INSPECTION REPORT

Islington LEA

02 December 2002

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 training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based training 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

In those cases 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.

SUMMARY

The provider

Adult, community and family learning is provided by the lifelong learning service of Islington Council. The service is located within the directorate of education and regeneration. It provides a number of adult and community education courses in information and communications technology, sport, yoga and complementary therapies, visual and performing arts, community learning, family learning, and provision for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Overall judgement

The quality of adult and community learning in the London Borough of Islington is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, information and communications technology, sport, yoga and complementary therapies, and visual and performing arts are good, community learning, family learning and provision for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory, equality of opportunity is good and quality assurance is unsatisfactory.

GRADES

Leadership and management	3
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	2
Quality assurance	4

Areas of learning	Grade
Information & communications technology	2
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	2
Visual & performing arts & media	2
Foundation programmes	3
Family learning	3
Community learning	3

KEY STRENGTHS

- very good partnerships with external agencies and voluntary organisations
- good provision for refugees and asylum seekers
- responsive course provision to attract non-traditional learners
- inclusive provision
- wide range of entry level programmes
- good teaching and learning

- effective use of research to contribute to planning
- good development of adult and community learning strategy

KEY WEAKNESSES
- poor recording of learners' achievements
- some poor identification of individual learning needs
- some poor accommodation
- inconsistent monitoring of learners' progress
- little emphasis on literacy, numeracy and language development
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
- identify and share good teaching practice
- use more appropriate accommodation for some courses
- further develop the curriculum
- more professional development for teachers and voluntary workers
- improve communication at an operational level

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of 13 inspectors spent a total of 65 days with the lifelong learning services section of the department of regeneration and education of the London Borough of Islington in December 2002. Inspectors observed 71 lessons and interviewed 65 teachers and 449 learners, the chief executive of Islington Council, the council cabinet member for regeneration and education, the head of lifelong learning, the quality assurance manager, the principal and deputy principal of the local college, four college programme managers, 16 community centre managers, and two collaborative partnership managers. Inspectors visited the college and a number of voluntary and community centres in the borough. They also inspected management and quality assurance files, as well as the self-assessment report and development plan which were produced in December 2002.

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Information & communications technology	2	4	3	3	0	0	0	12
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	1	4	7	2	0	0	0	14
Visual & performing arts & media	0	6	9	2	0	0	0	17
Foundation programmes	0	4	3	1	2	1	0	11
Family learning	0	2	4	3	0	0	0	9
Community learning	0	0	5	1	2	0	0	8
Total	**3**	**20**	**31**	**12**	**4**	**1**	**0**	**71**
per cent		**76.06%**		**16.90%**		**7.04%**		

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

2. The London Borough of Islington Council (the council) provides adult and community learning courses independently and through partnerships with the City and Islington College (the college), the Workers' Education Association (WEA), South Bank University and 40 local voluntary and community organisations. Until 1992, the council ran its own adult education service. In 1993, the borough transferred its adult education service to the local college. From 1993 to 1999, the borough gradually reduced its adult education budget. During this period, the college continued to provide adult education courses, subsidising provision from its own budget. In 1999, the council developed a strategic framework for lifelong learning and appointed a head of lifelong learning at a senior management level. Lifelong learning is part of the regeneration and education directorate. The council has bid for funding to carry out research with other training providers into what training should be provided and in which areas. The aim of the service is to increase participation in learning and raise attainment levels for all learners, including children and young people, outside school hours. Most of the council's provision is at entry and foundation level. The head of lifelong learning works with one full-time and four part-time staff to manage and run adult and community learning in the borough. During 2001-02, there were approximately 10,600 enrolments on adult and community learning courses provided by the council. Some people will have attended several courses during the year.

3. Islington Council has a contract with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide adult and community learning in the borough. The LSC contributes about one third of the funds necessary to run adult and community learning. Approximately 75 per cent of adult and community learning courses funded by the LSC are provided by the college. The rest of the funding comes from numerous sources including the European Social Fund (ESF), the new opportunities fund, the Social Regeneration Budget (SRB) and the neighbourhood renewal strategy fund.

4. Islington is one of the smallest but most densely populated London boroughs. It is one of seven boroughs that circle the City of London. The population of the borough in 2000 was 178,200. The council, the local college and two universities are the major employers in the borough, followed by transport, banking and finance, and public administration. Unemployment in the borough in October 2001 was 3.8 per cent. This was higher than the national average of 2.9 per cent and the London average of 3.3 per cent. There is considerable variation in unemployment in the different wards of the borough. For example, unemployment is almost double the borough average in the northern wards and half the average in the southern wards. It is at least double the national average in most of the wards. The proportion of the population from minority ethnic groups in Islington is 18.9 per cent, compared with the national average of 6.2 per cent. The proportion of young people in the London Borough of Islington who achieved five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above in

2001 was 29 per cent, compared with the national average of 47.9 per cent.

Adult and Community Learning

5. There is good teaching, learning and attainment for learners on information and communications technology (ICT), sport, yoga and complementary therapies, visual and performing arts courses, and foundation programmes. Learners progress well on family learning programmes, with some learners progressing to courses leading to a formal qualification. Many learners gain additional benefits and other skills. For example, in sport, learners improve their general fitness, strength and flexibility as well as learning about aspects of human anatomy. In community learning courses, refugees and asylum seekers are able to assess their skills, gain a better understanding of public services and improve their own self-confidence and self-esteem. There are some good resources. Learners come from a wide range of backgrounds. Links with external agencies in some areas, such as foundation programmes, provide learners with access to specialist support. Learner support is good on family learning programmes and community learning programmes. There is ineffective curriculum planning and development on sports-related courses, and there is some poor teaching and learning on community learning programmes. There is inadequate recording of learners' achievements and progress in some areas of learning. There is some ineffective communication between managers and tutors in visual and performing arts courses. There is some unsatisfactory accommodation for learners on sports courses. Progression routes and the development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills are poor for learners on foundation programmes and family learning programmes. On family learning programmes, some providers have poor quality assurance systems. Individual learning needs of learners on community learning programmes are not identified. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a clear and effective strategy to widen participation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT   Grade   3

6. Islington's adult and community learning is part of the department of regeneration and education of the London Borough of Islington, which has been an education authority since 1990. Five senior managers assist the director of regeneration and education. This team includes the head of lifelong learning, one of whose roles is to manage adult and community learning services in the borough. The council's community plan and neighbourhood renewal strategy have strategic objectives that relate to lifelong learning. Islington has a five-year education development plan which began in 2002. The department has produced a performance plan for 2002-03 which includes a focus on promoting and supporting social inclusion through adult and community learning. It includes key priorities to improve employment skills, access to education, and to implement the adult learning plan to increase community access to information and communications technology (ICT) at 21 learning centres in the area. The education authority approves the annual adult and community learning adult learning plan. The self-assessment process started in 2001 and the second self-assessment report was produced in December 2002. The education authority is responsible for developing corporate strategy and monitoring the implementation of the adult and community learning policy. The head of lifelong learning is responsible for managing the work carried out by subcontractors, including curriculum planning and development, quality assurance, and ensuring that resources support the strategic objectives and priorities for the service. The authority sets the fees for adult learning and provides corporate functions for payroll, personnel, legal and planning. The adult and community learning service provides adult learning principally through contracts with three local training providers. City and Islington College provides approximately three-quarters of LSC-funded provision on its own sites and at a number of learning centres in the borough. Other contractors include the WEA and South Bank University for family learning courses. Additionally, adult and community provision is made through 40 voluntary sector and community organisations. The service targets particular groups who have traditionally not participated in learning and mainly provides return to learning programmes mostly at entry level.

STRENGTHS

- good use of research to plan provision
- good community consultation processes
- clear and effective strategy to widen participation
- wide range of good partnership arrangements
- good strategic development of adult and community learning

WEAKNESSES

- inappropriate and inaccessible information for some learners
- poor access to some learning centres for people with mobility difficulties
- weak operational management and planning
- insufficient emphasis on the development of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better planning of courses and timetabling to take account of religious festivals
- further development of the curriculum
- better resources for some courses
- more effective exchange of good practice
- better communications at operational level

7. There is good use of research to plan provision. The strategy for the development of lifelong learning is effective and ongoing. Although the lifelong learning service is new, an infrastructure has been established to develop and improve adult learning in the borough. A clear strategy has been established and includes all adult learning, within a single strategic framework for planning, funding and quality assurance. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. With other training providers, the lifelong learning team has secured funding for a number of different organisations to carry out research into the range of provision required and the locations most suitable for its delivery. The council has also consulted widely with non-participating groups in the community. For example, it has developed a strategy to encourage older and infirm people in to learning.

8. Community consultation processes are good, and the service has developed a wide range of partnerships to ensure appropriate learning provision. This co-operation with partners avoids duplication of provision, has led to the identification of progression opportunities, and allows resources and expertise to be used more effectively. There is effective corporate commitment to equal opportunities and diversity at all levels and this is carried forward through partnerships with schools, other local authority services, community organisations and the voluntary sector. For example, the council has established an ICT strategic partnership which leads on the strategic planning, quality assurance and funding of ICT development in community-based learning. The partnership has launched UK online in neighbourhood learning centres and provides an ICT bus which visits other areas to provide training.

9. There is insufficient emphasis on the development of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills. Most learners are on foundation programmes and have not completed an initial assessment of these skills. Learners are not progressing at an adequate pace.

This weakness was identified in the self-assessment report.

10. Operational management and planning are weak. Some lesson planning is ineffective and there is not enough identification and sharing of good practice. Some tutors have good teaching and assessment methods, but these are not widely shared with other staff. The timing and scheduling of some courses does not always take full account of learners' needs. There is some ineffective communication between managers and tutors in visual and performing arts. Some staff are unaware of course changes. Learners and learning centre managers are not systematically told of their tutors changes.

Equality of opportunity   Contributory grade   2

11. The council has an equality and diversity policy and procedures and a complaints procedure for all staff and users of its services. These are available in a range of community languages, Braille, large print or on audio tape. The language used in some policies is not appropriate for some learners. A member of staff in each council department is responsible for the development of equality and diversity issues and a complaints officer. Lifelong learning, social inclusion and partnership are an essential element in the work of the department of regeneration and education. The local further education college and voluntary and community partner organisations have the required policies and procedures relating to equality of opportunity issues, as well as a complaints policy and procedures. Course information and publicity leaflets and posters display positive images of people which promote effectively the council's and college's social inclusion agenda.

12. The council has a clear and effective strategy to widen participation. This is one of the strategic aims of the department of regeneration and education. There are specific courses for learners from minority ethnic groups, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, men and women, older learners, unemployed people, and single parents. Some classes effectively integrate this diverse range of learners. There are effective consultation processes to help learners provide feedback on the provision. Research commissioned by the service focuses on the council's priorities to encourage learners back into education and to raise standards and achievement. Good use is made of this research to inform service planning. For example, it has been used to develop pilot projects to encourage men to participate in community learning. These pilot projects test different methods to encourage inclusion. The outcomes of these pilots will be used to assess the success of the approach.

13. Some buildings used for adult education are old and are not accessible to learners with mobility difficulties. Other buildings that have recently been refurbished have not been adapted for people with mobility difficulties. In some learning centres there are no toilets for disabled learners and in one internal sign posting is poor. The council has recently carried out an audit of community learning venues and has begun improving disabled access. Not all information is made available to learners in an accessible or appropriate form. A questionnaire developed by the college for learners to evaluate their course is not available in a form all learners can easily understand. Individual learning plans used by the college do not differentiate between the specific needs of learners. For example, learners with mental health difficulties are using the same standardised form as learners with physical or learning disabilities. These are headed as special needs individual learning plans.

14. A course for Asian women, planned for the autumn term, was suspended during Ramadan. The course had not been planned to take account of the religious festival and learning was disrupted.

Quality assurance   **Contributory grade   4**

15. The adult education service's quality agenda, which was introduced in 2001, involves all key providers working with over 40 voluntary providers to develop quality assurance and self-assessment processes to improve provision, meet quality assurance standards, and secure funding. A quality assurance framework has been developed for all aspects of the provision, but this has yet to be fully implemented. Some performance indicators and targets have been set but not all quality assurance statements are clearly defined. For example, there is inconsistent recording of assessments and learners' progress. Some staff do not have a good understanding of quality assurance.

16. The quality assurance arrangements are not complete and do not lead to continuous improvement. The self-assessment report identifies that quality assurance systems are not consistently applied across all learning. The council commissioned and managed research reports and reviews that established the basis for quality development. However, the service does not set enough quality improvement targets for subcontractors and does not properly monitor their provision, but instead relies too heavily on subcontractors' own quality assurance procedures. The service receives quarterly and annual reports from the college but these do not adequately report on the quality of provision. There is weak compliance with quality assurance processes in some areas of learning. Guidelines for carrying out teaching observations have been produced and training for observers has been provided, but not all teachers have been observed on a regular basis. The college and the adult education service collect feedback from partners and learners. This is analysed and some action has been taken to improve provision.

17. The college collects a range of learner data for the adult education service, which is analysed by the council as part of its strategic planning process. Data relate to meeting the requirements of external contracts rather than course improvement. Data are not used to monitor retention and achievement rates over a number of years by qualification or area of learning. There is poor setting and use of targets to improve performance. In some areas, such as family learning, not enough data are collected. However, data are analysed to monitor equality of opportunity and targets are set to encourage learners from certain under-represented groups into learning.

18. Self-assessment is not yet consistently applied throughout the service or its partner providers. The report accurately identified many strengths and weaknesses but contains insufficient data to produce accurate judgements. Inspectors gave the same grades as those in the self-assessment report for three areas of learning, gave higher grades for two areas of learning, and a lower grade for one area of learning. The self-assessment development plan is detailed.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology   Grade 2

19. The service provides a wide range of ICT courses, which include taster and basic introductory courses and courses leading to a formal qualification at foundation level, level 1 and level 2. Learners are able to progress through each stage on to a more advanced course at the college. Many courses are targeted at hard-to-reach and minority ethnic groups, asylum seekers and other under-represented groups. Some courses have been designed specifically for older learners and women with young children. Courses are provided at 21 learning centres located throughout the borough. The service also converted a bus into a computer-training centre, which is taken to parts of the borough specifically to attract the target groups. Courses take place in the day and in the evening throughout the year. They last from a single two-hour introductory session to a 30-hour course taught over 10 weeks. In 2001-02, approximately 1,500 people enrolled on a computer course, 70 per cent of whom were women. There are two full-time council teachers. Most of the part-time teachers work for between two and six hours a week. Neighbourhood learning centre managers manage the courses.

STRENGTHS
- good teaching and learning
- effective learner support
- good provision according to community needs
- successful collaboration with other training providers

WEAKNESSES
- insufficient additional support for learners who speak English as an additional language
- poor use of quality assurance systems in some provision

20. There is good teaching and learning. Lessons are planned well with clear aims, objectives and expectations of what learners should achieve. Most tutors prepare good handouts and learning materials relevant to the needs of their learners. Some handouts are poorly detailed and others are not at an appropriate level for some learners. Learners complete an initial assessment of their computer skills. Teaching and course materials are planned so that learners gain confidence at each stage before moving on to the next stage. Tutors have good working relationships with learners. They give good clear explanations of each topic and provide individual support as and when necessary. Learners are encouraged to practise their skills using software applications. In some classes, volunteer helpers provide additional learner support. Learners also

work well together to share skills.

21. Learners make good progress. Most learners are well motivated to achieve new skills. Learners are taught about the Internet and the use of e-mail and are shown how to log onto the Internet and how to use search engines. They are taught how to use word-processing and spreadsheet programs. Some learners have enrolled on courses to improve their skills and get jobs. Other learners want to be able to use a computer to help their child or grandchild. Some learners enrol on a course to gain self-confidence and meet other people. For example, two learners who met while on the course baby-sit for each other while the other attends the course.

22. There is insufficient additional support for some learners who speak English as an additional language. Some learners on computing courses have poor English language skills. Tutors have to spend considerable time overcoming language difficulties and do not always have sufficient time to provide other necessary support.

23. Learner support is effective. Learners who want to acquire a qualification are given good support to prepare for formal assessment. Many learners do not want to achieve a qualification or to be formally assessed. On some courses, learners assess each other's understanding of aspects of the course, which helps them develop their own understanding. Most learners who continued to the end of their training programme acquired good skills and competences. Many learners' self-confidence improves while on the course.

24. Good training is provided according to community needs. The service has carried out research to identify the training needs of the local community and provide relevant courses. In response to this research, it now provides a basic course in using email. It also provides courses at some locations during the early evening for learners unable to attend during the day. It also provides computer taster courses. It is planned that all learning centres will provide UK online from February 2003. Some learners are using their new skills to prepare publicity material for the launch of this initiative.

25. Tutors are appropriately qualified. All tutors have access to staff development opportunities provided by the local college and receive the college's monthly staff development newsletter. The learning centres which provide computing courses are well equipped with modern computers, most of which are in good working order. Computer rooms have printers and a good range of other relevant equipment. At one learning centre the connection of computers to a printer was poor. The rooms are accessible to people with mobility difficulties and where rooms are on the first floor of a building there is a lift. The computer bus is used effectively. It is equipped with eight modern computers, which are networked, and there are printers and a scanner. There is a good range of software.

26. There is successful collaboration with other training providers. The Islington ICT partnership, a group that includes the service, college and voluntary and community partners, is responsible for the ICT strategic plan and setting local targets. Computing

courses are managed well and all key partners are involved in planning course provision. There is poor formal monitoring of the ICT provision. There is not enough formal recording of learner progress. In some cases retention and achievement data are not collected.

27. Most learners enjoy their course and are keen to attend others. Some have attended several courses. Learners welcome the opportunity to learn new skills at an accessible learning centre at a time best suited to them. Many learners spoke of the benefits of the courses they had been on, such as being able to use the Internet for research, or to send emails to family and friends living abroad. Several older learners joined courses to acquire skills that they could use doing voluntary work. Learners in mixed-ability groups prefer the small group sizes so that they can receive maximum learner support. Learners speak highly of the support provided by their tutors.

Good Practice
In a family learning session, 12 boys, accompanied by their fathers and their primary school teacher, attended a computer session. They worked together to produce posters on the computers, which enabled some fathers to gain a better understanding of the role of computers in their child's learning.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel   Grade 2

28. The service provides a range of keep-fit activities in partnership with the college and voluntary organisations and groups in the borough. A range of sports-related courses is provided in t'ai chi, yoga and keep fit. There is also a wide range of complementary therapy courses including introduction to body massage, aromatherapy, reflexology reiki, therapeutic reminiscence, crystal healing, Indian head massage, and tarot card reading. Courses are provided at the college and at 45 community venues in the borough, including community centres, day centres and secondary schools. Sport and complementary therapy courses are managed and quality assured by the college. All courses are intended to meet the needs of local people and some are targeted at groups such at the elderly and women from minority ethnic groups. Most courses last for between six weeks and three months and taster courses are also provided. Courses are provided throughout the year including the summer months. Sessions are held throughout the day and last between one and three hours. Courses are advertised throughout the borough. Courses are run by part-time tutors most of whom work for between two and 10 hours a week. During 2001-02, almost 1,000 people enrolled on sports-related courses, and 400 on complementary therapy courses. More than 1,000 learners have enrolled on courses this year.

STRENGTHS
*   good teaching and learning
*   good attainment on most programmes
*   significant additional benefits from learning
*   good systems for monitoring learner progress
*   responsive provision to attract non-traditional learners

WEAKNESSES
*   some poor accommodation
*   ineffective curriculum planning and development in sport and leisure

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
*   improve the sharing of good teaching practice

29. The standard of teaching and learning on sport and complementary therapy courses is good and tutors are appropriately experienced and qualified. Tutors prepare good course materials. Lesson plans clearly show the progress they expect learners to make during lessons and throughout the course. In many sessions most learners are at

different stages of development. This is well managed by the tutors who discuss with the learners how they would like to progress. Most learners are given good feedback on their progress and tutors clearly identify areas for improvement. For example, in therapeutic reminiscence classes, learners propose topics for discussion, and in keep-fit classes, learners agree with their tutor what aspects of their fitness they would next like to develop. Tutors' attention to health and safety is good, and they carry out individual pre-exercise medical checks before learners begin their course. Individual learner support and supervision is good during lessons.

30. Most learners make progress and achieve good levels of competence on most courses. They are set demanding tasks and activities appropriate to their ability. Learners develop skills, knowledge and improved levels of fitness on their course. In keep-fit, yoga and t'ai chi classes, learners improve their general fitness, balance, strength, flexibility and co-ordination. In complementary therapy courses, learners demonstrate good levels of proficiency when carrying out practical exercises, and work professionally when dealing with their own clients. Learners gain a good understanding of the theory of the therapy studied as well as aspects of human anatomy and physiology at an introductory level. They also learn about the cultural context and history of each therapy. Learners develop their communication skills by participating in discussion, listening to clients and giving feedback, reviewing their work and giving presentations to the group. They also gain additional benefits from attending courses, such as improved mobility, more confidence and self-esteem and better social skills with fellow learners. Attendance and retention rates are good on most courses. Learners are able to progress to a higher level on all courses.

31. There are good systems to monitor learners' progress. Most learners have individual learning plans against which tutors monitor their progress. Good records of each learner's progress are kept. Some tutors give learners a test to check understanding of a topic being taught. Other learners complete a journal of the work they have completed.

32. The standard of accommodation varies considerably and some is poor. Of the 45 learning centres used, two are modern and have good equipment to support all the courses provided. Heating is poor in some learning centres used to provide yoga courses. There are no changing facilities in some learning centres and at one learning centre the toilets are locked. One class in body massage was held in a treatment room where learners used the tables as beds. Some learning centres are not easily accessible to wheelchair learners. Some tutors provide their own teaching resources and some regularly wash the mats used for yoga.

33. The service provides a good range of complementary therapy courses. These courses are very popular and an effective way of attracting people back into learning. Not enough sport and keep-fit courses are provided. There are no water-based activities and not enough courses to attract male learners. Most courses are attended by women.

34. Both sport and therapy sections are generally well managed. There are regular tutor team meetings at which learner progress is discussed. Although learners provide feedback about what courses they would like to attend, this information is not used to develop new courses. There is a good programme of lesson observation. Tutors are observed and given feedback on their teaching. Information from observation is used in annual staff appraisal. Although good information about good teaching practice is obtained during observation, there is no mechanism for sharing this among other tutors.

35. Learners enjoy their courses and state that they work towards demanding targets. Some learners attend courses with the intention of progressing to a further qualification or in come cases to becoming a private complementary therapy practitioner. Other learners already work in the health and caring professions and want to achieve a recognised qualification. Learners fully understand the benefits gained from the course and the impact the new skills have on their lives.

Good Practice
After attending an adult and community course, a young mother who left school without achieving any qualifications is now working towards an accredited keep-fit qualification to become an instructor.

Visual & performing arts & media   Grade 2

36. A range of visual and performing arts courses is available in guitar playing, singing, dance, pottery, life drawing, fashion, jewellery making, and stained glass. Most courses run for between 20 and 25 hours over eight to 10 weeks and most are available throughout the year. No courses run at weekends. Approximately 75 per cent of the learners are women and 30 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. In 2001-02 almost 1,500 learners enrolled on visual and performing arts courses. Learners can progress on to more advanced-level courses such as folk guitar, Egyptian dance, fashion, pottery, and stained glass making. Most courses are managed and run by the college, and take place at the college and eight other learning centres throughout the borough. Some performing arts courses are run by voluntary organisations at community centres. There is one specialist fashion provider running courses for refugees and other people who wish to return to employment. All college tutors are part-time and work less than 10 hours each week. Courses offered by the specialist fashion provider are taught by the three company directors and two part-time tutors. Each provider is responsible for managing their own course programmes and for quality assuring their provision.

STRENGTHS
*   inclusive provision
*   very good teaching
*   very good attainment
*   good resources

WEAKNESSES
*   poor recording of learners' achievement
*   some ineffective communication between managers and tutors

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
*   better literacy, numeracy and language skills training
*   better range of courses
*   better learner advice, guidance and support

37. Teaching of visual art and design courses is very good. Teaching is planned well and tutors use a good range of practical demonstrations and share technical knowledge during discussion with learners. They provide good, appropriate individual learner support. Learners work towards demanding targets and are able to progress at their

own pace. Some tutors are particularly enthusiastic. Tutors frequently check learners' understanding and there is good reinforcement of prior learning. Most learners have an agreed individual learning plan and work towards set targets. Learners' achievements are sometimes evaluated in the final session of their course against their initial aims. Tutors give some verbal and written evaluation of their work, although this is not consistent. Learners work well together to share creative skills, techniques and prior knowledge effectively.

38. Attainment is very good. Learners attend courses for a wide variety of reasons and from a wide range of backgrounds and community groups, and all achieve their learning goals. Visual and performing arts courses provide learners with new skills and motivation and self-confidence. One learner has now returned to formal education following one adult and community learning course. Learners on a Greek dance class were encouraged by their teacher to begin ICT and English courses. Skills acquired during a course are used by many learners at work, at home and in their local community. Some learners have set up small businesses alone or together to share their skills. All learners achieve at least a satisfactory level of technical skill and in some cases their learning and understanding greatly improve. Many tutors do not record their learners' achievements. Some learners progress to higher-level courses, such as accredited courses at the local college, and in some cases on to higher education. The service does not provide enough performing arts courses at a higher level than entry level. Many learners re-enrol on the same courses as they are unable to progress further with the current provision.

39. Resources are good. Tutors are well qualified. Many are professional performers, artists and arts managers. Resources for visual arts are outstanding at one learning centre and include a large and well-equipped pottery studio and three well-resourced woodcrafts workshops. Learning centres are well placed across the borough to provide good local access to provision for learners. There is not enough space in the learning centres used to provide the performing arts courses. This was identified in the self-assessment report. However, learners are able to take part in public performances and to exhibit their work.

40. Most learners receive inadequate advice and information before and during their course. Some learners enrol on to inappropriate courses. Those learners who enrol by telephone using information from the college prospectus or using the Internet, are not given advice and guidance about course content or appropriate course levels. The recording of some learners' achievement is poor. Learners' progress and achievement are assessed in a number of different ways. There is informal verbal feedback in all sessions and learners are encouraged to evaluate their own achievements using their individual learning plan. Some plans are not completed properly. Many tutors do not assess learners' initial skill or progress. This was identified as a weakness in the self-assessment report.

41. There is some ineffective communication between managers and tutors. There is good research carried out of local needs but strategic planning does not always take

into account the results of this research. For example, managers have identified gaps in drama and media arts provision but there has been no change to the planned curriculum since these gaps were identified. College and community tutors in the same subject area do not meet regularly to share good practice.

42. Tutors have good working relationships with the learners. Learners enjoy their classes and learn new skills. Learners' self-confidence improves during the courses. One learner is now singing at a local music festival. Learners appreciate the freedom to work at their own pace. One dyslexic learner has gained self-confidence by attending a dance class and is now studying for a degree. Another learner has acquired the skills and motivation to start her own business and has progressed on to teacher training. This learner now supports other women learners in the community. Learners also benefit from the concessions and subsidised rates available through the provision.

Good Practice
One learner who attends a drumming workshop now works at an outreach centre with clients who need support in a range of life skills. Drumming is now used during personal development workshops and is helping the group to build confidence and communication skills.

Foundation programmes **Grade 3**

43. Courses are available for learners with mental health difficulties, physical disabilities, learning difficulties and for older learners with mobility difficulties. The courses for learners with learning difficulties/disabilities are provided at 14 daycare centres and community centres across the borough. Courses are available in visual and performing arts, hospitality, sport and leisure. Those courses last from six to 28 weeks. The courses are provided during the day and in the early evening. Learners are able to access these courses in community venues close to their home. Collaborative working relationships exist with Social Services, voluntary organisations and a range of educational providers. There are no data showing the number of current learners. All courses are provided through the contract with the college. These programmes are taught and staffed in two of the college's schools. These areas are managed by the college's school of professional and community studies.

STRENGTHS
- good teaching and learning
- good achievement of personal skills
- good links with external agencies

WEAKNESSES
- lack of recording and monitoring of learning
- poor development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills
- poor progression routes

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
- wider range of resources
- better learning support

44. The standard of teaching and learning in most sessions is good and in some lessons very good. Tutors provide good learner support. A range of teaching and learning activities is used and is well planned with clear aims and objectives. Tutors plan activities which are designed to be enjoyable as well as meeting the learners' individual targets. There is good achievement of personal skills, such as raising learners' confidence to carry out new tasks, improving self-esteem and motivation by working and co-operating with others, and being a member of a group and sharing ideas. In an art session, the tutor demonstrated the effect that artificial light has on light and shadow to encourage learners to think about the colours and shapes in their work. In a cookery

lesson, learners planned a seasonal dish together using flashcards displaying items of food. Learners with severe learning difficulties are encouraged to undertake stretching, stepping, posture and balancing exercises individually and in pairs.

45. Some sessions are poor and do not meet learners' needs. Some lesson plans are poor with a list of topics and no detail of methods and resources to be used and how outcomes are to be monitored and evaluated. Most tutors do not regularly record learner progress. Assessment of what a learner has achieved during each session is not always carried out but often takes place at the end of the course. There is not enough use of formative assessment to help the planning of the next session or to prepare learning activities, particularly in the area of meeting literacy and numeracy needs.

46. Most learners attend their sessions regularly and are punctual. Learners are achieving their targets set at the beginning of the course to improve their confidence, motivation and enjoyment of a variety of learning activities. In an art lesson, learners understood the task they had been set. They were all interested in what they were doing and successfully completed their work. Learners are acquiring good levels of knowledge and skills. In a cookery lesson, learners asked questions about the aims and objectives of the lesson and wanted to know how the lesson was different to the last cookery lesson. All learners were involved in food preparation, washing potatoes, peeling onions and cutting food. They were transferring skills from one task to another that had been learned in a previous lesson.

47. Learners develop personal skills such as confidence building and working in teams during their course, but tutors do not systematically record these objectives in their schemes of work, lesson plans or on learners' individual learning plans. Skills in communicating with others and the learning of new skills are identified as goals for many learners but no specific targets for individual learners are identified.

48. There is good achievement of personal skills. Learning goals are set and are being met for learners with mental health difficulties and those with mobility difficulties. Health and well-being targets are achieved through learning activities such as singing and keep fit. Achievement is demonstrated through learners' enjoyment, good attendance, participation and positive views of the activities provided for them.

49. There is poor development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills in most lessons. Learning activities in many vocational and leisure areas are not used to promote the learning of the practical day-to-day tasks involving literacy and numeracy. Achievement of literacy and numeracy skills for learners at entry level and level 1 is poor. Some tutors do not know how to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills through their learning activities. Many tutors do not take advantage of activities such as cooking, singing and drama to promote and identify these essential skills.

50. Teaching accommodation is satisfactory at the college. Lessons take place in good-sized rooms and most tutors make good use of the space available. In some community venues, rooms are smaller and this limits the movement of learners with

mobility difficulties. Most tutors use their own resources, such as tape recorders for music and equipment for keep fit, when teaching in community centres. Learners in most classes have access to an appropriate range of resources but in some areas such as cookery there are not enough resources or adequate accommodation for practical activities.

51. There are good links with external agencies. There is good co-operation between the voluntary organisations, statutory services and tutors to promote participation of learners in courses at community centres. Learners attend learning centres close to their homes but where they have difficulty attending, transport is provided by the relevant voluntary or statutory service. There are good links with specialist voluntary organisations where expertise is shared to meet needs of learners, such as those who are visually impaired. Specialist equipment is available for some learners, such as specialist computers with speech-recognition software, screen readers and magnification.

52. Progression routes are poor. Many learners have been on the same course for several years, have become familiar with the content of the course and have been taught by the same tutor for over a long period. Many of these learners do not make adequate progress. Learners are not encouraged to try new courses within the local community. Participation in the college facilities and services such as drop-in facilities and use of information technology (IT) and library services is not promoted.

53. Most learners enjoy their courses and particularly like meeting and talking to other learners. One new learner found it difficult to join a class where the other learners were more advanced. Some learners are unaware they are entitled to use the library. Many learners understand the value of learning and the positive impact it has on their lives.

Family learning   **Grade 3**

54. The service provides a range of family learning programme in literacy, numeracy, ICT, crafts, museum educational visits and cultural events, all from entry level. Most courses are intended for parents and their children. Some courses are targeted to attract men, people from minority ethnic groups and people who have not previously benefited from education. Most courses are two hours in length to enable them to fit in with childcare arrangements and are held during the day, with some provision in the early evening. They include short courses, one-off seminars and 10-week course programmes. Courses are held through the year except in the summer. Family learning programmes are provided in approximately 16 community locations in the borough at places where parents with their children can easily reach. The programmes are provided in partnership with six other relevant organisations. Family learning courses began in 2001 and during 2001-02 approximately 250 learners enrolled on family learning programmes. There are no data for current learners. Courses are taught by the primary school teachers, part-time tutors and early years workers employed by either the council or by partner providers.

STRENGTHS
*   good teaching
*   good range of courses at entry level
*   excellent partnership arrangements
*   good resources
*   particularly good personal and practical support for learners

WEAKNESSES
*   poor literacy, numeracy and language support
*   inconsistent monitoring of learners' progress
*   poorly planned outcomes
*   poor quality assurance systems by some providers

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
*   more professional development for teachers
*   larger teaching spaces

55. Teaching is good. Tutors have good working relationships with their learners. They fully understand their learners' needs and help them to progress. Learner support is good. One very good lesson for parents and their children was taught in two parts. In

the first, the children's schoolteacher taught the parents and children the alphabet and singing. In the second half of the lesson, an adult literacy teacher taught the parents spellings and the use of the apostrophe, while the children were given other tasks to complete. The aims of the lesson were clearly identified, parents and their children enjoyed the lesson and good learning took place. Most lessons are well planned, although some tutors do not always make learning outcomes clear at the beginning of their lessons. The cultural backgrounds of learners are respected and celebrated in teaching. One family craft workshop was described as a Celebration Workshop and included cards for Eid as well as Christmas.

56. A good range of courses is provided at entry level. For many learners these courses are a first step back into education after leaving school. Learners are able to gain self-confidence and self-esteem. Learners are better able to help their children with their schoolwork at home and to talk to teachers about their children's learning. Learners are encouraged to start family events where they live such as organising visits to local places of interest. One learner had recently organised a successful outing to the Tate gallery. Learners and carers also gain skills in ICT and first aid. Not enough courses lead to qualifications, but learners make good progress and some are progressing to courses leading to a formal qualification.

57. There are excellent partnership arrangements. Teachers invite visiting speakers from the local museums who often bring resources and artefacts to lessons. Visits are arranged to local libraries, an Internet café and the zoo.

58. Initial assessment of learners' knowledge and skills is poor and leads to some learners being on inappropriate courses. The learning outcomes of some courses are not clear or shared with learners. The identification of learning outcomes is frequently confused with planned activities for lessons. Where learning outcomes are planned, they are often not sufficiently challenging.

59. Literacy, numeracy and language support is not included in many learning programmes. Communication is poor between some tutors and learners. In one lesson a learner walked out with her child. Her poor language skills had not been tackled effectively by the tutor. The specific learning needs of two learners with dyslexia in another class had also not been identified.

60. Tutors are generally well qualified and most have a teaching qualification. Some older learners who have been trained as volunteer classroom assistants provide good tutor support. There is no programme of professional development for tutors. Some of the accommodation used for family learning is too small. Family learning takes place at many learning centres around the borough convenient to people's homes. One learning centre does not have access for people with restricted mobility. There is a good range of resources available, including up-to-date IT equipment.

61. There is a good range of family learning programmes and in many of these parents learn with their children. The courses provide good learning relevant to learners' needs

and interests, and learners work well with their children. Sessions are provided at times to suit learners. The council collects feedback from learners, as well as other agencies such as social services, and voluntary and charitable organisations.

62. Good personal and practical learner support is provided. Learners are given good support throughout their course by tutors and volunteer staff. They are given good encouragement to help them stay on their course and to succeed. Learners are also given good practical support to deal with external agencies, particularly when applying for additional benefits. One tutor accompanied a learner to a course offered at a local college because she felt unable to go alone.

63. The quality assurance of programmes is poor. There is not enough formal monitoring or evaluation of the progress made by learners on some non-accredited courses. Learners' achievements are not recorded in a consistent way and there is no information kept about the achievements of previous learners. Partner organisations who provide family learning courses do not provide feedback on the outcomes of the programmes they run and often work to different management structures.

64. Learners speak enthusiastically about their learning and fully understand the benefits of attending the courses. One learner in a family mathematics class has gained confidence to talk in front of a group. One parent has achieved an ICT certificate. One older learner is being trained as a volunteer to work as a classroom assistant in a primary school.

Good Practice
Learners and their children write diaries which demonstrate how their learning and skills improve over the duration of the course.

Community learning   Grade 3

65. Most community learning programmes are targeted to attract refugees and asylum seekers, many of whom have professional qualifications from their home country. Courses include one for qualified teachers who wish to qualify to become teachers in the UK, and a course for interpreters. Another course trains people who wish to volunteer as health advocates in a local community-based project. Many learning programmes provide individual learner support such as jobsearch and careers advice and guidance. All learning programmes are accredited. Learners progress to become volunteers in their community, employment or further training. Courses are available at a wide range of venues, including community centres, open learning centres, advice centres, and the local university campus. Most courses are provided over a specified number of weeks ranging from 10 to 36 weeks and at times most suitable for learners to attend. They run on weekdays during term time. The funding for most courses is not continuous, so courses run when money is available. Most courses have been developed recently and currently there are approximately 100 learners.

STRENGTHS
• good personal development by refugees and asylum seekers
• good learner involvement in programme development
• good advice, guidance and support for learners

WEAKNESSES
• some poor teaching and learning
• poor identification of individual learning needs
• insufficient recording of learner progress

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED
• better teaching facilities in some learning centres

66. Most lessons are well planned. Learners are given good learning materials and case studies to use as the basis for discussion and problem-solving exercises. Tutors maintain learners' interest, concentration, and motivation well by using examples. For example, on a health advocates course, learners were taught about HIV infection. A visiting speaker made a good presentation and then through discussion and group work learners were introduced to the correct terminology and were made aware of how the virus affects the body. In another class, learners were asked to calculate the rate of housing benefit based on a series of case studies. Tutors give clear instructions, monitor

learners' understanding and provide good feedback. Good use is made of visiting speakers, such as health visitors and hospital managers, immigration workers and benefit advice workers. In some learning centres, learners have individual tutorials, usually while other learners continue with their own activity or at the end of the session. All tutors have good subject knowledge, but some do not have the necessary skills to share this effectively with their learners.

67. In some classes, teaching is unsatisfactory. Lessons are not well planned, do not have clear objectives and learners do not understand what is expected of them. Some tutors do not provide sufficient opportunities for learners to practise their language skills. Other tutors are not good at managing class activities. Most courses include a work or volunteer placement where the learner gains experience and confidence working in their new country. These placements are managed well by the tutors.

68. There is good personal development by refugees and asylum seekers, many of whom are well qualified and held professional positions in their home country. The training courses they attend help them to assess their skills, gain a better understanding about public services, and develop their own self-confidence and self-esteem. For example, on one learning programme, learners are required to present to an external examiner their previous levels of study, professional experience and the skills they have acquired during the course, using a PowerPoint presentation. Learners in another course were confident enough to take up work placements as advice workers in community groups or to provide support in local schools. Others volunteer their time as health advocates for a local health advocacy project.

69. Individual learning needs are not systematically and comprehensively identified at the start of the learning programmes. Learners are not clear about the course selection criteria. Initial assessment procedures are not thorough and do not take account of the cultural diversity of the learners. Some learners do not have a clear understanding of the skills they are expected to acquire when they start their course and no use is made of individual learning plans. Some learners are unclear about the progress they are making because they have infrequent tutorials or feedback about their progress.

70. Tutors are well qualified for the courses they teach and some are specialist teachers for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses. Good use is made of external speakers when specialist subjects and topics are taught. All courses are held at community venues throughout the borough. Some accommodation is small, cramped and in some cases poorly ventilated. As most courses are new the service does not have an established bank of teaching resources. Tutors make their own worksheets and teaching aids as the course progresses.

71. Learners are fully involved in the community organisations which provide and manage the learning programmes. There is learner representation on their steering groups and management committees. In one organisation, learner representatives contribute to the end-of-course review process. Learner feedback is collected through mid-course and end-of-course evaluations. This information is collated and used to plan

future courses.

72. Learners are provided with good advice and guidance during their course. In one learning centre, learners have a dedicated personal advice and guidance worker who they see on a fortnightly basis. Many of the guidance workers have been through a similar course in the past and are able to provide good role models for new learners. They are all bilingual and share an understanding of the difficulties encountered by refugees and asylum seekers when they are trying to re-establish a career. Most learners are provided with financial support for travel expenses and childcare when on a course.

73. All learners find their course informative, valuable for professional development and helpful in developing skills such as critical thinking. They fully understand that a qualification will improve their chances of finding employment. Learners have good working relationships with their tutors and appreciate their knowledge, skills and approach to their individual and group needs.

Good Practice

In a local nursery, an older learner is writing stories for the young children based on her own cultural background. This is helping the learner to develop her own creative writing skills and enabling the children to explore issues of culture and age.

Language of the Adult and Community Learning

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework.*   The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.