

REINSPECTION REPORT

Camden LEA Reinspection

26 March 2004



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. 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
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes 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.

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Camden Local Education Authority (LEA) is situated in inner London and falls within the London Central Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area. It provides courses and other learning activities in 10 areas of learning, including community-based learning in very diverse settings, many of which are in disadvantaged areas of the borough. Since 1996, the LEA has subcontracted much of its adult and community learning provision. In Camden, four colleges have substantial adult learning programmes. One is a large further education college and the other three are specialist adult education colleges. All attract learners from across London. The service contracts with two of these colleges and with a national adult learning provider. In addition, it has partnership arrangements with an extensive range of other training providers.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Family learning

2. At the time of the previous inspection, the foundation area included provision for adults with learning disabilities. This has been discontinued. Only family learning was reinspected and this is now reported on separately.

3. Camden LEA provides family learning programmes across the borough. Most of these courses are provided through contracts with a local adult education college, with some through a national provider of adult learning. There is also a small amount of directly managed provision. Most of the family learning takes place in primary schools.

4. Family learning literacy and numeracy programmes are designed as a first step back into learning for adults and are non-accredited. Wider family learning programmes aim to involve adults more fully in their children's education, often through craft activities. One programme designed to encourage parents and carers to help in schools is provided by the national adult learning provider and accredited through the Open College Network (OCN).

5. In the term before the reinspection, 60 per cent of the 157 learners were from minority ethnic groups and 7 per cent were men. In the week of reinspection, there were 72 enrolments on wider family learning courses and 26 enrolments on family literacy, language and numeracy courses. Of these enrolments, 14 were on courses run by a national adult learning provider and the remainder on courses provided through a partnership between a local adult education college and schools.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	2
Number of inspection days	6
Number of learner interviews	27
Number of staff interviews	8
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	6
Number of partner/external agency interviews	12

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

6. During the previous inspection, the quality of the provision in foundation programmes was found to be unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, this provision was found to be good.

GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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

Information & communications technology	2
Visual & performing arts & media	2
Foundation programmes	4

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

Family learning	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

AREAS OF LEARNING

Family learning

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	98	2

During the reinspection process, the inspectors identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- good attainment
- good teaching and learning
- effective information, advice and guidance to support progression
- effective action to widen participation
- strong and effective partnerships

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment on family literacy and numeracy programmes
- insufficient development of literacy and language skills in some wider family learning programmes

Achievement and standards

7. Attainment is good. This was satisfactory at the previous inspection and is now a strength. Learners achieve their goals and apply their learning in different contexts. They have a good understanding of how children learn in school and of the National Curriculum. Some good skills development is demonstrated in practical sessions. In jewellery making and art and craft courses, learners produce good end products, such as copper jewellery and clay models. Learners gain computer skills, including e-mailing. Learners' self-confidence improves and they are able to carry out activities with their children at home. Head teachers confirm the positive impact on relationships between parents and carers and the school. Parents work well with staff and have become active in their schools, promoting family learning to other parents and carers. Children also benefit from the adults working and learning with them and show improved behaviour and concentration. One programme to give adults the skills to work in schools is accredited, but there were insufficient data available to make a judgement on attainment. Learners on family literacy, numeracy and language programmes can take the national tests.

Quality of education and training

8. Teaching and learning is good, with 80 per cent of sessions judged to be good or better. This was satisfactory at the previous inspection and is now a strength. Sessions are well planned through effective collaboration between tutors, school staff and community workers. Tutors use a good variety of teaching methods and respond appropriately to issues raised by learners. Tutors make clear links between activities and the National Curriculum. For example, during a kitchen science activity, one group explored the relevant vocabulary and skills in the science curriculum. Learners are able to articulate their learning and apply well their new skills with their children at home.

9. Learners are given effective information, advice and guidance to help them progress on all family learning programmes. This was satisfactory at the previous inspection and is now a strength. Tutors are well informed and guide learners to other relevant activities and training or refer them to other providers. A guidance worker visits groups each term to provide information and advice, and follows up specific requests from individuals. This helps many learners to progress to other forms of training, voluntary work or paid employment. A survey of learner destinations indicates a high proportion of learners progressing to other activities. Progression from parent and carer programmes to the accredited programme for those wishing to help in schools is particularly effective. There is good support for learners to assist with portfolio-building and on their school placement.

10. The standard and use of resources is satisfactory. There are adequate teaching resources, including handouts and craft materials. Learners have access to a range of literacy and numeracy games in taught sessions and can take these home to use with their children. Learners can access the resources base at the college. All tutors have been supplied with a laptop computer and printer. All programmes have a crèche.

11. The range of family learning programmes is appropriate for the needs of most learners. A particularly effective and innovative new family learning programme to develop jewellery making skills is helping to raise learners' awareness of vocational and further training. There are no programmes targeted at carers who are men.

12. There is inadequate initial assessment on family literacy, numeracy and language programmes. Assessment was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection and, although the provider has taken steps to rectify it, this weakness remains. On the 30-week family literacy, numeracy and language programmes learners are not set specific individual goals. For example, where the identified learning goal is to improve spelling, there is no detailed plan of how this will be tackled. Tutors are able to monitor learners' progress accurately. There are satisfactory procedures for reviewing broader group aims and individual learning goals and these help learners to self-assess their own work and progress.

13. There is insufficient development of literacy and language skills in some wider family learning programmes. On some courses with learners who speak English as a second

language, tutors use language which is too complex and rely on a bilingual speaker to interpret. There is insufficient use of strategies to support understanding, such as the use of visual prompts or aids and reinforcement of key words, and not enough checking of understanding.

Leadership and management

14. Action to widen participation is effective. This was a strength in the previous inspection and remains so. Camden LEA provides courses at schools in the most deprived wards and has recently extended provision to other community venues. There is good participation by learners from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. This is supported by bilingual community workers and tutors. Current learners promote well the family learning programmes and recruit new learners.

15. There are strong and effective partnerships between the LEA, schools, college and national provider of adult learning. Camden LEA now gives clear direction for family learning that is understood and shared by all partners. Clear contracts have been drawn up detailing roles and responsibilities of partners on collaborative planning and delivery. Programmes are jointly reviewed regularly. These developments have rectified weaknesses identified at the previous inspection.

16. There is a comprehensive staff development and training programme that is accessed by staff from all the partner organisations. An intranet to support family learning is used to share information about training, resources, contacts and websites. The network is developing as a tool to exchange views and share good practice.

17. Significant progress has been made to tackle the weaknesses in family learning identified at the previous inspection. This improvement has been steered by an effective post-inspection action plan. The head of service, appointed since the previous inspection, and the family learning co-ordinator have strengthened the management and co-ordination of the programme.

18. The LEA has improved the accommodation used for family learning. This was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. The service has closed some classes located in unsuitable accommodation, drawn up partnership agreements that make requirements for accommodation clearer, and has commissioned buildings surveys to identify changes needed to meet requirements.

19. Quality assurance arrangements for family learning have improved and are now satisfactory. This was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. Camden LEA has drawn up quality assurance standards setting out what schools and subcontractors should provide and what learners can expect. The service has begun to develop a lesson observation scheme to quality assure its own and the subcontracted provision. This is not yet fully established, but has already led to improvements. All tutors carry out end-of-

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course learner evaluations and write a course review report. These are discussed with the family learning co-ordinator and will be submitted in summary form to a quality assurance improvement panel. A thorough self-assessment process involving all partners has led to a new self-assessment report, published in February 2004. This accurately identifies many of the improvements made in family learning. The use of data on retention and achievement at course level has improved, but is not yet analysed across the area of learning.

20. The LEA promotes equality of opportunity in its family learning programme through its carefully targeted provision in disadvantaged schools, the provision of crèche facilities to support carers with young children, and bilingual support for speakers of other languages. Cultural diversity is reflected in the curriculum through, for example, the recognition of different religious festivals on the parents and carers courses.

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.

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	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.