

REINSPECTION REPORT

Harrow Council Reinspection

11 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.

REINSPECTION REPORT

Harrow Council Reinspection

Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Description of the provider | 1 |
| Scope of provision | 1 |
| About the reinspection | 1 |
| Overall judgement | 1 |
| Grades | 2 |
| Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel | 3 |

REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Harrow Council (the council) offers adult and community learning in conjunction with several partner organisations. It offers training in information and communications technology; hospitality, sport, leisure and travel; hairdressing and beauty therapy; visual and performing arts and media; English, languages and communications; foundation programmes; family learning; and community learning.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

2. Hospitality, sport and leisure courses are offered at eight venues throughout the borough. Locations include colleges, schools and community centres. The 423 learners variously attend 23 courses in this area of learning. Courses are offered during the week, in the evenings and at weekends. Programmes offered include bridge, yoga, tai chi, keep fit, table tennis, cake baking and decorating, wine appreciation and Indian and Malaysian cookery. The programmes usually last for 10 weeks, for between one and a half and two and a half hours each week. None of the courses are accredited. The provision is subcontracted to two local colleges. A curriculum manager in each college is responsible for the adult and community learning programme. Sixteen part-time tutors teach on these programmes. Teachers are employed by one college and supplied through an agency to the other college. In 2001-02, there were 1,905 enrolments, in 2002-03, 2,126 enrolments, and in 2003-04, 637 enrolments have been made to date. Some learners enrol on more than one course.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of inspectors | 2 |
| Number of inspection days | 8 |
| Number of learner interviews | 82 |
| Number of staff interviews | 4 |
| Number of subcontractor interviews | 13 |
| Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited | 9 |

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

3. During the previous inspection, all aspects of training provision were satisfactory or better, with the exception of hospitality, sport, leisure and travel which was unsatisfactory. At the end of the reinspection process, hospitality, sport, leisure and travel was found to be satisfactory.

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 |
| Contributory grades: | |

| | |
|---|----------|
| Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel | 4 |
| Contributory grades: | |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Hairdressing & beauty therapy | 2 |
| Contributory grades: | |

| | |
|---|----------|
| Visual & performing arts & media | 3 |
| Contributory grades: | |

| | |
|--|----------|
| English, languages & communications | 2 |
| Contributory grades: | |

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Foundation programmes | 3 |
| Contributory grades: | |

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Family learning | 2 |
| Contributory grades: | |

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Community learning | 2 |
| Contributory grades: | |

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

| | |
|---|----------|
| Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel | 3 |
| Contributory grades: | |
| Adult and community learning | 3 |

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Grade 3

| Programmes inspected | Number of learners | Contributory grade |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Adult and community learning | 423 | 3 |

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

Strengths

- good achievement rate for learners' personal goals
- good individual coaching of learners
- good approach to widening participation

Weaknesses

- poor resources and accommodation
- insufficient use of initial assessment to plan individual learning.

Achievement and standards

4. Learners' achievement rate of personal goals is good; this was identified as a strength in the previous inspection report. These goals range from making and developing new friendships, to improving mental health; raising personal confidence; increasing flexibility, mobility and relaxation; and developing strategies to counter stress. Learners' records of progress indicate a lot of satisfaction with the support and guidance they receive, and they comment on the improvements to their well-being and quality of life.

Quality of education and training

5. Individual coaching is good and was observed taking place in many sessions. It enables learners to develop appropriate new skills effectively. Learners understand the improvements they have made and what they should do to develop further. For example, in the cakes and pastry sessions the merits of one ingredient over another are discussed in detail with individual learners. Their understanding is reinforced by sampling each other's produce. In tai chi classes, the long form is first demonstrated, and then talked through as the learners practise. During practice, individual learners receive well-timed reminders that are used effectively to improve and refine techniques. Individual learners' posture is accurately corrected in the smallest detail and to a very good standard. However, in some yoga classes, the pace of the session is inappropriate. Learners do not have sufficient time to prepare fully for each position they are practising, or to improve their ability to achieve the position.

HARROW COUNCIL REINSPECTION

6. Access to hospitality, sport and leisure provision is good, and responsive to local needs. Enrolments are representative of the resident profile of the borough in terms of age, gender and ethnicity, and exceed the council targets for age and ethnicity. Recently, teachers have agreed a more consistent approach to the content and delivery of the provision throughout the borough. The council has made good progress in developing publicity materials to provide potential learners with information about sport and leisure activities throughout the borough. In addition to promoting the courses offered by the two subcontractors, the publicity material effectively signposts opportunities offered by other providers, including those with specialist resources to support learners who have learning disabilities and difficulties.

7. The resources and accommodation are poor. Reviews of accommodation have not resolved the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. Tai chi and some yoga classes are held in large halls with poor acoustics; some halls have inadequate heating and are dirty. Before the start of three observed sessions, teachers and learners had to tidy up and reorganise the room. The kitchen used for cake decoration by one subcontractor is too small for the number of learners attending. There are no cake-decorating timetables, and learners have to use an upturned box or bowl to position their cakes. At another subcontractor's site, the kitchen used for the basic cakes and pastry sessions has two small scales and six ovens to accommodate 15 learners. Every process of the course involves weighing up ingredients and using an oven to bake produce. Learners have to wait to use the ovens and scales. Books recommended by tutors are not always available to learners, and in some tai chi classes, learners are expected to purchase their own books, some of which cost £20.

8. Initial assessment is not used sufficiently to plan individual learning. Since the previous inspection the council has introduced new learning plans which identify group goals, but some are not sufficiently detailed. Plans do not take account of the prior achievements and abilities of individual learners. No individual targets are set at the start of the course, and it is difficult to measure individual learners' progress. Some learners do not know what progress they have made.

9. Learners are required to complete a medical history form for sport-related activities. They do not complete these forms before starting their programmes. Some forms have not been signed and dated by learners and their tutors, and some are missing, or are only partially completed. Information from medical forms is not used to contribute to individual learning plans or progress reviews. Learning plans do not indicate modifications to exercises when required by individual learners. Some tutors do not monitor current or new illnesses or injuries at the beginning of each learning session. The recording of learners' progress is not consistent. For example, some review forms have been completed and returned by learners to their tutors, but learners have had no written or verbal feedback about their progress. Although some learners' reviews are completed on a weekly basis, others will not have a review of their progress until the end of their programme.

Leadership and management

10. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Communications between the council and the subcontractors are good. Contracts are appropriate and clearly set out the responsibilities of both parties relating to quality assurance, target-setting and monitoring arrangements. Not all monitoring arrangements have been implemented. The provider has effective plans to observe teaching sessions, including a teacher lesson observation programme carried out by their peers. These plans are intended to supplement the arrangements of the subcontractors and are beginning to result in the sharing of good practice. The subcontractors do not observe all tutors on an annual basis. One subcontractor has a more comprehensive training and development programme for teachers and a higher ratio of qualified teaching staff to learners. The council actively supports staff training by funding that training which adds value to the provision.

11. The council has a quality assurance group which includes representation from the subcontractors. This group meets regularly. Since the previous inspection the council has appointed a quality assurance officer. The quality assurance group agrees action points within the meetings, but these points are not always effectively monitored or reviewed. The quality assurance group has terms of reference which include sharing good practice through a common approach to quality assurance, monitoring self-assessment, prioritising issues for the adult and community learning development plan, and identifying staff development needs. The group has made a good start in carrying out its terms of reference. The quality of the subcontractors' contribution to the council's self-assessment report, which is due for completion by the end of March 2004, is inconsistent.

12. Management information has not been used sufficiently to effectively monitor attendance and retention rates on programmes. Attendance in classes during the week of inspection averaged 66 per cent, but there are currently no reports showing trends over time. The council has recently introduced a new computer-based management information system which will provide more-effective reports. One subcontractor has produced useful analyses of learners by post code, ethnicity, age and gender; however, the results of analysis are not being used in curriculum planning. Strategies exist to widen participation, including the use of promotional literature and the launch of a new website for the adult and community learning in June 2004.

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. |