

Short inspection of Wandsworth London Borough Council

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 November 2021

Outcome

Wandsworth London Borough Council continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Wandsworth Lifelong Learning (WLL) is part of the children's services department of Wandsworth Borough Council. WLL teaches adult learning programmes and apprenticeships and at the time of inspection, they had 24 apprentices, most of whom were completing business administration apprenticeships. There were 300 adult learners enrolled on a range of courses that include English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), English, mathematics and information technology (IT). A further 200 learners were enrolled on courses with WLL's six subcontractors.

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

Learners and apprentices are proud to be part of WLL. From the time they arrive for their course, they feel that staff are there to support and help them. Most learners achieve qualifications or learning goals. For many learners, attending a course helps to reduce their isolation, build their confidence and improve their well-being.

Learners appreciate the fact that teachers pay good attention to their specific needs and as a result are on courses that feel highly personalised to them. Because of the effective partnerships that WLL has with its subcontractors, learners can find courses that help them gain skills for employment and personal development that are taught in their local community.

Learners enjoy their learning and the new skills that they gain. They produce work of a good standard. Apprentices learn the skills they need for their jobs, gain confidence to take on increasingly complex tasks in what is, for some, their first permanent job after school or university.

Learners and apprentices, including those taught by subcontractors, feel safe and know who they can contact if they have any concerns. They are confident that if they raised a concern, that they would be supported effectively.

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

Council leaders and managers work effectively with council departments and external organisations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to ensure that the courses offered continue to meet the needs of residents. They have carefully chosen the subcontractors they work with to broaden their curriculum and widen participation of residents in adult learning. They have a suitable plan for incremental growth of the education and training they offer, particularly for their apprenticeship provision where they focus well on ensuring apprentices move into long-term sustainable employment.

Leaders and managers frequently review the provision and where courses do not meet the needs of residents, they reduce or decommission provision. In many cases, the courses offered are intended to enable participation by women with childcare commitments and those with low levels of literacy. Leaders also have a highly effective partnership with Deaf First to teach courses such as British sign language.

Tutors plan lessons well and teach them skilfully. For example, tutors and volunteers provide good support to learners on courses where English is a second language by helping learners with formulating sentences and pronunciation of English. As a result, learners remember the new language learned before putting it into practice using real-life scenarios. In IT, tutors help learners to understand specific technical terminology and features of the software they are using before going on to complete practical tasks related to creating documents independently. Volunteers provide additional effective support to learners, for example in ESOL lessons.

Employers of apprentices are highly satisfied with the service they receive from WLL because apprentices bring the new knowledge, skills and behaviours they learn to the workplace. As a result, many employers have taken on multiple apprentices over time and many apprentices take on new areas of responsibility or gain promotion at work.

Skills coaches frequently assess apprentices' knowledge and review the progress they make. They are good at providing feedback so that apprentices know how well they have done in an assignment. However, too often they do not identify what apprentices can do to improve their work. Skills coaches do not always record in sufficient detail the nature of their discussions with apprentices during reviews. As a result, apprentices do not get the guidance they need to continuously improve, and a few do not have enough knowledge of how they will be assessed at the end of the programme.

Learners and apprentices benefit from access to a team of careers advisors. They receive effective support to help them plan their next steps. When necessary, they also have more specialist support, for example through interview skills workshops or help to search for jobs.

Leaders and managers have worked effectively to support their staff to develop their skills, especially with the need to teach courses remotely. Where appropriate, staff are supported to complete higher-level training to improve their knowledge of the subjects they teach. They also attend courses in aspects of teaching, such as effective strategies to assess learners' work and training to improve their knowledge of autism. As a result, teachers continuously improve their practice.

Leaders and managers have a secure oversight of the quality of provision at their subcontractors and are effective at helping them to continue to improve their provision. They complete monthly reviews and provide ample training opportunities to subcontractors. For example, tutors have completed newly devised basic literacy training to improve their skills at supporting learners with low levels of English.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and managers have a positive culture of safeguarding that supports learners and apprentices to feel safe. They have implemented policies that ensure all staff, learners and apprentices know to whom they should report any concerns they may have.

Leaders and managers meet frequently with staff responsible for safeguarding at each of their subcontractors. This helps to ensure a consistent understanding of the expectations that the provider has relating to safeguarding. As a result, leaders and managers have a good overview of safeguarding.

Skills coaches have a good understanding of safeguarding and receive training appropriate to their roles. This ensures that they can discuss in detail key safeguarding topics, such as identifying potential inappropriate sexual behaviour, or the risks associated with peer-on-peer abuse. Despite their knowledge and training, skills coaches do not plan and discuss safeguarding topics with apprentices that are specific to their apprenticeship or where they are based.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and managers should ensure that staff record more thoroughly their discussions with apprentices so that apprentices have a full account of their apprenticeship journey ready for their final assessment.
- Staff should ensure their feedback on apprentices' and learners' work gives suitable guidance that helps them to improve.
- Skills coaches should ensure in their discussions with apprentices on safeguarding, that they focus on issues that might be relevant to them and their place of work.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53152
Address	Gwynneth Morgan Centre 52 East Hill Wandsworth London SW18 2HJ
Contact number	0208 8718618
Website	www.richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk
Principal/CEO	Santino Fragola
Provider type	Local authority
Date of previous inspection	25 and 26 November 2020
Main subcontractors	South Thames Colleges Group Deaf First MI ComputSolutions Need2Succeed The Baked Bean Charity Katherine Low Settlement

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the first short inspection carried out since Wandsworth London Borough Council was judged to be good in November 2020.

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy 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 visiting 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

Kanwaljit Dhillon

Gayle Saundry

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Her Majesty's 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 2021