

# INSPECTION REPORT

## Hillingdon LEA

24 March 2003



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based 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 and community learning is provided by the Hillingdon adult education service of the London Borough of Hillingdon. This is a directly managed service and is located within the directorate of education, youth and leisure. A wide range of courses across all areas of learning are provided across the borough. In 2001-02 there were 7,565 learners, of whom 1,854 were on accredited courses and 5,711 learners were on non-accredited adult and community learning courses.

### Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. The provision in languages is good, and information and communications technology, visual and performing arts, and community development is satisfactory. Health and fitness, literacy and numeracy, and English for speakers of other languages is unsatisfactory. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory, as are equality of opportunity and quality assurance.

### GRADES

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

Areas of learning	Grade
Information & communications technology	3
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	4
Visual & performing arts & media	3
English, languages & communications	2
Foundation programmes	4
Community learning	3
Other adult and community learning	4

### **KEY STRENGTHS**

- good leadership to support change
- good communication
- good achievement of personal goals and development of new skills
- some good standards of work

### **KEY WEAKNESSES**

- inadequate operational management and planning
- inadequate management information system
- inadequate learning plans
- insufficient monitoring of learners' progress
- inadequate arrangements for initial assessment and provision of additional support
- little sharing of good practice
- poor resources including poor access to buildings for learners with restricted mobility
- low levels of participation by socially excluded groups

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- further development of basic skills strategy to support development plan
- more attention to wide variations in practice
- further implementation of quality assurance to stimulate improvements

## THE INSPECTION

1. A team of 14 inspectors spent a total of 70 days at Hillingdon adult education service in March 2003. They observed and graded 96 learning sessions, spoke to 468 learners and examined 528 individual learning plans and 459 learners' assignments. They made 48 visits to sites across the borough and spoke to 104 staff, including managers in the service and within the local authority. Inspectors examined a range of documents including policies, promotional materials, minutes and notes of meetings, the borough's adult learning plan, development plans and the self-assessment report which was 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	0	1	1	7	2	1	0	12
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	1	7	3	5	0	0	16
Visual & performing arts & media	0	4	4	7	0	0	0	15
English, languages & communications	1	6	7	6	0	0	0	20
Foundation programmes	0	0	2	7	1	0	0	10
Community learning	0	1	2	5	0	0	0	8
Other adult and community learning	0	2	4	5	2	2	0	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>per cent</b>	<b>44.79%</b>		<b>41.67%</b>		<b>13.54%</b>			

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

2. The London borough of Hillingdon provides adult and community learning by direct provision through Hillingdon Adult Education (HAE), a team within Hillingdon council's education, youth and leisure group. Adult and community learning is one of several areas of responsibility of the head of lifelong learning, who is one of six assistant directors. Planning for adult education is carried out within HAE's strategic plan and the adult learning plan. It is developed in collaboration with the head of lifelong learning and the Hillingdon lifelong learning partnership. During 2001-02, there were approximately 7,565 learners accounting for 9,082 enrolments on accredited and non-accredited adult education courses across all areas of learning. The service has been through a number of significant changes in the senior management team over the past few years. Currently the curriculum is organised in five teams, and in some cases an area of learning is managed by two teams. There are over 260 part-time staff working across the borough. A further restructuring of the curriculum is planned over the next few months to improve the direct management of areas of learning. The service works with a growing number of partner organisations and provision has been developed with some external funding, including the European Social Fund (ESF). The adult service also works alongside other borough services including the libraries and social services.

3. Since 2001, adult education has been funded through a contract with London West Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Hillingdon, an outer London borough, has an adult population of approximately 243,000. The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups is 16.6 per cent, compared with 6.2 per cent nationally and 25.6 per cent for inner London. The largest employment sector in the borough is business and management services. In April 2003, the unemployment rate was 2.4 per cent in Hillingdon, compared with 3.7 per cent for London and 2.6 per cent nationally. In 2001, the proportion of school leavers in the borough who achieve five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above was 47.1 per cent, compared with 47.9 per cent nationally.



## Adult and Community Learning

4. The quality of adult and community learning provided by HAE is largely unsatisfactory. Leadership and management arrangements for the service have been through a number of significant changes over recent years. Although many new plans are now in place and there are signs of improvements, at the time of inspection, leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Quality assurance arrangements are at an early stage of development and the arrangements for equality of opportunity and diversity are inadequate. The collection of learners' data is at an early stage of development.

5. HAE has started to deal with the needs of 'hard to reach' learners by developing a range of partnerships in the community. Courses are targeted at specific groups including parents, employers and local community groups. Learners achieve good levels of confidence, develop personal skills, and courses improve the quality of life of those who attend. Of lessons observed in areas of learning, 42 per cent were satisfactory, 45 per cent were good or better and 13 per cent were unsatisfactory. Learners actively participate in their learning and there are some good standards of work in languages, visual and performing arts and in accredited health and fitness programmes. Teachers and learners enjoy good and supportive relationships and volunteers provide an important support service in foundation programmes. Although individual learning plans have been recently introduced across the service there are wide variations in practice. There is inadequate monitoring and evaluation of learners' progress, and progression opportunities are poorly defined across the service. There are few opportunities for the integration of learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Resources, including access to buildings for learners with restricted mobility, are poor and there is insufficient attention to health and safety in health and fitness courses.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

## Grade 4

6. Adult and community learning is the responsibility of the London borough of Hillingdon's directorate of education, youth and leisure. Six assistant directors help the director of education youth and leisure. This team includes the head of lifelong learning whose responsibilities include the HAE team which manages the borough's adult and community learning service. The head of lifelong learning is responsible for the adult learning plan, with the support of the head of HAE services, who manages the adult education. The plan draws on the council leaders' statement, the council's themes and values, the borough's community plan, education strategic plan 2002-04, lifelong learning plan, the LSC's strategic objectives, and the HAE team plan. The plan is endorsed by the Hillingdon lifelong learning partnership. The plan is scrutinised by the borough council's overview and scrutiny committee before approval by the cabinet, which is part of the modernised council structure of political management which was adopted from May 2002. The borough council endorses the plan. HAE does not use subcontractors for the delivery of this service. The head of lifelong learning recommends changes to the fees and charges associated with adult and community learning. The borough council, following recommendation by the cabinet, approves all changes. The head of services manages the HAE team with the support of the head of client services. There are four adult education centres which offer day and evening provision and four centres which offer evening provision. Adult education is also provided using a number of schools, libraries and community venues. The curriculum is managed by four programme managers, supported by curriculum and tutor co-ordinators. There are four centre managers with administrative support teams, a senior finance officer and management information officer and a range of administrative, premises and playgroup staff. There is a quality assurance policy. The self-assessment report for 2001-02, which was used by inspectors, was completed in January 2003. It is the second self-assessment report produced by the HAE team. There is an equality of opportunity and diversity policy.

### STRENGTHS

- good leadership to support change
- good communication

### WEAKNESSES

- insufficient strategic planning
- inadequate operational management and planning
- inadequate management information system
- inadequate resources
- weak quality assurance arrangements
- low levels of participation by socially excluded groups

7. The leadership has been good through the process of change. The HAE team has undergone considerable change since September 2001, when many staff took on new roles and responsibilities. The role of head of service was shared between the head of curriculum and head of client services between March and December 2002 when the head of service attended a secondment and then left the service. The new head of service, formally the head of curriculum, took up her post in January 2003. Senior managers have worked hard to provide leadership and support staff, in response to the changing demands of the service. There is effective consultation with staff, including meetings and opportunities for staff to review and give feedback on drafts of documents associated with new arrangements. As a result, there are new and improving arrangements covering key business processes to support the learners' experience. These include greater clarity in the quality assurance arrangements, the development of a new tutor handbook, and new planning arrangements which involve staff. Staff value the consultation opportunities. Further need for change is welcomed by staff and is understood to be essential to provide clearer lines of responsibility and improve standards.

8. The communication is good. There are effective patterns of meetings at council and directorate level to meet the needs of the HAE service. The head of lifelong learning meets with his team, which includes the head of adult education service, every month. He holds individual meetings with each of his management team every three weeks. In the HAE service, there are regular group and individual meetings between managers and their staff. There are over 260 tutors working across the borough. Programme area curriculum teams meet once each term and although attendance is a requirement of each tutors' contract, it is sometimes poor. Tutors who are unable to attend the meetings are sent a copy of the minutes, and are contacted to discuss major problems. Managers and co-ordinators support tutors through regular contact.

9. The arrangements for staff appraisal and review are satisfactory. However, some of the sessional tutors have not been able to meet with their manager or co-ordinator to discuss their personal development needs. Some sessional tutors are unaware that the observation of teaching and learning is used as part of their annual appraisal, and that personal development can be discussed during feedback meetings. HAE has comprehensive staff policies and procedures which are available to tutors in the tutor handbook. There is no similar handbook or guidance for support staff. Some of the human resources policies and procedures are out of date or are difficult to access. There are satisfactory arrangements for staff training. Staff training plans are based on appraisal, lesson observation, and training needs analysis. Staff are aware of their staff development entitlements through the borough council and through HAE. However, there is poor take-up. The financial management is satisfactory.

10. There is insufficient strategic planning to support the development of the adult education service. The adult learning plan is produced each year and is mainly based on other annual planning documents. It has five key objectives which are to be

achieved through five key actions. This plan is not based on a long-term strategy to improve, develop and resource adult and community learning throughout the borough. The adult learning plan identifies initiatives which target support to groups of under-represented learners. The education youth and leisure service plan is not based on long-term planning to provide a more structured and coherent approach for 'hard to reach' learners throughout the borough. There is an HAE basic skills development plan, but there is no strategy. The development of a lifelong learning strategic plan for the borough is in progress. A wide range of groups contribute to this through the lifelong learning partnership and research has now taken place.

11. The operational management and planning is inadequate. There has been difficulties in staffing the service. One manager has taken on additional work due to the long-term absence of the basic skills and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programme manager and the basic skills curriculum co-ordinator. In basic skills, ESOL, and visual and performing arts, there is a limited range of provision. There is some poor planning of learning, schemes of work are not sufficiently detailed, and lessons are poorly structured. Poor initial advice and guidance results in some learners attending inappropriate programmes. There is some poor practice in initial assessment. There is insufficient detail in individual learning plans in most areas of learning. When the individual learning plans are used well, they help the learners to reflect on their achievements. The monitoring of the learners' progress is inadequate. In most areas of learning there are poor progression routes and there are no arrangements to provide advice and guidance for new learners on access to further education or training.

12. The management information system is inadequate and this was identified in the self-assessment report. The network for information exchange has only recently been installed in three of the four adult education centres. This will enable HAE to use up-to-date software to manage financial and student information. Student information is not networked. Analysis of data requires electronic collection and transferral to spreadsheets and databases which are created by HAE. Apart from regular reports on learners' enrolments, little use is made of data as a basis for management decisions. Learners' gender, ethnicity and disability profile are analysed at enrolment, but the information is incomplete and does not have sufficient detail to influence recruitment policies. Analysis of retention and achievement has started recently, but inspectors found it difficult to access data and confirm its accuracy.

13. The resources to support adult and community learning programmes are inadequate. Much of the accommodation is not accessible to people with restricted mobility. In some areas of learning, there is an over-reliance on tutors to supply specialist resources, and in others, the resources do not meet specific needs, including poor acoustics and some outdated resources. Specialist accommodation for complementary therapies is unsatisfactory. There is inadequate technician support for IT at one centre. Some classes are held in cramped accommodation and at one centre noise causes disruption to teaching and learning. There has been a review of the accommodation used for adult and community learning and there is a clear accommodation strategy which includes plans for the redevelopment of some sites and

a new build project in the south of the borough. HAE has access to a good range of learning resources, including laptop computers through the Hillingdon lifelong learning partnership. Some of the health questionnaires which are completed by learners are not checked thoroughly. Health and safety is not effectively promoted or reinforced in some areas of learning. There is a risk assessment which covers each of the centres, but risk assessments are still to be developed in the curriculum.

**Equality of opportunity****Contributory grade 4**

14. There are poor levels of participation by socially excluded learners. The proportion of learners from black and Asian groups is well below the proportion of the local population as a whole. In visual, performing arts and media, languages, and health and fitness, fewer than 10 per cent of learners are from black and Asian groups. The recruitment of learners with visual, mobility and complex disabilities is poor. Only 1 per cent of learners in all areas other than foundation programmes has a declared disability. Traditionally, far fewer learners attend classes from the southwest of the borough, where there are high levels of deprivation. There are few learners in receipt of benefits other than those who are aged over 60. Targets to resolve the low recruitment rates are insufficiently precise. The provider has recognised the gaps in its provision and has introduced a number of measures to widen participation by new and 'hard to reach' learners. In partnership with schools and community organisations, such as the Cranford women's project and provision for families at a local government base, some provision has been specifically designed to meet the needs of those who are unable to travel easily. These initiatives have introduced a significant number of new learners, but the provider has recognised the need for a more fundamental change in how it deploys its resources. Through good links with library services, new learners have been introduced to information and communications technology (ICT) through taster sessions. Two of the main learning centres offer a good level of financial support for childcare to enable learners to attend lessons. Some community learning centres include crèche facilities.

15. The new equal opportunities and diversity policy statement is well written and is backed up by a comprehensive range of associated policies. The complaints procedure, which is published in the prospectus, is not sufficiently reinforced after the start of a course and some of the learners are not aware of its existence. There is a proforma for logging suggestions and complaints included in the learner handbook and charter, but this does not include any details of the complaints procedure. Complaints are followed up and feedback is given to the individual who complains. There is no analysis of trends in complaints.

16. Course publicity brochures are translated into more than 10 community languages. Advertising literature and posters promote non-stereotypical images. The provider advertises in a variety of ways including bus poster campaigns and prominent banner displays. Prospectuses are delivered to all households in the borough. Advertisements are placed in local newspapers and the council's own newspapers. Exhibitions of learners' work help to attract new learners. Staff attend learning roadshows and community events, and details of all courses are available on the council's website. Taster courses also help to attract prospective learners.

17. There is insufficient access to a large number of courses for learners with restricted mobility. Some of the buildings which are used for adult education are old and are not fully accessible to learners. Many do not meet the requirements of the 'Disability Discrimination Act 1995'. In some buildings the internal sign posting is poor. The provider has recognised this weakness in its self-assessment report and plans to improve

access, as a key feature of its accommodation review. The council has recently carried out an audit of some of its learning centres and has introduced a number of small measures to improve access. The provider understands its obligations under the 'Disability Discrimination Act 1995'. Most full-time staff and some part-time staff have received recent training to raise their awareness of current legislation on equal opportunities. The provider has purchased, and started to make good use of, some specialist equipment to support learners who are hearing and visually impaired.

18. The identification and provision of additional support needs in literacy, numeracy and language are inadequate. Arrangements for initial assessment are not detailed and few learners have been identified as needing additional learning support. A recent pilot survey indicates that large numbers of learners would benefit from additional support in areas such as dyslexia. There are no arrangements in place currently to meet these needs.

19. Some information is not made available to learners in an accessible or appropriate form. Some of the questionnaires used to evaluate courses are not available in language which learners can easily understand. There are separate individual learning plans for different groups of learners including family literacy, ESOL and basic skills. Although the plans give a record of course objectives, they do not record how learners might achieve their personal learning goals.

## Quality assurance

## Contributory grade 4

20. The quality assurance policy and framework identifies a clear commitment to improve the quality of the tutors' performance and the learners' experience. It includes teaching and learning, learners' feedback and self-assessment, and describes roles, responsibilities and related activities with timescales for their completion.

21. Targets for retention and achievement for 2002-03 were set in January 2003. Tutors are committed to the achievement of the targets, and are supported by the introduction of a retention and achievement strategy. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this strategy.

22. Apart from regular reports to senior managers on enrolments and on gender, ethnicity and disability profiles, there is little monitoring of performance or analysis of variations in performance. Enrolments are one of the council's best value performance indicators. Reports are not shared or used by programme managers and their teams to improve performance. Although learners' attendance is recorded electronically, information is not used to monitor attendance. There are no formal course reviews and there is little effective validation of quality assurance arrangements. Programme managers and curriculum co-ordinators visit classrooms to support tutors. They check schemes of work, lesson plans and look at arrangements for induction and health and safety. The visits are welcomed by tutors, but they have not identified key weaknesses which were identified by inspectors. Support teams have service standards, but there are no related targets, and data are not used to monitor, review or evaluate performance against the standards.

23. There are arrangements for the annual observation of teaching sessions and the observation forms are comprehensive. Sessions are graded and completed forms provide helpful feedback. However, grades given by the programme managers and curriculum co-ordinators are generous and do not reflect the findings of inspectors. There is little sharing of good practice in some areas of learning. Tutors work independently and best practice has not been identified.

24. A range of strategies has been introduced to collect learners' feedback, including the use of questionnaires after induction, half-way through and at the end of the programme. However, the design of the questionnaire and sampling strategies are weak, and there is no analysis of trends. Course representatives have been introduced in 2002-03 to encourage learners' participation.

25. The self-assessment report and development plan for 2001-02 was completed in December 2002. Established teaching and support staff were involved in the production of the report. All sessional tutors were invited to contribute, but some tutors cannot recall their involvement. The report contained helpful information and was self-critical. Although the report identified a number of strengths and weaknesses which were also identified by inspectors, it did not identify some key weaknesses.



## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Information & communications technology

### Grade 3

26. ICT courses are offered at 11 locations, including adult education centres, public libraries, schools, community venues such as church halls, and the local education authority's (LEA's) staff development centre. The programme offers a choice of accredited and non-accredited ICT courses ranging from pre-level 1 to level 2. Classes run at various times of the day and are repeated during the week and in some cases, on Saturdays. One programme manager and three curriculum co-ordinators manage the ICT curriculum. Two of the curriculum co-ordinators work on a part-time basis. The managers have teaching responsibilities and there are 17 part-time tutors who support the programme.

27. In 2001-02, there were 1,120 learners accounting for 1,504 enrolments. Learners in ICT accounted for 17 per cent of total enrolments. Since September 2002, 731 learners have been recruited, and of these, 36 per cent are women, 12 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 1 per cent have a declared disability and 17 per cent are on concessionary rates. Twenty-seven per cent of learners are aged 60 years or over.

### STRENGTHS

- good achievements by learners
- good development of new skills
- effective planning of curriculum

### WEAKNESSES

- poor ICT resources at many centres
- insufficient attention to health and safety
- ineffective use of individual learning plans
- weak quality assurance arrangements

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better discussion of planned learning outcomes

28. The achievement rates are good. Seventy per cent of all learners who attended accredited courses in 2001-02 achieved a qualification. Current learners are progressing well towards achieving their qualifications, with most passing their interim modular tests. Learners on non-accredited courses also make good progress. Most have good

opportunities to review their progress against planned course and personal learning goals. They value and easily recognise their achievements and new skills. Many have made significant progress in acquiring new knowledge and skills about computers and this has helped learners to improve their social and business lives in various ways. For example, many are now able to help their children with homework, assist their families with business management, gain employment or improve their work skills, and keep in regular contact with friends and family abroad. Learners regularly attend their classes and produce good standards of work, sometimes beyond the level of their course.

29. Most teaching is satisfactory. Tutors are well organised and appropriately prepared. They have good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching. They set activities to reinforce learning and challenge learners at an appropriate level. Most tutors vary the teaching methods and maintain the learners' interest. However, some tutors spend too much time working with projected images without engaging learners in useful activities. There are clear schemes of work and lesson plans which show planned learning outcomes. However, few tutors discuss learning outcomes in any depth with learners at the beginning or end of lessons.

30. The ICT resources are poor at many centres. Most of the ICT equipment is out of date. Technical support is inadequate and faults take too long to repair. Furniture and learning environments are often poor and some of the rooms are crowded and uninspiring. Many centres are difficult for learners with restricted mobility to access. Three centres have good equipment and fast Internet connections. Learning materials such as handouts and textbooks are appropriate, although many tutors are duplicating resources and are not sharing best practice. Most tutors have a teaching qualification, but many do not have appropriate ICT qualifications.

31. There is insufficient attention to health and safety practices at many centres. ICT equipment is set up without proper regard to good posture, glare, eye level and muscular-skeletal strain. There is insufficient equipment such as foot rests, wrist rests, anti-glare screens and adjustable chairs. Health and safety is not properly explained to learners. A new draft handbook for tutors is raising awareness about health and safety, but there are insufficient resources to support tutors in promoting best practice.

32. There is no systematic initial assessment of learners' ICT or basic literacy and numeracy skills. Different tutors use different initial assessment methods, but they are not effective in diagnosing individual needs. Initial assessment is not included in the individual learning plans. A few learners have been poorly advised about which course to take, but most are working at appropriate levels. Assessment of learners' progress is satisfactory, but it is not always effectively recorded. Individual learning plans do not contain realistic and relevant targets and are rarely used to review and plan progress.

33. The planning of the ICT curriculum is effective. There is a good range of ICT courses which are designed to help learners to progress to level 2. Managers recently surveyed visitors to local libraries to assess their needs for ICT training. An excellent range of two-hour taster courses has been established in response to this survey and

they are heavily subscribed and well attended. Three-hundred learners attended over 80 taster courses in the first month of this initiative. Progression routes are clear and well publicised by tutors. There are many good examples of learners who have joined the programme as beginners and have progressed through level 1 and 2 qualifications. Presently there are no level 3 options and no firm links with other providers who can help learners to make further progress. Managers have also recently responded positively to learners' needs by piloting a new distance-learning ICT qualification. There is a well-produced development plan which is clearly focused on further improvements to this curriculum.

34. Most of the learners are given appropriate guidance and support, but this is usually because tutors respond well to learners' needs, rather than as a result of good planning. Marketing materials for ICT have recently been reviewed and reissued. Course details contain clear learning goals and explain the commitments learners should make. One member of staff has recently been appointed to develop an initial advice and guidance role, although this has yet to make any significant impact. A drop-in class has been established at the two main learning centres to provide additional support for learners to supplement their regular lessons. There is a formal structure to induction, although it is not always effective. Most tutors work without additional classroom support, even when learners demand high levels of individual attention.

35. Managers have recently introduced significant improvements to the way the curriculum is managed. These include more effective quality assurance and monitoring practices, more diverse and better-structured learning opportunities, a new tutor guidance pack and clearer line-management responsibilities. There is good progress in implementing the new management practices and they have started to make an impact in many areas. However, quality assurance arrangements are still incomplete and some of the planned changes are not yet established. Systems are not sufficiently established to support sharing of best practice, tutor development, internal verification, marketing to minority and other target groups, and effective use of data to analyse performance targets.

36. Learners speak highly about the expertise and patience of their tutors. They are generally very satisfied. They value their learning experience and find many practical ways to apply their new skills at home and in their professional lives. Their confidence in using ICT has increased significantly. Many have overcome an initial fear of technology and are now enjoying their time with computers. Some learners are frustrated about the poor quality of computers, printers and Internet connection at some centres. There are also a few learners who have complained about late cancellation of a course at one centre due to low numbers of enrolments.

**Poor Practice**

*One learner who uses a wheelchair has been attending an ICT course for nearly two years. He has to use a standard PC workstation. The learner's wheelchair does not fit under the desk and he is forced to work in discomfort. The learner has to stretch to reach the keyboard and often suffers back pain. It was not until a recent survey that his needs were acknowledged. An adaptable table has now been ordered, but has not yet arrived.*

**Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel****Grade 4**

37. Activities in fitness, complementary therapies and health are offered at five locations across the London borough of Hillingdon. Some sessions are offered in community venues and schools. Provision is organised by the two curriculum areas of humanities, and arts, crafts and related subjects. Ninety-four per cent of learners are enrolled on non-accredited courses and these are generally in sport and leisure and include fitness training, badminton, bowls, golf, bridge, T'ai Chi, yoga, reiki and shiatsu. Learners on accredited courses include first aid, reflexology, aromatherapy, massage, counselling and a teaching assistant award. Provision is offered throughout the week and some short courses are available at weekends. Courses run during the day and in the evening with the length of lessons varying between one and five hours.

38. In 2001-02, there were 1,308 learners accounting for 1,885 enrolments on courses. Learners in health and fitness accounted for 21 per cent of total enrolments. Since September 2002, a total of 811 learners have been recruited. Eighty-three per cent are women, 6 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, 1 per cent has a declared disability and 11 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees. Forty-two per cent are aged 60 years or over.

**STRENGTHS**

- good achievement on accredited courses
- high level of learners' participation in lessons
- good teaching on most accredited programmes

**WEAKNESSES**

- weak monitoring of learners' progress on non-accredited programmes
- some poorly planned teaching on non-accredited programmes
- some inappropriate accommodation
- no clearly defined progression routes for non-accredited programmes
- inadequate risk-management procedures

39. There are good achievements on accredited courses and this was acknowledged in the self-assessment report. In 2001, the pass rates on the course in anatomy, physiology and massage were 77 per cent, while in aromatherapy and reflexology they were 94 per cent and 91 per cent respectively. In 2002, the pass rate on the anatomy, physiology and massage course was 86 per cent and aromatherapy was 100 per cent. Pass rates on the classroom assistants courses were also good in 2002 at 86 per cent on the stage 1 and 89 per cent on the stage 2. There is detailed recording of assessments and there are good monitoring systems to measure learners' progress. Comments from

external moderators and examiners are positive. Learners on accredited courses demonstrate skills of a higher standard than expected. For example, in an aromatherapy lesson, learners who had only been studying the subject for five months were able to blend a selection of oils to treat clients with several needs. At the time of inspection, attendance was 72 per cent. However, registers indicate a higher level of attendance on most courses in previous months.

40. The participation by learners is good on most programmes. There is active involvement by learners in practical lessons. Learners display high levels of concentration to achieve the correct techniques. For example, learners on non-accredited courses of yoga and keep fit, work hard to be successful in their activities. Good stretches and posture in yoga classes were observed. On an introduction to aromatherapy course, learners had been practising their massage techniques during the previous week and displayed good levels of skill in massage after only three weeks on the course. There are good responses to questioning during background knowledge lessons and most learners were actively involved in discussions.

41. Good teaching was observed on most accredited programmes. In seven lessons observed for accredited programmes, 71 per cent were judged to be good or better and 14 per cent were satisfactory. The self-assessment report did not make reference to this. Lessons are well prepared, planned and taught. Teachers work effectively with a wide range of abilities and use different approaches to meet learners' needs. These include question and answer, discussion, demonstration and small group work. In a lesson for classroom assistants, learners displayed good understanding of the subject and were able to apply this to a series of case studies. There is a good rapport between teachers and learners. Teachers give good feedback to learners during lessons and on assignments. Learners are able to improve their understanding and further their knowledge through the constructive comments made by teachers.

42. Some teaching is poorly planned for non-accredited programmes. Schemes of work and lesson plans have insufficient detail and place too much emphasis on listing exercises and activities, rather than focusing on the learners. Aims and objectives of the sessions are not routinely shared with learners. Instruction and demonstration techniques are good, but there is an over-reliance on these methods. The pace of some lessons is inappropriate, with technical information and skills being covered very quickly. In some classes, the more able students are not sufficiently challenged by additional or alternative activities. Some learners who have repeated the same programme a number of times do not always carry out new activities or progress on to higher levels of activity. In good sessions, tutors are more aware of learners who have injury problems or physical limitations and make appropriate suggestions about modifying the activity.

43. The self-assessment report acknowledges that there is some inappropriate accommodation. Access to one of the centres is by a series of steps. Learners who have restricted mobility have difficulty entering and leaving the building and reaching upstairs classrooms. Learners who use wheelchairs are unable to study at the centre. In

a number of centres, classrooms are cramped. In one centre, learners on a first aid at work course had difficulty carrying out practical work. Some of the keep fit classes are hindered by the lack of space which does not allow learners to move freely. A number of classrooms are interrupted by noise from corridors and other classrooms. Learners in a yoga lesson were disturbed during the relaxing and meditating session of their programme. The cookery room at one of the centres is outdated and contains a poor standard of small equipment. Accommodation for complementary therapies is inadequate as classrooms are used for practical lessons. Portable beds are used for massage sessions and one room has no water supply for washing hands.

44. The monitoring of learners' progress is weak on non-accredited programmes. Individual learning plans have been designed and employed in most of the learning centres. However, many of the learning outcomes set by teachers are superficial and are not linked to targets which can be assessed. Learners mainly make statements of their satisfaction of the courses and their teachers. Individual learning outcomes are not regularly reviewed. Learners in some centres have not been offered the opportunity to formally review their progress. Little consideration is given to recording or monitoring progress. In non-accredited courses, learners view their lessons as mainly for leisure and find paperwork obtrusive. The recording of assessments on accredited programmes is satisfactory. The monitoring of progress is thorough and monitoring systems are appropriate to meet the requirements of the awarding body.

45. There are no clearly defined progression routes for non-accredited programmes. A large number of programmes have been running for several years with the same tutor and learners. Many classes have new learners alongside experienced learners and the teaching methods are not changed to reflect their different levels. Some class sizes are small and there is no opportunity to progress on to a higher-level programme. Provision is offered at five centres across the area, but they do not cover the needs of the diverse communities. Classes are available during the day and evening, but provision is limited in each centre. Some short programmes are offered at weekends. There is a small range of accredited programmes in complementary therapies and counselling which are growing steadily.

46. Information on courses is limited to that contained in promotional material. The content and aims of some programmes are not fully explained and specialist staff are not always available to advise learners when they are choosing a programme. Opportunities to progress are not clearly identified at this point. Additional costs which learners may have to meet are stated on the literature, but some learners have difficulty in purchasing expensive equipment. Some learners who are aged over 60 receive a fee concession which gives support to those experiencing financial hardship. Once learners have joined a programme they have a good level of support from their tutors. There is often personal contact from a tutor if learners miss a class or are ill. Tutors are very good at creating informal support networks and links with their learners.

47. The procedures for risk management are inadequate as it is unclear who is responsible for them. Some risk assessments are carried out, but they are limited to

specific accommodation and do not deal with the risks associated with an activity or the group involved. The additional risks of working with older learners in a practical environment are not fully acknowledged. Health considerations are covered at the start of a programme, but are not constantly reinforced at every session. This is a particular risk where learners admit to using new skills on other people outside class without fully appreciating the associated dangers. In some sessions, there is insufficient attention given to safe practice. In badminton sessions, learners are allowed to wear jewellery while they are playing. In some classes, there is no routine discussion about safe technique and health related issues. Health check questionnaires are not always completed before the start of a physical activity to identify learners who have physical limitations or difficulties. There is no coherent curriculum planning and evaluation. The range of provision across the borough is not co-ordinated by a curriculum specialist. Sport and leisure provision is managed in two different curriculum areas. Valuable opportunities for sharing best practice and improving provision are not taken. The lesson observations carried out by curriculum managers are thorough and well recorded, but the grades are generous compared with those given by inspectors.

48. Learners value and enjoy the opportunity to participate in physical activities and have a high regard for their tutors. Older learners state that participation in the courses contributes significantly to maintaining health, mobility and flexibility. Learners also value the social interaction and the opportunity to develop and maintain social contacts. Learners on accredited courses are very positive about the vocational relevance and benefits of their programmes.



**Visual & performing arts & media****Grade 3**

49. At the time of the inspection, learners were enrolled on 62 courses, most of which are non-accredited. There are weekday classes in 22 subjects at five centres across the borough. Current provision broadly matches that offered in previous years. Most courses run for two hours a week during the daytime for 28 weeks a year from September to June. A smaller number of courses are offered in the evening. In addition, there are a few weekend, short summer courses and taster days. Arts and crafts subjects include embroidery, pottery, interior design, dressmaking, calligraphy, jewellery, woodwork, art, and violin making. The provider also runs a small number of performing arts courses such as drama, choir and Egyptian dance. There are a few opportunities for learners to progress from beginners to advanced level classes.

50. In 2001-02, there were 1,131 learners accounting for 1,885 enrolments. These learners accounted for 18 per cent of total enrolments. Since September 2002, a total of 950 learners have been recruited. Seventy-eight per cent are women, 5 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 1 per cent has a declared disability. Six per cent are entitled to a concessionary fee and 51 per cent are aged 60 years and over. The curriculum is managed by a programme manager who is responsible for budgetary management, quality assurance and the planning and delivery of the curriculum. Two fractional curriculum co-ordinators manage 41 part-time staff who work an average of four hours a week.

**STRENGTHS**

- good standard of work by most learners
- good development of technical skills
- good support for tutors to improve teaching and learning

**WEAKNESSES**

- weak assessment practice on non-accredited courses
- limited range of courses
- poor management information for the programme area

**OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- further develop access to specialist facilities
- increased celebration of learners' achievements
- better partnership links with arts providers
- further development of opportunities for the sharing of good practice
- wider range of teaching and learning methods

51. Most learners achieve good standards of finished practical work, but this was not identified in the self-assessment report. Paintings and artefacts produced by learners on visual arts and crafts courses are good. For example, some of the more able learners on painting and drawing courses have exhibited and sold their work, while others have gained paid work as a result of attending accredited courses in interior design. Learners are motivated and work hard to develop good technical skills and knowledge. They understand a range of processes and apply them with confidence. Violins which are made by learners are used in national orchestras and other public performances. Learners on music, dance and drama courses perform pieces to a good standard. For example, learners on a beginners line-dancing course, choreographed and recorded their own 32-step piece in pairs, using appropriate specialist vocabulary. They then successfully performed these to other learners. Learners on painting and drawing classes work with confidence on a wide range of materials. Learners' understanding of the historical, social and cultural aspects of their specialist subject is less well developed. The achievement of less-able learners is satisfactory. Those learners interviewed state that learning has increased their confidence and improved their quality of life. However, there are few displays of learners' work and achievements in classrooms to inspire current learners. In learning sessions observed at five centres, the average attendance was 66 per cent, but in one of these centres, it was poor at 45 per cent. Pass rates on the three accredited courses in 2001-02 were good at 97 per cent. Retention rates across the provision are 87 per cent.

52. All teaching is satisfactory or better. Tutors' specialist knowledge, skills and expertise are generally appropriate to adult learner groups and the working relationships they develop with learners are good. The teaching of technical skills is good. Tutors effectively demonstrate and explain a wide range of techniques and processes and successfully guide learners in their application. Learners make steady progress towards achieving learning goals. In the best sessions, learners' produce creative and expressive work, they share their skills and knowledge and are challenged by the range of work covered. Learning effectively builds on learners' prior experience and knowledge. In the less-satisfactory sessions, feedback is insufficiently evaluative. In art classes, a lot of the work is limited to small-scale, mainly representational work and there is little individual creativity or experimentation. There is insufficient use of handouts or other learning resources to stimulate or reinforce learning.

53. Tutors use a narrow range of teaching methods which in many cases follow the pattern of the tutor's demonstration followed by individual tuition. This was not recognised in the self-assessment report. Lesson plans focus on processes and activities and insufficient attention is paid to the identification of measurable and achievable learning outcomes. Planning does not identify assessment criteria for success, and in many cases little attention is paid to the different needs of learners. This was reflected in some learning sessions, where less-able learners made slow progress. Individual learning needs are not always sufficiently identified and there are few opportunities for

independent learning.

54. Most of the accommodation is adequate. Centres are welcoming, well lit and signposting is good. However, there is insufficient access to specialist facilities and resources. Learners are limited to a basic range of arts and crafts subjects and rooms sometimes restrict the scale and extent of their work. For example, a significant amount of art work is small scale, and poor acoustics in a hall used for choir rehearsals make work on rhythm and intonation difficult. Access is poor. Insufficient ground floor premises prevent learners with restricted mobility from attending learning sessions. There are no facilities for independent study or rehearsal. Many tutors regularly order and pay for materials themselves and then sell them to learners.

55. The monitoring and assessment of learners' progress on non-accredited courses is weak. Initial assessment of learners' needs is not formalised or recorded. Learning goals are set for all courses, and progress towards achieving them is reviewed mid-way and on completion of programmes. There are few individual learning goals. Learners generally receive regular, constructive verbal feedback and clear technical guidance on work in progress. However, learning goals and criteria for success are insufficiently precise. Learners are insufficiently aware of the progress they are making, and what they need to do to achieve their goals. On accredited courses, assessment procedures meet the requirements of the awarding body.

56. The range of provision is fairly traditional and many courses have run for a number of years. There are few new learners. Most provision is in the arts and crafts courses. There is a limited amount of performing arts provision. In too many courses, the content of the curriculum is limited to a narrow range of styles, traditions and cultures. There are a few new initiatives to extend the curriculum in community venues, such as candle-making, arts and crafts, and glass painting for Asian women. However, the curriculum currently offered is not meeting the full range of learning needs of local communities. A large, but declining number of programmed courses do not run. The recruitment of black and Asian learners is poor and declining. The curriculum provides very few opportunities for learners to progress from beginners to advanced levels, and in many cases, learners of varying abilities and experience are in one class for many years. Learners benefit from a small number of enrichment activities, such as exhibitions of learners' work, and an exchange with a French choir. However, there are insufficient partnership arrangements with arts providers.

57. Pre-course information is readily available to learners. The provider's website includes useful course guidance. Course information sheets follow a standard format, are easy to read and provide clear and concise course descriptions and guidance on the purchasing of materials. Course advice days are held where learners are given detailed information about their chosen course. Induction procedures are satisfactory and follow a standard format. Punctuality, non-attendance and poor performance are closely monitored at programme level by tutors.

58. There is good support for tutors to improve the quality of their teaching.

Curriculum managers carry out regular and thorough classroom visits to check whether course documents reach the required standards. Teaching observations are effective and communication with staff is good. There are regular staff meetings and tutors receive useful written communication. Although tutors attend a range of professional development events which are planned and related to local and national targets, there are few opportunities for tutors to share good practice in their specialist curriculum areas. Programme managers have insufficient management data at curriculum level to monitor performance trends. For example, attendance patterns are not effectively monitored by managers.

59. Learners value the confidence they have gained. They enjoy working in a range of media using a variety of techniques and processes. They appreciate the specialist skills and knowledge of their tutors and the individual support and guidance they are given. Many learners speak about the social benefits of attending an adult education class, and the opportunities to learn from, and share ideas with, other members of their group.

60. A significant number of learners spoke about problems they had experienced in accessing some of the provider's specialist facilities.

#### Good Practice

*Learners produce violins of a professional standard in a violin making class. They are very prolific, and current members of the group have produced one cello, five violas, ten violins and a trapezoid violin. The quality of their finished products are played and assessed by visiting professional musicians. Some of their instruments are currently being played in professional national orchestras.*

**English, languages & communications****Grade 2**

61. HAE provides courses at a variety of levels in 12 languages. These are located at seven venues across the borough. Lessons take place once a week for one and a half, or two hours. Courses may last for eight, 17 or 28 weeks. Family learning courses in French and Spanish take place on Saturday mornings for two hours and run for 10 or 24 weeks. Currently, 59 per cent of courses take place in the evening and 41 per cent in the daytime. At present there are 34 part-time language tutors, managed by a full-time programme manager and a part-time curriculum co-ordinator. Approximately 91 per cent of tutors are fully qualified and 74 per cent are native speakers.

62. In 2001-02, there were 1,120 learners, accounting for 1,531 enrolments on courses. Since September 2002, a total of 809 learners have been recruited. Sixty-three per cent are women, 17 per cent are from minority ethnic groups, two per cent have declared a learning disability and 6 per cent are entitled to concessionary fees. Nineteen per cent of learners are aged 60 years and over. There are opportunities for progression to advanced level in French, German, and Italian and up to intermediate level in Spanish and Greek. All other languages are offered at beginners level. In September 2002, Irish and Polish were discontinued due to lack of recruitment and beginners Punjabi was introduced to meet community needs.

**STRENGTHS**

- good achievement of personal goals
- good teaching and learning
- wide range of language provision

**WEAKNESSES**

- inadequate course review and evaluation

**OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- some better accommodation
- more informative schemes of work
- more effective use of individual learning plans

63. There is good achievement of learners' personal goals, but this was not identified in the self-assessment report. Learners express great satisfaction with their courses, especially about the increased confidence in speaking the language. Their speaking skills are well developed and many use them at work and abroad. One learner is often

called upon to act as a translator at work. Many learners have foreign relatives and properties abroad, and find the courses have been of real benefit to them. Others mention the importance of maintaining skills which they would otherwise lose. Learners on the few accredited courses have achieved good pass rates. At the time of inspection, attendance was good at 78 per cent, and so far this year, retention is good at 88 per cent. Written work is good and on the higher level courses, there is good understanding of grammar.

64. A high proportion of teaching is good or better, with effective use of the target language, well-planned lessons, extensive use of pair work, and varied tasks at the appropriate level. These strengths were not fully identified in the self-assessment report. There is good use of well-produced and often authentic materials. There are comprehensive profiles of learners which indicate good insight into individual needs. In most classes there is enthusiastic active learning. Learners have highly developed speaking skills and use the target language at length, accurately and with confidence. In advanced classes, learners engage willingly in discussion and speak fluently. They discuss complex ideas in the foreign language and are able to understand the language of native speakers. However in a few classes, too much English is used and the learners are given fewer opportunities to develop their oral skills. Schemes of work are largely underdeveloped and many have insufficient detail about the resource materials to be used and the teaching strategies needed to meet the needs of individual learners.

65. Resources are mostly satisfactory. Classrooms are clean but drab. Whiteboards, overhead projectors and tape recorders are in place. Textbooks are adequate, and in most classes observed, there are well-produced teaching materials. However, at one centre there is no access for those with restricted mobility, and there are no hearing loops at any site to support hearing-impaired learners. Language rooms at one site are subject to noise at certain times of the day and one of the rooms used for language teaching in another centre is inadequate. Teachers are well-qualified, speak fluently in their target language and many are native speakers.

66. Arrangements for initial assessment of learners' language needs are being further developed. Individual learning plans are used in most classes and include learners' aims at the beginning of the courses. However, they are of limited value in recording progress and are not valued by learners. Some initial assessment is carried out through an information evening and through induction, but the information is not recorded. Records of achievement are used on many beginners courses and are recognised by learners as a useful record of their progress. However, they are not used in all classes. Most learners recognise their progress from the increased confidence they see when they use their foreign language outside the classroom.

67. There is a wide range of provision in many languages, at different levels during the daytime and in the evening. This was identified in the self-assessment report. The introduction of small-group provision means that many languages can be offered. Progression routes are available in most languages, but there is little provision in the evening above level 2. As part of the strategy to widen participation in adult learning,

courses now run in centres in more deprived areas of the borough and family language classes in French and Spanish are now offered in one town centre on a Saturday morning. Pre-enrolment information and advice are good. The level of each course is clearly described in the prospectus. Course information sheets give clear, detailed course information. Learners are very positive about the enrolment and induction processes. Learners are supported in the classroom by caring staff, who also organise additional activities. Three tutors organised a trip to Bordeaux in 2002, which was taken up by 48 learners and some tutors support language clubs in French, German, Spanish and Greek, which are organised by the learners.

68. Course planning is comprehensive. It takes into account learners' views from a questionnaire at the end of the course, tutors' views and local information. The current action plan includes the development of initial assessment and diagnosis procedures, the introduction of community languages and improved links with a local specialist languages secondary school. There is regular and effective communication between programme managers and tutors. The practice of lesson observation is established and outcomes are recorded. However, there is no systematic review of course content or achievement by managers or tutors. The data on retention and attendance are not systematically analysed, nor is effective action taken. This was partially recognised in the self-assessment report. There is little involvement of part-time tutors in the self-assessment report.

69. Learners value their lessons and are enthusiastic about the lively teaching and encouraging support they receive from their tutors. They appreciate the opportunity to maintain or acquire foreign language skills. Their reasons for following language courses include family, social, personal development, travel, ownership of property abroad, and for work. For example, one learner in a Spanish class is passing on her learning to her children. Others own properties or are preparing for a holiday in a foreign country. They value the fact that tutors will adapt their courses to meet their individual aims, as well as the opportunity for regular revision to consolidate their knowledge. Many also report an increase in confidence and improvement in mental alertness, in addition to development or maintenance of linguistic skills. Learners enjoy the social interaction with tutors and other learners in the classroom. They are appreciative of the benefits that come from having native speakers as tutors, and welcome the inclusion of authentic materials. Homework is marked with helpful comments to improve the learners' language skills.

## Foundation programmes

## Grade 4

70. A range of part-time ESOL courses are offered at HAE's three main adult education centres and in outreach centres. The core courses of four hours range from pre-entry to level 1. Additional courses are offered in literacy, computing, preparation for study and work, dressmaking and women-only courses.

71. In 2001-2, there were 408 learners accounting for 584 enrolments on courses. Learners in ESOL accounted for 6 per cent of total enrolments. Since September 2002, a total of 389 have been recruited of whom 69 per cent are women, 3 per cent have a declared learning difficulty/disability and 4 per cent are aged 60 and over. Most learners enrol for more than four hours a week and courses run for either 15 or five weeks. Most of the courses are internally accredited and learners are offered the opportunity to take a written examination at basic and elementary level as well as open college network (OCN) word processing.

72. ESOL provision is central to the strategic planning of the borough and adult education service and improvements include increasing the number of staff and an improved curriculum offer. There are now three permanent staff and 14 part-time teaching staff. The programme manager's post is vacant although a new member of staff has been appointed. The area has been temporarily managed by the head of client services. The development of the ESOL curriculum has been affected by the shortage of teaching and management staff.

### STRENGTHS

- good development of learners' oral skills in lessons
- effective use of homework to reinforce learning

### WEAKNESSES

- ineffective assessment of learners' progress
- insufficient attention to individual's learning needs
- poor retention

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better monitoring systems for measuring individual learners' progress

73. The learners develop good oral skills in lessons. They enjoy the challenge of new vocabulary and practice using it in useful contexts. For example, in a well planned



lesson which aimed to relate new vocabulary to a visit to the post office, a good range of learning resources was used including stamps, parcels, airmail stickers, postcards, and letters. The more able students explained the use of different items while learners who had never been to a post office, developed their functional use of language. In another lesson, learners at beginner level expressed their opinions well through the use of a board game which prompted them to say what they think about various topics. In better lessons, there is a good focus on developing pronunciation, listening skills and accurate responses and learners are able to state what work they covered in lessons and what they have learned. Teachers encourage learners to practise and improve their oral skills and involve them in role-play and group activities. In some lessons, insufficient use is made of questions to involve more passive learners. The more able and confident students answer all the questions while others remain silent.

74. Effective use is made of homework to reinforce learning. Learners' files and course files contain many examples of marked work and learners confirmed the helpful correction of their homework. Learners' work is carefully marked and they are given constructive feedback. In one observed lesson learners completed a personal diary of their daily activities for homework and this showed development of their writing skills.

75. Retention is poor at 51 per cent for 2001-02. Improvement targets have been set for each course and a new attendance monitoring system has been introduced. However, it is not yet effective. There is little accurate data to show achievement rates or to quantify numbers of learners who have taken examinations. Data suggest small numbers of examination entries. Arrangements to measure success on non-accredited courses are inadequate.

76. Assessment of learners' progress is not effective. An initial assessment is carried out before the learners attend a work placement, but the information is not used as a starting point for teaching. There is little evidence of diagnostic and formative assessment and progress is not monitored adequately. Lesson plans focus on outcomes rather than steps to learning, and the practice for reviews varies. Formal reviews are not always carried out and there is little recording of achievements on non-accredited courses. Individual learning plans have recently been introduced, but there are significant variations in practice. Although learners are aware of their individual learning plans, they are not clear about their purpose and confirm that their use is not regular.

77. Insufficient attention is placed on individual learning needs. Teachers complete learners' profiles which record learners' individual needs and aims, but there is insufficient attention paid to prior and future learning needs. There is little evidence of work for different ability levels and often targets are not shown in individual learning plans. The teaching activities and methods focus on group work and are rarely individualised. There is insufficient attention on planning for the range of ability and skill levels. The learning materials tend to be culturally biased.

78. There is some unsatisfactory accommodation including size of rooms, temperature, layout, and the sharing and shortage of space. Often there is background noise and on

occasions this affects learning. All ESOL students have an induction and there is a helpful checklist of topics to be covered including health and safety and equal opportunities. In addition, the teacher and learner sign a form to say that induction has taken place and a copy is placed in learners' files.

79. Management of the programme is inadequate. The range of provision is insufficient to meet the needs of learners. The ESOL curriculum only includes part-time courses. Students attend a core programme of four hours and then additional sessions in literacy, computers and language. However, there is a large number of learners aged between 16 to 24 and their needs are not being met. There is little preparation for further study, training or work. ESOL training is not adequately staffed. The area does not have a manager although someone has recently been appointed. There are three permanent staff and an over-dependency on part-time sessional staff. Staff who work in outreach centres feel isolated and rarely see management. The planning and improvement of the quality of the ESOL programme has recently been dealt with by the temporary manager. A development plan and quality assurance policy and framework for 2003-04 deals with key issues. However, it is too early to judge the impact of changes.

80. The staff are not adequately qualified in ESOL as a specialist area and some are not qualified to the required level. Most have an initial certificate in basic skills. The management team is aware of this and is dealing with it by offering training opportunities and funding. There are satisfactory arrangements for staff development and meetings. However, there are difficulties with staff participation and attendance. External and internal training programmes are on offer. Internal training takes place once a term and there are team meetings every week for the three permanent staff. A full team meeting with part-time staff takes place twice a term. There are inadequate arrangements for staff performance reviews. The self-assessment report over-estimated the number of very good and good teaching sessions and did not identify any lessons as unsatisfactory.

81. Learners are positive, and many say that they enjoy learning at Hillingdon and state how their everyday language has improved. Information on the service is available from local libraries, the civic centre and the college. However, learners are not aware of support services and say that they rely on their teacher for information. They comment favourably about the free ESOL provision, the approachable teachers, and the opportunity to learn. They state that they have gained new skills, improved their communication skills and built new relationships.

82. Learners would like to see improvements in the accommodation, temperature in classrooms, childcare and parking facilities. Some learners comment that they find the classes too easy and would like to practise using their language more in class. Some are not sure of the levels at which they study and how they can enrol on computing courses. A large number request additional courses, and longer learning sessions.

**Community learning****Grade 3**

83. The community learning programmes funded by HAE are focused on attracting 'hard to reach' learners by offering learning opportunities in partnership with community organisations, employers and primary schools. Some programmes specifically target parents of children attending the schools. These include family literacy, family numeracy and introduction to computers. The courses aim to help parents to develop the knowledge, confidence and skills to help their children with their school work. On some courses there are joint sessions where parents and children learn together. Other programmes are run in partnership with local employers, on employer premises and aim to improve the basic skills of employees. Some programmes are run in community centres and meet the needs and interest of local groups. These include a parenting course for a women's group, candle making and yoga for an Asian women's group. Learners acquire new skills and knowledge and the confidence to continue learning on other local courses. For most of the learners, these programmes are the first learning opportunity they have had since leaving school. Some learners work towards OCN accreditation. Courses are available at times to suit the learners, usually during school hours. Some courses provide help with childcare. Courses are generally taught over a specific number of weeks ranging from six weeks to 12 weeks. Most teachers are sessional and teach for less than 20 hours a week. Family literacy and family/community learning are managed by a curriculum co-ordinator. The workplace basic skills programme is managed by a tutor co-ordinator. They are all line managed by the head of client services.

**STRENGTHS**

- effective partnerships with external organisations to widen participation
- good achievement of confidence and skills
- good individual attention for learners
- effective family literacy and family learning courses

**WEAKNESSES**

- ineffective initial assessment of learners
- inadequate target-setting and monitoring of progress
- inadequate workplace basic skills programme

**OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better teaching accommodation for some classes
- better access to ICT facilities for community learning
- better sharing of good practice

84. Learners gain confidence and skills from attending the courses. Learners in the workplace basic skills class gain confidence and are motivated. They acquire a better understanding of company priorities and develop skills which are of use to them in their work. For example, they learn how to use calculators and are able to calculate the average weight of a consignment of mail. Attendance is good, as the class is in company time. Learners in family literacy and numeracy classes gain an understanding of how their children are taught at school and enjoy spending time with them. Learners have the confidence to use the spelling games they have made in the classroom with their children at home. They are more confident to go to the local public library on a regular basis and are more comfortable talking to their children about school and homework. Attendance is generally good, but some parents find it difficult to attend due to other caring pressures on their lives. Parents and teachers notice improvements in the children's behaviour and in their school work. Learners on family literacy and learning programmes are entered for OCN accreditation. In 2001-02, the achievement rate was 81 per cent.

85. Family literacy and family learning programmes are effective. Teaching is satisfactory or better and all learners are engaged in the learning activities. Teaching methods and most learning materials are relevant to the learners' needs and interests. There is good revision of work from previous lessons and tutors regularly check and reinforce understanding. They give good feedback to learners on the work they are carrying out in class. In a family literacy class, parents made a game and tried it out before playing it with their children. Parents learn about the different types of writing children do in school and practise planning a story with a story planner and writing frame. However, course plans do not have clearly defined aims and objectives. Some lesson plans do not have objectives, and some lesson plans are only a description of tutors' and learners' activities.

86. The workplace basic skills courses are inadequate. They are not customised to the needs of employers and the learning needs of employees. Although in one case, a training pack was provided by the company, no adaptations were made by the tutor to ensure that the diverse learning needs of the learners were met. Learners are not shown strategies to help them solve problems independently. Many of the workplace basic skills courses focus on developing employees' information technology (IT) skills only.

87. Most of the teaching materials are relevant to the learners' needs and interests, and most tutors use relevant teaching materials and resources. Resources are obtained from the partner organisations such as employers and primary schools. However, the materials are not always adapted to meet the learning needs of learners. Teaching materials in the family literacy class consist of handouts for the parents and games for the children which are made by the parents. Most classrooms are large enough and are well equipped with flipchart, overhead projector and whiteboard. However, some

classes are small and are not well equipped. Learners do not always have access to ICT facilities which would enhance their learning. Most of the staff are well qualified. Many of the family literacy tutors have primary school teaching experience and qualifications, in addition to basic skills teaching qualifications. Although some staff have industrial experience, they do not have the appropriate skills or up-to-date basic skills qualifications to design and teach customised basic skills programmes. Staff attend professional development training programmes on using the new curriculum and diagnostic materials.

88. The learners' initial assessment is ineffective. Some of the learners on family literacy and numeracy or workplace basic skills programmes do not have their reading and writing skills assessed. Long- and short-term goals are not clearly identified and there is no training needs analysis carried out to identify specific training needs in the context of a learners' job. There are no targets for learners to achieve in an allocated time. Individual learning plans are not consistent in design across the areas of learning, and there is no consistent approach to using them. The lack of clear learning goals inhibits the progress review, although learners are given informal feedback. Some learners are given a test at the end of their short course. At the end of community learning courses, tutors give learners leaflets about other available learning opportunities, but there is no formal information, advice and guidance from qualified staff.

89. Effective partnerships have been established with 20 employers, 25 schools and 11 community groups. There are good working relationships with the Hillingdon lifelong learning partnership. Joint working arrangements to support under-represented groups are good. HAE is supporting community groups to deliver their own courses, and develop their own capacity. The programmes are targeted at a specific group of learners, who are referred by either their employer, their child's school or their community organisation. All learners in community learning classes are new learners. For most of them this is the first time they have engaged in formal learning since leaving school. Learners benefit from attending the programmes and are motivated to continue learning. They wish to further develop their skills in computing, numeracy, and literacy. Many progress onto classroom assistant or other childcare training courses.

90. Learners are given good individual support. Tutors show great sensitivity to learners, especially when personal problems are discussed. Not all learners are of the same ability, but tutors ensure that all learners feel valued, supported and able to learn and progress. Tutors also create an atmosphere which enhances peer support.

91. Support for staff is not structured. There are occasional tutor meetings, but there is no sharing of good practice. There is commitment to developing workplace basic skills and family literacy programmes. Staff are given information on further training opportunities, but tutors are not paid for time spent on course development.

92. All learners are satisfied with their courses and feel more confident. Some say that attending the courses has taught them how to spell and that they have learned new learning strategies. They feel that they are challenged by attending the courses and that

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this helps them to support their children. Learners in community classes enjoy the social aspect of the classes.

#### **Good Practice**

*At the last session of a parenting class, the tutor offers to facilitate the setting up of a support group for the women who have attended the course. She helps the women to organise an exchange of telephone numbers, agree on meeting dates, and find a location for their first meeting. The women then run the meetings independently in their own homes until such time as they are no longer needed.*

**Other adult and community learning****Grade 4**

93. The inspection of other adult and community learning covered literacy and numeracy and a small sample of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Family literacy and numeracy and workplace basic skills was inspected under community learning. Literacy and numeracy programmes take place in HAE's three main learning centres and a community outreach centre. Provision includes basic literacy and numeracy and pre-GCSE classes. At the time of the inspection, there were 17 basic skills courses and 10 open learning workshops. Learners can enrol on 15-week courses, attend the open learning centre or a combination of both, for up to four sessions a week. Classes take place in the morning, afternoon or evening and accreditation is available for all learners. At the time of inspection, a caretaker programme manager has responsibility for the provision. There is one full-time tutor, and nine part-time or sessional tutors.

94. In 2001-02, there were 590 learners accounting for 725 enrolments on literacy and numeracy courses. They accounted for 7 per cent of the total enrolments. Since September 2002, a total of 475 learners have been recruited, of whom 68 per cent are women, 45 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 6 per cent have declared a learning difficulty or disability. Five per cent are aged 60 years or over.

95. Provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities consists of an independent living programme which operates across the borough. Most of the programme has been accredited through OCN. It is a discrete programme and there is no integration of learners into the mainstream adult education programme. The curriculum co-ordinator was appointed in September 2002.

96. In 2001-02 there were 123 learners accounting for 246 enrolments in provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learners accounted for 2 per cent of the total provision. Since September 2002, 202 learners have been recruited, of whom 69 per cent are women, 10 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 21 per cent are aged 60 years and over.

**STRENGTHS**

- some good learning based on the needs and interests of learners
- good volunteer support

**WEAKNESSES**

- too much unsatisfactory teaching
- insufficient range of provision and venues to meet the needs of learners
- inadequate assessment and monitoring
- unsatisfactory programme management

97. Tutors understand the needs of the learners. In the better sessions, learning outcomes are appropriately challenging for the learners. Tutors use well-prepared learning materials and the pace and content of the lessons is good. In these sessions, tutors plan a range of learning activities based on the interests of the learners. In one literacy session the tutor designed interactive activities to support the learning objectives, including a game which matches captions to illustrations. In another session the tutor used newspapers to develop the lesson topic and related the learning to local and national events. Learners work productively and develop the confidence to extend their skills and direct their own learning. Tutors regularly check progress and learners receive good personal feedback which helps them reflect and evaluate their own learning. In a very good lesson for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, learners were engaged in developing challenging vocal skills. They were very involved in their learning, developed good concentration skills and enjoyed each other's performance.

98. Volunteer support is good. Learners appreciate the support of volunteers who add value to the learning process. Volunteers are well qualified and are sensitive to the needs of learners. They help learners develop self-confidence and self-esteem and have a good knowledge of the learners. They work well with tutors and give individual support as necessary. In some sessions tutors act as volunteers when they are not teaching.

99. Achievement rates are satisfactory in literacy and numeracy courses. Most learners are entered for OCN accreditation and in 2001-02, 69 per cent achieved a qualification. However, some learning programmes are inappropriately focused on the production of evidence for accreditation purposes, rather than on the development of individual learning outcomes. Learning targets for literacy and numeracy are sometimes too broad for achievement to be adequately measured. Some learners develop personal skills, including confidence in their own abilities. Attendance in taught classes is satisfactory, but is poor in the open learning centre. There are satisfactory systems in place for contacting absent learners and monitoring attendance.

100. Achievement of OCN units for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. However, given the absence of initial assessment to ascertain levels and needs, it is not possible to judge the value of accredited achievements. Learners work well together, enjoy practical activities which are challenging, and have good opportunities to develop manual dexterity and improve confidence.

101. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching. In the poorer sessions, insufficient use is made of information gained from initial assessment and guidance. Some teachers use a limited range of teaching techniques and there is insufficient use made of group and pair work. There is little development of learners' oral communication skills. In some



sessions, there is an over-reliance on paper-based activities which do not reflect the interests of the learners. Learning activities are poorly differentiated and do not meet the needs of some learners. Tutors do not always give learners the opportunity to direct their own learning. Ineffective use is made of the national curriculum to plan and monitor learning.

102. The quality and range of learning resources is inadequate. In some lessons tutors use worksheets which are outdated and poorly reproduced. ICT equipment for teaching in literacy and numeracy is poor, with outdated and poorly maintained hardware and insufficient suitable software. Some tutors do not have the expertise to include ICT as an integral part of their lesson planning. Some of the teaching accommodation is small and at one centre there is poor access for learners with restricted mobility. There are insufficient tutors who have the necessary skills and qualifications to teach numeracy and literacy. Class sizes are too large for learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The range of needs are too wide and the ratio of staff too small to support the range of intellectual and physical support learners need.

103. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress is inadequate. Insufficient use is made of initial and diagnostic assessments. Individual learning plans are not used effectively to monitor and review progress and to set targets. The monitoring and recording of small steps of achievement is very poor, with an over-emphasis on the recording of activities carried out in lessons. Reviews of progress do not include the use of formative assessments to monitor progress. Exchange of information between tutors for learners who attend more than one class is weak and the programmes are not related. During the inspection some learners were observed in three literacy sessions which were taught by three separate tutors.

104. The range of provision is not adequate to meet the needs of learners. Analysis of the literacy and numeracy needs of the whole community is insufficient. There are very few numeracy classes, and learners are sometimes inappropriately placed in open learning centre sessions because there is not a suitable class to meet their needs. Provision is not evenly distributed across Hillingdon, with little provision in community outreach centres. In the Victoria centre only four classes are available, and they are all taught by one tutor. Progression routes for learners are poor and partnerships with other providers are not well developed. A previous partnership with the adult guidance network is no longer active. Family literacy and numeracy has been developed in schools in the borough to extend the opportunities available. There is no integration of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and no clear progression routes are available.

105. The management of the literacy and numeracy programme is unsatisfactory. During the long-term absence of the basic skills programme manager and a basic skills co-ordinator, the management has been added to the workload of another manager. There is no basic skills strategy on which to base a plan to develop the quality of the provision. There are several action and developments plans in place, but they are not

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well linked. Plans have been poorly implemented and monitored. Quality assurance systems are currently ineffective in monitoring and improving the performance of staff. Support for part-time tutors is weak and communication between the staff is poor. Sessional staff have few links with managers and other tutors and often work in isolation. There are insufficient team meetings and inadequate sharing of good practice. The collection of data relating to the recruitment, retention, achievement and progression of learners is not used effectively. Staff are not aware of these systems and how they impact on their work.

106. The management of programmes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has undergone significant changes recently and the weaknesses in the programme are recognised. The self-assessment report identified the planned changes, but it is too early to judge their impact.

## 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	
<b>Provider</b>	<b>Provider</b>	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
<b>Learner</b>	<b>Learner</b>	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
<b>Teacher / trainer</b>	<b>Tutor</b>  <b>Mentor</b>	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.  Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
<b>Learning goals</b>	<b>Main learning goals</b>  <b>Secondary learning goals</b>	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.  These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
<b>Personal and learning skills</b>	<b>Personal and learning skills</b>	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
<b>Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome</b>	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.
<b>Subject-based programme</b>	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.
<b>Issue-based programme</b>	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.
<b>Outreach provision</b>	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.
<b>Neighbourhood-based work</b>	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.
<b>Community regeneration</b>	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.

<b>Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning</b>	
<b>Community capacity building</b>	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.
<b>Active citizenship</b>	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.