

INSPECTION REPORT

Kirklees LEA

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

- work-based learning 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

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.

INSPECTION REPORT

Kirklees LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Kirklees Local Education Authority (LEA) is part of Kirklees Metropolitan Council. It is contracted by the West Yorkshire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for the delivery of that part of adult learning funded by the LSC's adult and community learning budget in the borough. The LEA subcontracts the direct delivery of most of its adult and community learning programme to a number of other providers. The main ones are a local college of further education and a local technical college. The LEA has much smaller contracts with a local sixth form college, an educational association and a college for residential adult education, near Barnsley. The two colleges of further education operate in a range of community venues and schools across the borough. Through a service unit called Families and Schools Together, Literacy and Numeracy for Everyone (Fast Lane), the LEA also makes family learning provision in 80 schools across the district. This initiative was previously funded through the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), but is now funded by the LSC, the LEA and other sources. The responsibility for the adult and community learning programme and 'Fast Lane' rest within the LEA's community education and regeneration service. In addition, the LEA funds a number of smaller projects aimed at widening participation in areas of deprivation. These are run by voluntary organisations. Through its museums, art galleries and libraries, it carries out a range of other educational activities for adults which do not fall within the scope of the inspection.

2. The LEA is in a period of transition. It has agreed with its subcontractors that from August 2003, they should contract directly with the LSC for the funding to provide the adult education programme. The details of the new arrangements are still under discussion. The LEA wishes to retain its strategic role in relation to the planning forums in the borough, and to continue to directly manage its family learning programme and other community learning activities.

3. Through its subcontractors, the LEA offers courses in science and mathematics, construction, engineering, technology and manufacturing, information and communications technology (ICT), hospitality, sports, leisure and travel, health social care and public services, visual and performing arts and media, humanities, English, languages and communication and family learning. In 2001-02, 9,574 learners made 10,477 enrolments. By far the largest areas of study are hospitality, sports, leisure and travel, where most learners follow courses related to health and fitness; the visual and performing arts and media, where most learners take arts and crafts courses, and English, languages and communication, where most learners are studying modern European languages. Eighty per cent of learners were involved in courses of this kind. In 2000-01, 76 per cent of learners were women, and 4 per cent had a learning disability. Learners were evenly distributed across the 30-69 years age group, with approximately 5.7 per cent of learners being over 70 years of age.

4. Adult and community learning and Fast Lane are part of the community education and regeneration department within the lifelong learning directorate of the council.

5. An adult education officer is responsible for managing the teaching of the LEA's subcontracted adult and community learning programme, and for the oversight of the small projects. The postholder reports to the head of post-16 and adult learning. The Fast Lane project has its own manager who reports to the education regeneration manager. There is one temporary project development officer (0.6 full-time equivalent). The two main subcontractors each have their own adult education managers.

6. Kirklees has a population of 388,931. According to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000, Kirklees is the 85th most deprived local authority in England and Wales. The most deprived areas of the district are the three Huddersfield wards of Deighton, Crosland Moor and Newsome, two of the three Dewsbury wards (Thornhill and Dewsbury West), and two of the three Batley wards (Batley East and Batley West). Deighton, Thornhill and Dewsbury West are among the 10 per cent of the most deprived areas in England and qualify for Neighbourhood Renewal funding. Thirteen wards qualify for European Union Objective 2 funding. At 3.6 per cent, the overall unemployment rate for the district is slightly above the national average, but this conceals wide variations. The unemployment rate for people of minority ethnic origin who make up approximately 13 per cent of the district's population is 14.6 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

7. The LEA contracts out all hospitality, sport and leisure programmes to two colleges of further education in the borough. One college runs 65 per cent of the provision and the other 35 per cent. This is the largest aspect of the LEA's adult and community learning programme, and accounts for over one third of the programme. There were 3,785 enrolments in 2001-02. Courses are offered in 36 venues throughout the borough, in rural and urban settings. Ninety-one courses are currently running. Hospitality courses include Chinese, Indian, vegetarian cooking, cooking for special occasions, cake decoration, sugar craft and wine appreciation. Sports courses include keep fit, yoga, t'ai chi, qi gong, circuit training, badminton and sailing. Few of the courses are accredited. Some courses are targeted at specific groups of learners such as Asian women and people with learning difficulties. Around 75 per cent of enrolments are made by women, and approximately 50 per cent are aged over 50.

8. Courses last from between seven to 12 weeks and are organised on a termly basis with the shortest courses taking place in the summer term. Most sessions last for either one and a half or two hours and are offered in the mornings, afternoon and evening over five days a week. There is no weekend or summer provision, although there have been some five-week taster courses this year. A range of accommodation is used for the teaching of courses, including church halls, secondary and junior schools, colleges and community centres.

9. Each college has adult education staff who manage the provision. One college also has an area co-ordinator responsible for co-ordinating provision in the north of the borough. The other college has two area co-ordinators each with separate geographical responsibilities. There are 30 part-time tutors responsible for the teaching of all programmes in this area of learning, with most working for between two and six hours a week.

Visual & performing arts & media

10. Visual and performing arts and media is the second largest area of learning in the LEA's adult and community learning programme. The provision is delivered by two main subcontractors. It is the largest aspect of one subcontractor's programme, and the second largest of the others. During 2002-03, there were 2,689 enrolments on non-accredited courses, compared with 3,403 in 2001-02. Currently, learners are enrolled on 81 weekday classes in 25 subjects at 18 centres across the borough. This year's programme broadly matches that of previous years. Most courses run for two hours a week during the evening for six to 10 weeks. Courses are offered from September to mid-June. In addition, some are run in the daytime and there is also a small number of Saturday workshops. Arts and crafts subjects include painting and drawing, pottery, upholstery, lace-making, stained glass, dressmaking, calligraphy, photography and guitar making. The provider runs a smaller number of performing arts courses which include ballroom dancing and Arabic dance, guitar, singing and drumming. There are some opportunities for learners to progress from beginners to advanced level classes in painting and drawing. In 2002-03, 76 per cent of enrolments were made by women, 2.4 per cent of learners are from a minority ethnic group and 34 per cent are 60 years of age and over. At one of the colleges, the curriculum is managed by an adult education manager who is responsible for budgetary management, quality assurance and the planning and delivery of the curriculum. At the other, the non-accredited adult programme is managed within the school of adult and continuing education. The head of school is responsible for budgetary management, quality assurance, and the planning of all areas of learning. The curriculum delivery is managed by two area managers who oversee all adult and community learning provision within a geographical area. Both subcontractors employ full-time, part-time and fractional teaching staff.

English, languages & communications

11. The LEA's subcontractors offered a total of 956 hours of languages and communications provision in the current academic year, making this its third biggest choice of course. There were 209 enrolments for courses in 2001-02. Classes are offered at 70 community locations across the borough. There are currently 17 courses in French, Spanish, Italian, Chinese, British Sign Language and creative writing, running at nine centres. Courses take place during the day and on weekday evenings. The length of a course ranges from five weeks to 10 weeks. All sessions are two hours long. In the summer, free taster sessions are held which last for five weeks and are intended to attract new learners on to programmes. Approximately 50 per cent of learners are men. There are few applications from people who do not have English as their first language. Daytime classes attract an older age group, with most learners aged 60+, while evening classes attract a younger learners with an average age of 38.

12. There are language co-ordinators at both of the subcontracted colleges. The staff report to an adult learning manager in their college. The programme is determined largely by perceived demand from existing learners. Managers plan the programme in consultation with the curriculum co-ordinators.

13. There are approximately 70 tutors, most of whom are part time, and most of whom hold teaching qualifications. Tutors report to centre managers and liaise with curriculum co-ordinators.

Family learning

14. In Kirklees LEA, family learning is managed through Fast Lane, which originated as part of wider SRB programme, but now secures funds from the LSC, the LEA, the regional development agency, the local health authority and a share of costs from partner schools. Fast Lane employs a full-time family learning manager, eight co-ordinators, the equivalent of 40 full-time literacy development workers and four administrators. It currently has partnerships with 80 schools. Fast Lane operates its own company for providing crèche facilities.

15. There have been 715 enrolments on to Fast Lane's courses so far this year, compared with 914 in 2001-02. Approximately 20 per cent of enrolments are made by learners from minority ethnic groups which represent approximately 12 per cent of the Kirklees population, and 7 per cent are men. Fast Lane particularly targets older learners for some of its programmes. The list of programmes ranges from one-off family days and short practical workshops, through to 12-week programmes with a mix of background knowledge and practice which focuses on the active role of the parent or volunteer in helping a child's literacy, numeracy and language skills. There is also a range of programmes in schools and community venues, initiated by the Fast Lane team but provided by other agencies. These include English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), information technology (IT), and health- and employment-related options. Fast Lane provision is concentrated in SRB designated urban areas, but there is also a pilot project in a deprived rural community in Kirklees.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	12
Number of inspection days	60
Number of learner interviews	656
Number of staff interviews	113
Number of partner/external agency interviews	66

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

16. The quality of the provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Overall, leadership and management are unsatisfactory, as is the approach to equality of opportunity. The LEA's approach to quality assurance is very weak. The quality of hospitality, sports and leisure, visual and performing arts and languages and communications is satisfactory, as is the family learning programme.

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	4
Quality assurance	5

Areas of learning	Grade
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3
Visual & performing arts & media	3
English, languages & communications	3
Family learning	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

17. **In visual and performing arts, learners gain a good level of practical skills**, and they often use these skills at home to produce pieces of work for friends and relatives. Learners on craft courses, in particular, produce work of a good standard. Learners' skills of critical evaluation are not fully developed. Learners on hospitality, sports and leisure courses also achieve a good level of knowledge and skills. What they learn in lessons helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and in some cases, helps them to manage serious health conditions. Learners on language courses develop the ability to converse

KIRKLEES LEA

confidently in their chosen language. However, many learners leave these courses early. Adult learners in the family learning programme reach a satisfactory level of achievement, and gain accreditation for some of their work. Learners' improved parenting skills lead to their children doing better at school. Overall, poor or partial record-keeping made it difficult to form a clear view about learners' achievements.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	1	5	5	6	1	0	0	18
Visual & performing arts & media	0	7	14	7	0	0	0	28
English, languages & communications	0	3	5	1	0	0	0	9
Family learning	1	4	6	4	0	0	0	15
Total	2	19	30	18	1	0	0	70
per cent	72.86%		25.71%		1.43%			

18. Only one of the lessons observed was unsatisfactory, two were outstanding and overall 72.9 per cent were good or better. Inspectors were observing lessons on popular courses which had lasted into a third term. The exception was family learning where the programme continued on the same basis throughout the year.

19. **Practices for assessing and reviewing learners' progress are not well developed.**

Learners do not receive sufficient encouragement to set themselves targets and to evaluate their own performance periodically. Except in family learning, where learners work towards units of accreditation for some aspects of their work, there are no methods for helping learners to identify their progress. Where there are recording systems, they are not used effectively or systematically.

20. **Tutors provide good personal support for individual learners on language courses and on the family learning programme.**

21. The resources available for teaching and learning are satisfactory.

22. **People interested in adult education courses do not receive enough advance information** about what these courses involve, or sufficient advice about which one is appropriate. Often, the only way to find out whether a course is suitable is to join it. On the family learning programme, tutors do not give enough attention to finding out the starting point of each adult learner.

Leadership and management

23. **The LEA has good working relationships with other providers in the borough,** including its subcontractors. This has led to a range of initiatives to widen participation. However, the arrangements for the delivery of the LEA's subcontracted programme is

not managed well. The curriculum is poorly planned, and many new courses do not run. The LEA has not been successful in ensuring that the programme is attractive to all sections of the community, and in particular to minority ethnic groups. Nor has it ensured that new learners have a positive experience. In some areas of the programme there are few new learners whereas, in languages, too many learners are recruited, and class sizes quickly decline. The LEA has taken significant steps to make sure that buildings are accessible to people with restricted mobility, but there are still some that are not. The LEA does not check regularly or effectively that provision is of a good standard. Although the subcontractors have some quality assurance arrangements of their own, they are not fully implemented. The LEA places few demands on the subcontractors in terms of meeting service standards. The family learning programme clearly makes a positive impact on families and schools, but there are insufficient checks on quality.

24. **Self-assessment is not a well-established process in the authority.** The self-assessment report is limited in scope, and there is no development plan. A good attempt was made to include the views of subcontractors into the report, but the strengths and weaknesses are not specific enough, and the supporting evidence is not precise. The self-assessment report for family learning had not been completed by the time of the inspection.

25. Discrete literacy, numeracy and language provision did not fall within the scope of the inspection. A few learners are referred to other providers for tuition, but there are no support arrangements in the current programme. Some tutors have been on literacy, numeracy and language awareness training, but in general tutors are unaware of how to meet the needs of learners through their teaching. The family learning programme does not take sufficient account of the fact that a high proportion of learners are likely to have literacy, numeracy and language difficulties. The LEA has recently contributed to the development of an application for funding for this area of work.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good partnerships with other providers
- broad range of initiatives to widen participation

Weaknesses

- poor management of subcontractors
- poor curriculum management
- insufficient use of data and target-setting
- under-representation of priority groups in some areas of the provision
- poor quality assurance

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good development of learners' knowledge and skills
- good additional health and social benefits for learners
- good account taken of individual learner's interests

Weaknesses

- insufficient assessment of learners' progress
- poor curriculum planning and management

Visual & performing arts & media

Strengths

- good standard of work in crafts
- good development of learners' practical skills
- effective demonstrations by tutors

Weaknesses

- insufficient development of learners' critical evaluation skills
- ineffective use of personal learning goals
- poor curriculum management

English, languages & communications

Strengths

- good application of learning outside the classroom
- good development of learners' conversational skills
- good personal support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor feedback to learners
- weak quality assurance
- poor curriculum planning

Family learning

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- good learning resources for adults and children
- readily available crèche facilities
- beneficial impact of family learning on the school community
- effective inclusion of hard-to-reach learners
- good personal support for individual learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment practices
- insufficient recording of learners' progress
- little integration of basic skills into the programme
- poor practice in some aspects of management
- inadequate self-assessment process

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT KIRKLEES LEA:

- enthusiastic, knowledgeable tutors who give a great deal
- the fact that courses are interesting
- the opportunity to learn skills which they can apply outside the classroom
- the fact that they can study locally at times that are convenient
- its supportive administrative staff

WHAT LEARNERS THINK KIRKLEES LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the length of courses - they are too short and don't run over the summer months
- the range of courses
- access to some courses which are always oversubscribed
- the quality of pre-course information and advice
- disabled access and crèche facilities at some centres

KEY CHALLENGES FOR KIRKLEES LEA:

- improve curriculum planning and management
- improve all aspects of quality assurance
- attract more people from under-represented groups into the subcontracted programme
- improve pre-course information and advice for learners on the subcontracted programme and initial assessment for those on the family learning programme
- develop appropriate methods for helping learners to evaluate their progress and plan their learning

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

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

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

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

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

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

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 4

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good partnerships with other providers
- broad range of initiatives to widen participation

Weaknesses

- poor management of subcontractors
- poor curriculum management
- insufficient use of data and target-setting
- under-representation of priority groups in some areas of the provision
- poor quality assurance

26. The LEA has good working relationships with other providers. Through the Kirklees learning partnership, it works successfully with a range of external partners including local colleges and members of the voluntary and community sector. The LEA acts as the secretariat for the learning partnership and is widely viewed by other organisations as a proactive and impartial member of the partnership. For instance, it has recently supported the development of four key co-financed bids aimed at widening adult participation in the borough. The LEA has also instigated the development of a community education forum through which it funds projects for priority groups. In 2001-02, 564 people benefited from a range of projects funded through the forum.

27. The LEA's management of its subcontractors is poor. There is no formal reporting structure in key policy areas such as health and safety, risk assessment and learners' complaints. Subcontractors use their own policies and procedures in these areas, and the LEA does not monitor whether they are appropriate or how effectively they are implemented.

28. Management of the curriculum is poor in all areas of the subcontracted provision. The range of the curriculum is narrow, and is largely based on what appeals to a long-standing clientele. For instance, 56 per cent of sports-related courses are in yoga. The subcontracted provision does not reflect the wider community in terms of the range of participants or cultural content. There is no curriculum plan or strategy aimed at tackling these issues, and there are very few identifiable strategic links between the subcontracted provision and that made by other providers, or by other parts of the local authority, for example, in the visual and performing arts. Communication between managers and part-time tutors is poor. Many tutors feel isolated and are unclear about how to obtain resources for the courses they teach. In some cases, tutors pay for these themselves.

29. The LEA makes little use of data to analyse the effectiveness of its provision or to inform planning. Its contracts with subcontractors are not thorough, and do not include targets for retention, achievement and progression. Data returns are often provided late by subcontractors. Data about the family learning provision are collected, but not used effectively to evaluate performance.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 4

30. The LEA has contributed funding to a broad range of initiatives to target specific priority groups, including those who are hard-to-reach, economically disadvantaged and from minority ethnic groups. For example, in family learning, a 'babies into books' project has been successful in involving parents and children from disadvantaged areas in learning. This project now operates across approximately 30 venues. In family learning overall, the participation rate for people of minority ethnic origin is approximately 19 per cent, compared with 13 per cent representation in the population as a whole. Other funding supports a project specifically aimed at people with drug and alcohol problems. Some courses, including keep fit classes for women, have been delivered specifically to minority ethnic groups. There have also been some pottery classes for visually impaired learners, and a number of outreach classes for people who want to return to learning, but are not yet confident about re-entering mainstream provision. The priority passport scheme instigated by the LEA and recognised by both main subcontractors, allows learners to qualify for concessions. Some learners who are over 60 years old, qualify for 50 per cent reduction on fees.

31. The LEA does not monitor the appropriateness or effectiveness of its subcontractors' equal opportunities policies or practices. The enrolment form used by one of the colleges includes numerous questions relating to equal opportunities, but the terminology is not easy to read and some of the questions asked may cause concern with confidentiality. Subcontractors deliver staff induction and training on equal opportunities legislation, but the LEA does not monitor the quality or effectiveness of this training. While tutors are generally sensitive to the circumstances of individual learners, and make adjustments in their teaching to accommodate people with physical disabilities or sensory impairments, the design and content of the curriculum does not indicate that equality of opportunity is being actively promoted.

32. There is insufficient use of data and target-setting to widen participation. The LEA sets targets for widening participation in its adult learning plan, but they are not reflected in the contracts with subcontractors. The LEA and subcontractors gather participation data by age, gender, ethnicity, and disability, but the LEA does not use this effectively to ensure courses meet the needs and aims of all sections of the community.

33. Priority groups are under-represented in some areas of the provision. Only 4 per cent of enrolments on the subcontracted programme are made by learners from minority ethnic groups. This is well below the proportion of people of minority ethnic origin within the population as a whole. Seventy-eight per cent of enrolments on this programme are made by women. The LEA and its subcontractors recognise this as an

issue, but have not been successful in attracting a higher proportion of men.

34. The LEA and its subcontractors have carried out a significant amount of work to comply with legislation. Progress against action plans is monitored. Some centres have wheelchair lifts, ramps, toilets for the disabled and allocated parking spaces. Specialist equipment for learners with visual or hearing impairments is available. All funding from the LSC for Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001 (SENDA) has been passed on to subcontractors. However, access to some centres is still poor for those with restricted mobility.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 5

35. The LEA's quality assurance procedures are inadequate. It has no quality assurance framework for the subcontracted provision, other than a timetable for contract setting and the production of the adult learning plan and self-assessment report. There is no development plan from the self-assessment report. The LEA allows subcontractors to include its provision under their own in-house arrangements for quality assurance, and although regular liaison meetings take place, they are not minuted. The LEA does not set quality assurance targets for subcontractors. When providers carry out satisfaction surveys, lesson observations or other key quality assurance activities, the LEA does not monitor the outcomes, and there is no formal discussion for continuous improvement. The LEA has no arrangements for sampling the quality of provision on its own behalf. Responsibility for staff development rests primarily with subcontractors, and although the LEA has contributed funding to support staff development in areas such as disability awareness training, it does not record attendance or evaluate the impact of training on teaching and learning. In some areas of learning, tutors are unaware of the professional development activities available to them. There is no co-ordinated approach by the LEA to allow the sharing of good practice across the borough.

36. The LEA does not have a self-assessment report or development plan for its family learning provision. Managers of this provision are unclear about the process and purpose of self-assessment. Staff development for this provision is satisfactory. However, insufficient use is made of lesson observations to improve practice, although good practice is shared in other ways. Case studies and celebratory events show that tutors are aware of the quality of learners' work.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Grade 3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of learners' knowledge and skills
- good additional health and social benefits for learners
- good account taken of individual learner's interests

Weaknesses

- insufficient assessment of learners' progress
- poor curriculum planning and management

Achievement and standards

37. Many learners develop a good level of knowledge and technical skills in cookery and sports-related subjects. In cake decoration and cold porcelain lessons, learners demonstrate a high level of proficiency in the work they produce. They often exhibit their work in local shops and other public venues. Some learners progress to more advanced courses and some are achieving commercial competence. In cookery classes for learners' with learning difficulties, learners show that they are developing skills in cutting, measuring and weighing, as well as improving their cooking capabilities. In yoga, t'ai chi and keep fit classes, learners demonstrate confidence in balance, co-ordination and the choreography of movement. In one t'ai chi lesson, learners competently performed all five stages of the form in one continuous series of movements, and were awarded certificates of achievement at levels 4 or 5. Older learners are retaining skills, abilities and fitness levels as well as developing some new skills. Learners on all programmes can identify the progress they are making and the progress of others. Attendance in the lessons observed was good, averaging 83 per cent. The retention rate for the last three academic years has been 86 per cent.

38. Many learners have made good health and social gains as a result of attending classes and are able to apply these to good effect in their everyday lives. Learners use techniques learned in yoga, t'ai chi, and keep fit lessons to help them overcome or alleviate health problems and to manage post operative rehabilitation. In cookery, learners make good use of the recipes they learn at home to entertain others and to provide more balanced nourishment for family members. In many lessons, learners' achievements are not fully recognised and celebrated.

Quality of education and training

39. Lessons vary widely in quality. Most are satisfactory, good or very good. Courses and schemes of work are well planned. On the better programmes, schemes of work and lessons are developed in response to the expressed interests of the learners. All lessons have a similar format, which includes practical work by learners, with demonstrations and some individual attention from the tutor. In the better lessons, as well as providing good demonstrations, tutors give good explanations and make good use of open-ended questions to encourage learners to reflect on their own experience and draw conclusions. New postures, routines and exercises are steadily introduced. Some tutors provide supplementary material which they have prepared themselves for learners to take home, and this is of a good standard. In some yoga and t'ai chi lessons, tutors make good use of lighting, music and tone of voice to create a good atmosphere for relaxation. Good attention is paid to the health, safety and hygiene of learners. Specialist equipment is generally provided by the subcontractors. Some lessons depend largely on learners repeating what they have done previously. Little use is made of the more able learners to demonstrate skills and support the less able members of the group. Some lessons have poor facilities and accommodation. For example, two cookery and yoga classes take place in rooms which are not large enough to accommodate all of the learners on the register. In some centres, the rooms are dusty and cluttered. Some rooms have insufficient lighting and ventilation. Although buildings are accessible to people with restricted mobility, some rooms would not be appropriate for wheelchair users unless there were fewer learners. Tutors in this area of learning are well qualified.

40. Learners' progress is not effectively assessed. Some tutors have developed 'readiness for exercise' questionnaires for learners. However, they are not widely used for lesson planning. One subcontractor has introduced individual learning outcome questionnaires, but again these are not routinely used. Learners' progress is monitored informally, and without consistency. Some tutors have devised their own systems. The systems devised by the college, subcontractors are not used effectively. There are no final assessment practices, and tutors do not talk to learners about revising their goals and setting new targets in the light of their progress.

41. Prospectuses are distributed to all households in the borough. However, more detailed course information is not readily available. Most current learners found out about the courses by attending the first session.

Leadership and management

42. Curriculum planning is poor. The current programme is popular, predominantly with women who are aged 50 years or older, many of whom have been attending classes for some considerable time. Over 60 per cent of all learners are 'repeat' learners, and in the case of yoga, over 90 per cent of one subcontractor's learners are 'repeat' learners. There are long waiting lists for classes. The summer term is short, with a long break before the winter programme begins, and there is no weekend or summer school provision. In sports-related subjects, this has an impact on learners' ability to retain their

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strength, suppleness and muscular endurance. Some tutors continue to teach in other premises on a commercial basis throughout the summer, but some learners cannot attend because there are no crèche facilities and no subsidy is available.

43. The range of provision is limited. Fifty-six per cent of all sports-related courses are in yoga. There is little development of new courses, and there are no clear criteria for maintaining existing courses or for developing new ones. There are no partnerships with other local authority departments or private providers for progression routes in badminton, yoga and keep fit. New courses are offered without sufficient market research. Fifty per cent of new provision planned for the current year has not run. Taster sessions led to the development of a keep fit course for Asian women, but on the whole, the LEA has not been successful in widening its client base. Men and people from minority ethnic groups are under-represented on courses.

44. Curriculum management is poor. Data about provision are not collected systematically by the LEA, nor is it analysed to plan the provision. Risk assessments are left to the tutor's discretion. There is no procedure to ensure if they are carried out or whether the necessary improvements have been made. Communication with tutors and learners is poor. For example, when the venue of classes is changed, the information is not effectively communicated. Learners' views about the quality of the provision are gathered inconsistently and are not always evaluated. Learners are seldom informed of any outcomes of the consultation process. Self-assessment is not well developed, and a lesson observation scheme is in the early stages of development.

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

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good standard of work in crafts
- good development of learners' practical skills
- effective demonstrations by tutors

Weaknesses

- insufficient development of learners' critical evaluation skills
- ineffective use of personal learning goals
- poor curriculum management

Achievement and standards

45. Learners achieve a good standard of work in craft subjects, particularly in pottery, upholstery, lacemaking, heirloom embroidery and calligraphy. For instance, lace work on display is of a professional standard and every level of learner contributed to the exhibition. Learners' work is often displayed in exhibitions in local libraries, leisure centres, reception areas of adult education centres and in classrooms. A few learners sell their art work and take commissions. Completed work is proficient and professional. A few learners are able to describe their learning goals using professional and technical vocabulary. In one calligraphy class, learners' technical and design skills are good and include innovative elements and experimentation using colour and texture. Learners have gained confidence and are enthusiastic about the skills they have learnt. Learners use their skills in the home and produce pieces for friends and relatives. Retention rates have not been calculated on a consistent basis by the subcontractors. It was difficult to judge what proportion of learners achieved these standards.

Quality of education and training

46. Learners gain a good understanding of technical and rehearsal skills. These are applied to create finished pieces and improve learners' skill levels. Learners effectively use a range of techniques and processes and extend their skills through practise. In one singing lesson, learners made good use of well-developed aural and technical skills to improve harmonisation, rhythm and phrasing during rehearsal. In the best sessions learners use their new skills and techniques creatively and expressively. Learners on most art courses experience a range of media which is reflected in their work.

47. Tutors give clear and confident demonstrations, alongside informative explanations of techniques and processes. Learners show a good level of interest and are clearly

motivated. Demonstrations often stimulate group discussion and debate on techniques and the potential use of methods and materials. Tutors use and explain technical vocabulary which is then used by learners when talking about their own work. As well as demonstrating to the whole group, tutors give demonstrations to individual learners and small groups. Learners value the tutors' knowledge and expertise in specialist subjects.

48. Learners have a good level of individual instruction from tutors. They are encouraged to practise skills and techniques learnt such as the stitching of samplers, experimental brush work and glaze trials. A significant number of learners in popular sequence dancing enjoy attending regular social dances where they perform and practise sequences learnt during lessons.

49. Learners' critical evaluation skills are not developed sufficiently. There are few group critiques and learning is not always effectively shared. In some sessions, evaluative activities are tutor-led and learners do not contribute sufficiently. In most lessons, not enough reference is made to the work of other artists and professional crafts people to illustrate points and to further learners' understanding. Tutors do not encourage learners sufficiently to develop their appreciation of styles and genres, and their familiarity with the cultural contexts which influence artists' work and the production of artefacts.

50. Resources are generally suitable for the purpose intended. In most cases, specialist practical rooms and studios are provided for subjects such as pottery and computer-aided design. In a few instances, rooms are inappropriate for the practical nature of the activities and the number of learners enrolled. Some art rooms are situated on the first floor of learning centres and there is no access for learners with restricted mobility.

51. Little use is made of learners' personal aims in the planning of lessons, or to help learners set criteria against which they can judge their own progress. Learners' prior knowledge and skills are not effectively assessed. Tutors give insufficient constructive feedback to learners to help them improve, and do not encourage them sufficiently to reflect on their own progress. Less able learners cannot always identify what they need to do to improve their work other than repetitive practice. They are insufficiently aware of the range of skills they have gained and the progress they have made. Some more experienced learners are slow to develop their independent learning skills.

52. Learners are given insufficient pre-course information and guidance. Basic course information is provided in subcontractors' prospectuses, but this is not enough for them to make informed choices on the content and level of the courses.

Leadership and management

53. The curriculum management is poor. The current programme is based largely on what has been offered in the past, and there is little curriculum development. The range of courses available to learners is narrow. There are only a few performing arts and media courses. The cultural diversity of the borough is not reflected in the programme of courses offered, nor in the profile of the learners. There are few learners from minority ethnic groups. A small number of arts projects and courses cater for specific groups of

learners such as the visually impaired. There are few links to the borough's and the subcontractors' initiatives to widen participation. There are few opportunities for teaching staff to share ideas about professional practice across the area of learning. One subcontractor plans to appoint a fractional co-ordinator for this area of learning to tackle this issue.

54. The LEA does not monitor its subcontractors' quality assurance processes, and was unaware of the issue concerning retention rates. Some tutors do not understand their employer's quality assurance processes. One subcontractor has a programme of lesson observations and tutors are given feedback. However, these lack credibility with tutors as they are not undertaken by arts specialists, and only generic feedback is given on teaching and learning. Grades for these observations are generous. The self-assessment report produced by the LEA was not sufficiently evaluative.

English, languages & communications**Grade 3**

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good application of learning outside the classroom
- good development of learners' conversational skills
- good personal support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor feedback to learners
- weak quality assurance
- poor curriculum planning

Achievement and standards

55. The learners who stay on programme make good use of their skills outside the classroom. Learners are using their learning in a range of ways. Some learners on creative writing programmes have had work published. All have had experience of approaching editors, and have gained business skills as a result of this. Language learners have used their new skills to help non-English speakers visiting this country, for example, to help a lorry driver with directions and to negotiate in complex situations, such as with the purchase of property abroad. However, attendance in lessons is poor, and was only 66 per cent during the inspection. Also, there is a high initial drop-out rate on some courses. On two of the courses where lessons were observed, the retention rate was only 60 per cent. Overall, attainment is satisfactory. In post beginner courses, learners maintain skills and acquire new strategies for communication, including some reading and writing.

Quality of education and training

56. Most teaching is good, and some is very good. In the best language lessons, tutors allow learners to experiment with language to build on their prior learning. For example, learners who had recently been introduced to the past tense were encouraged to talk about what they had done in the previous week, which required them to use the language construction in a relevant context. Learners are confident in the use of their chosen language and are able to converse freely. Learners work collaboratively, and are not afraid to make mistakes in front of peers. Many learners find their native language skills are enhanced as they make progress in the foreign language. They are more confident about dealing with situations, such as complaining, as a result of this skill development. In creative writing, constructive feedback from the tutor and from peers is a strong feature of the course. Some creative writing tutors are practising professionals,

and make good use of their experience to give learners practical advice about how to get work published. In some lessons, teaching methods and materials are not exploited to best advantage. For example, some teachers introduce a topic through texts, then leave it without reinforcing the learning in any other way, such as through the use of videos or games.

57. Resources for teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Most tutors have access to video recorders, audio-tape recorders and whiteboards, and photocopying is available. Some of the course books are old and do not reflect cultural changes such as the introduction of the Euro. Most teachers have subject-specific qualifications and many have, or are working towards, teaching certificates.

58. Overall, learners have little constructive feedback about their work. Tutors are nurturing and encouraging, but often fail to point out learners' mistakes. Written work is sometimes marked either correct or incorrect with no explanation of where learners have gone wrong. Learners are unable to correct their own mistakes, and often perpetuate them. They do not know what their strengths are, and cannot build on them, or evaluate their own progress. Tutors monitor learners' progress informally as the course progresses, but do not share their judgements with the learner. There is no form of final assessment.

59. Personal support for individual learners is good. Tutors are sensitive to the needs of individual learners, and accommodate them well. For example, one tutor stopped using audio cassettes because they were too difficult for five learners who had hearing difficulties, and placed greater emphasis on face-to-face interaction. Another rearranged the classroom to accommodate a learner who uses a wheelchair. Most tutors contact learners if they miss a class, either by letter or telephone, and some return as a result of this contact.

60. The small amount of pre-course information is confusing. For example, some identical courses are given different names. Fact sheets about course content are available from the colleges on request, but there is no opportunity to talk to someone who is familiar with the subject or any form of initial assessment. Most learners find out about a course by joining it. They can transfer if the level is unsuitable.

Leadership and management

61. Quality assurance is weak. Learners are recruited on to courses in large numbers to compensate for a possible drop-out rate, but this creates unmanageable classes where communication is difficult. Many learners stay at the same level for a number of years and, as they can pre-enrol for courses, this limits opportunities for new learners to join programmes. Some tutors have had little or no professional development to update their subject skills for many years. Many are unclear about opportunities for continuous professional development. Some tutors are unaware that the lesson observation programme they had participated in was meant to help their development and believed it was an external inspection. There are workshops for in-service training, but they are optional, and many tutors do not participate. None of these issues has been identified as

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an area of concern. The self-assessment report did not identify all of the strengths and weaknesses in this area of learning.

62. Curriculum planning is poor. Neither learners nor tutors have a clear idea of progression routes for the curriculum area. More than 75 per cent of the language provision in the borough is vocational, and there are ample opportunities for learners to study and gain qualifications. However, there are fewer non-vocational courses and, as many learners do not wish to gain qualifications, they are not always able to identify an appropriate course in a suitable venue. Learners currently on programme feel that courses meet their needs and aims, particularly in the case of creative writing. New courses may be put on if there is a demand for them. For example, Arabic was run in response to requests from members of the public. However, overall, the learners' profile does not match the race/ethnicity profile of the area. Very few learners who speak English as an additional language join courses. Most courses are a repetition of what has run in previous years, and a significant proportion of learners have been attending for a number of years.

63. There is no strategy for identifying learners with basic skills needs. Support for learners is available through the colleges, and some staff have had awareness training. However, staff generally feel it is inappropriate to approach adults about this, and consult an expert if they wish to refer somebody on to basic skills learning. Information on basic skills provision is made available in the various venues.

Family learning**Grade 3**

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good teaching and learning
- good learning resources for adults and children
- readily available crèche facilities
- beneficial impact of family learning on the school community
- effective inclusion of hard-to-reach learners
- good personal support for individual learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment practices
- insufficient recording of learners' progress
- little integration of basic skills into the programme
- poor practice in some aspects of management
- inadequate self-assessment process

Achievement and standards

64. Achievement is satisfactory. In 2002, 110 learners were entered for accreditation, using Open College Network (OCN) units and they were all successful. Weaknesses in record-keeping make it difficult to make judgements on other measures of achievement. There are as yet no figures available to show the retention of learners on family learning programmes. Some learners report valuable gains in skills through family learning, such as a greater ability to help with their own children's reading. One learner talked about reading with her daughter. This previously caused friction between them. As a result of the skills she gained on the programme, they now both enjoy reading.

Quality of education and training

65. Lessons are satisfactory or better, and 66 per cent are good or very good. Most sessions are well structured, with good rapport between teachers, adult learners and children. Courses are well planned and combine practical activities with some background knowledge, and opportunities for language development for adults and children. Parents learn a range of life skills such as gardening, health, and behaviour management and comment favourably on the experience. However, it is not always possible to see clear evidence of learning and attainment in sessions because of poor record-keeping. Staff are experienced and facilitate learning well. They work together effectively, and have good opportunities for in-service training. A new training and

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development record scheme has been introduced recently. New colleagues have the opportunity to develop their skills through team teaching. Learners have the benefit of a range of expertise when co-ordinators and development workers contribute to a course.

66. Learning resources for adults and children are good. Teachers have developed excellent course materials with clear language and graphics. Some course materials have been professionally published and marketed. Clear handouts and prompt cards are used in practical activities to supplement verbal instructions. The resources for children are at the appropriate level and include toys, puppets and a range of books. An integral part of many of the programmes is for learners to make children's resources. The work produced is of an extremely high standard. Parents gain accreditation for planning and designing play sacks and the schools get the benefit of having them for the classroom. There is a marked impact of such good-quality resources on the motivation and involvement of the adult learners and in the obvious enjoyment of the children. Tutors also use a wide range of real resources, such as seeds and plants in a family numeracy activity.

67. Crèche facilities are readily available to support family learning. The LEA has established its own company for providing community crèches. This service supports nearly all of the learning sessions, except in schools which do not have a suitable room to host a crèche. The LEA monitors qualifications and training of crèche workers. There is a clear policy and procedure document and guidelines for users. In some cases, bilingual crèche workers provide essential language support for adults and young children.

68. Initial assessment practice is inadequate. There are no detailed written records of learners' prior experience or assessed needs, such as records of disability or illness which might affect teaching and learning strategies. There is no assessment of adult learners' literacy, numeracy or language needs and teachers rely on personal knowledge of individuals, which is not proactive or systematic. The absence of information makes it difficult to measure progress.

69. There is little recording of learners' progress. Some teachers do not evaluate sessions and those that do, concentrate on the learning of the children rather than the adults. However, some courses use learning diaries or 'learning rivers' to help learners record their own progress. There are no individual learning plans and no explicit targets for individual adult learners. Some progression and destination data are collected, but the information is not analysed.

70. The provision has a beneficial impact on the school community. Schools value the service it provides, contribute to an action plan every term and share some of the costs of a development worker. Home-school liaison has improved, with development workers carrying out outreach work, including home visits and liaising with other agencies on behalf of the school. Improvements in parenting skills lead to greater attainment of children in literacy, numeracy and social skills. There is evidence for this in a report by a university of action research evaluating the impact of particular programmes on reading levels. Headteachers report marked improvements in the confidence and communication skills of children and parents.

71. The provision successfully includes hard-to-reach learners. Hard-working development workers make efforts to get to know vulnerable families. Programmes are customised to meet the need of particular groups. In one area of Kirklees, a development worker was chosen because she was from the same minority ethnic group and neighbourhood as the learners. She has designed and organised an imaginative parenting course specifically for Muslim women. Learners from minority ethnic groups are very well represented on the programme, and there has been some success in involving men in family learning. Short courses, family taster days and stimulating but non-threatening themes, are all used to attract new potential learners. One project has successfully used the topic of alternative therapies in this way.

72. There is little integration of basic skills into the programme. No attempt has been made to apply the adult core curriculum for literacy, numeracy and language to courses. There is little specialist adult basic skills support within family learning sessions. In some schools and community venues, the local college or the Workers' Education Association provide basic skills classes at the instigation of the family learning team, but this is not widespread. There are plans for staff to do the new Skills for Life teaching qualifications.

73. Personal support for individual learners is good. Development workers and co-ordinators provide good levels of pastoral care. Effective and sensitive procedures are used to follow up absence. In one instance, a family who missed a session had a home visit to bring them up to date. Staff are good at guiding learners in an informal and positive way. Good links to other agencies enable learners to access a wider range of opportunities and facilities.

Leadership and management

74. Practice is poor in some aspects of the management of the programme. Record-keeping is only sporadically carried out, at all levels. Little use is made of data to evaluate performance. A new management information system has been bought, but is not fully operational. Little use is made of target-setting or measuring progress against targets, lesson observation, and appraisal as a basis for curriculum management. However, there is some attractively presented case study material. Although staff share good practice, they do not always use the information in systematic curriculum development. There is tension between the way in which the service encourages local initiative and satisfies the LEA's priorities.

75. The self-assessment process is ineffective. The current report is incomplete. There is no overall statement of strengths and weaknesses against the 'Common Inspection Framework'. The purpose and the process of self-assessment is not well understood.