence and resilience.

Learners value the expertise that their tutors have. Learners benefit from good-quality teaching and support from tutors which enable them to achieve qualifications and go on to their next steps. Through sharing their skills and knowledge, learners develop their own abilities well.

Managers and staff create a supportive and nurturing environment at the women-only Hillcroft campus. Learners with children benefit from childcare at the college. This helps them take courses they could not otherwise attend. Through attending their well-taught courses, women gain the qualifications and confidence they need to progress in their lives and, for example, to take up new careers.

Vulnerable learners, for example those with mental ill-health concerns, are prepared well to participate in college life. They are given useful strategies for managing anxiety in the classroom. Learners with SEND receive very good support which enables them to take part in lessons.

Learners feel safe. They demonstrate positive attitudes to each other and to staff. Most learners are aware of how to keep themselves safe and who to go to if they have any concerns.

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

Governors, leaders and managers have managed the merger of the two colleges in a considered way. This has meant that the uniqueness of each college has been maintained. Governors have effective oversight of the college and hold leaders and managers to account. As a result, positive changes have been made to staff morale, and improved outcomes for learners at Hillcroft. Learners benefit from consistently good teaching at both campuses.

In the large majority of programmes, staff structure the curriculum logically. This enables learners, including those who need extra help to achieve, to improve their knowledge, skills and behaviours during their studies. Learners first develop essential underpinning concepts, which then build towards more complex tasks. For example, the ESOL curriculum starts with the introduction of the alphabet, letters, building words and making sentences. By end of the course, learners have grasped basic grammar such as the use of nouns, verbs and prepositions. They can describe people, family and places.

Tutors are knowledgeable, highly skilled and vocationally competent in the subjects they teach. They use a variety of teaching techniques, such as questioning,

discussion, practical demonstration and repetition, expertly to enable learners to understand new and complex concepts. Tutors use music and singing effectively to help learners with SEND to develop good communication skills and clarity of speech. This improves learners' use of the spoken word over time. As a result of good teaching, learners achieve their qualifications.

Learners benefit from a wide-ranging and good-quality arts curriculum. They develop their skills and confidence very well as a result of expert teaching. For example, those studying painting restoration learn how to reframe paintings, stretch canvases, clean, retouch and remove varnish.

Tutors check learners' understanding of topics thoroughly. They observe their participation in classroom activities and discussions. They test learners' knowledge through questioning their responses and through helpful feedback on completed work. As a result, learners gain detailed technical knowledge in the subjects they study. In the arts curriculum, learners make good use of this new knowledge to achieve their creative ideas. Those studying techniques to make stained glass learn how to score and paint glass and stretch lead. They create high-quality pieces of work.

Tutors provide learners with appropriate advice and guidance on future progression routes and next steps. For example, learners on access courses receive effective guidance on how to complete applications for university places. Tutors provide effective advice and guidance on the next steps for those learners with SEND.

Tutors ensure that learners broaden their knowledge of each other's cultures and respect each other. On the supporting teaching and learning in schools course, learners give presentations to the rest of the group about a feature of their country. As a result, learners from different ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds work cooperatively, and demonstrate respect and empathy for others.

Training for tutors to develop their pedagogical skills is not currently widespread. As a result, a few tutors are not consistently delivering high-quality teaching to learners. Leaders and managers have plans in place to address this, but it is too soon to judge the impact.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that learners have equal access to extra-curricular opportunities. As a result, not all learners are provided with opportunities to develop their talents and interests. For example, learners on ESOL programmes do not all benefit from trips out in the community to places such as libraries and museums.

Learners are not sufficiently informed about how to keep others safe from, or how to spot the dangers of someone at risk of, extremism and radicalisation. This is particularly the case for those who are on courses which prepare them to work in environments where people may be vulnerable to these risks.

Leaders and managers survey learners to monitor what they do once they complete their course. However, the aggregated results do not enable them to use the information about learners' progression from courses to further develop the curriculum and courses they offer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have appropriate systems in place to ensure that learners and staff are safe and protected from harm. Staff have a sound understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. Learners know who to go to if they have any concerns. Safeguarding officers manage these concerns effectively and in a timely manner. Governors, leaders and managers have ensured that they meet their obligations under the 'Prevent' duty. They have appropriate training, policies and action plans in place.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should develop further their staff development programmes so that all tutors develop their pedagogical expertise to the same high level.
- Tutors should ensure that learners, in particular those who will work with people who may be vulnerable, are fully aware of how to keep themselves and others safe from the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that they have more precise information about what learners do once they complete their course and use this to consider future curriculum development.

Provider details

Unique reference number	133053
Address	Parkshot Campus Richmond Upon Thames London TW9 2RE
Contact number	0208 891 5907
Website	www.rhacc.ac.uk
Principal/CEO	Gabrielle Flint
Provider type	Specialist designated institution
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	London Learning Consortium

Information about this inspection

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

Joanna Walters, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jon Bowman	Her Majesty's Inspector
Saher Nijabat	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alun Maddocks	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Hasty	Her Majesty's Inspector
Clifford Shaw	Ofsted Inspector

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020