

INSPECTION REPORT

Havering LEA

05 December 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

Havering LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Havering Local Education Authority (LEA) is a part of Havering Borough Council. It holds a contract with the London East Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for the provision of adult and community learning in the borough. Most of the provision is provided directly through the Adult College, which is the LEA's name for the adult and community learning service. The college operates in 38 sites across the borough, many of them schools, which have rooms used for day and evening classes. The college provides courses across 13 areas of learning, of which land-based, information and communications technology (ICT), sports, leisure and travel, visual and performing arts, English, languages and communication and foundation were inspected. In 2002-03, 6,500 learners generated 8,500 enrolments.
2. Five executive directors report directly to the chief executive of Havering LEA. The head of learning and achievement, who manages the lifelong learning manager, reports to the executive director for education. The lifelong learning manager is responsible for the strategic direction of the adult education service and the preparation of planning documentation, both internal and external, in respect of the college. The adult education provision is organised into two geographical areas headed by adult education managers and one curriculum area headed by a senior education manager. The two managers responsible for geographical areas cover all areas of learning. The senior manager responsible for foundation programmes has responsibility across the two geographical areas. There are quality assurance managers in each area as well as learning centre managers responsible for the operational provision of the service. Tutors are supported by curriculum co-ordinators. There are eight full-time members of staff responsible for management, administration and academic matters. There are approximately 450 part-time teaching staff and an average of 11 full-time support staff. A board of governors, which includes local authority members, a secondary school head teacher, and staff and student representatives supports the management of the college. The college is managed financially as a section within the education service.
3. Havering has a population of 200,000. The unemployment rate for Havering is 1.9 per cent, compared with the national average of 2.4 per cent. The proportion of people in Havering from minority ethnic groups is 4.2 per cent.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Land-based provision

4. Havering LEA currently runs 11 land-based courses. There are 115 learners on floristry and floral art courses, 27 on horticulture courses and 10 on animal psychology courses. Horse management NVQs at level 1 and 2 are also provided, but not enough learners were recruited for the course to run in 2002-03. All of the floristry and floral art courses lead to nationally recognised qualifications, NVQs at levels 1 and 2, however, learners

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can follow these courses on a recreational basis. Garden design and landscaping and the animal psychology courses are both recreational courses. Floristry courses are available at seven of the learning centres. The garden design and landscaping courses are available at two of the learning centres. These courses are run as day or evening classes. The animal psychology course is only available at one learning centre. There are seven part-time tutors and one curriculum manager responsible for the land-based provision across the borough. Learners can attend a one-session taster course before enrolment. Each learner can discuss the course with the tutor before enrolling. Tutors advise and guide learners to more appropriate provision if the proposed course does not suit the learners' needs. Accredited courses generally last for 30 weeks and non-accredited courses from five weeks to 30 weeks.

Information & communications technology

5. There are currently nine evening ICT courses, mainly in shared accommodation with secondary schools. There are also two daytime courses provided at the Chafford Learning Village. One-day internet courses are provided once each term on a Saturday. Courses last from five to 30 weeks. Accredited courses comprise a range of nationally recognised certificates in ICT. A range of non-accredited courses are provided in software applications, including desktop publishing, the internet and provision targeted at learners over 50 years of age. Most learners are women aged over 45. Ten part-time tutors currently work in this area. Accredited ICT courses are also provided during the day as part of the Learning Freeway programme in the Mardyke Learning Shop. Brittons Learning Village, which works in partnership with Havering Adult College, provides open access, workshop-style provision for learners using self-teach materials. All learning is supported by facilitators. Learners can work towards an examination-based computer qualification at basic level and at advanced level in word processing.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

6. There are currently 41 courses in hospitality, sport and leisure. Some hospitality courses are accredited, such as food hygiene. There are no accredited courses in sport and leisure. Most of the courses comprise one two-hour session a week for between 10 and 30 weeks. A small number of courses allow learners to progress through achievement levels, such as bridge, tai chi and yoga. There are currently 761 learners following a range of courses including Chinese and Indian cookery, wine tasting, badminton, yoga and keep fit. Most of the provision takes place during the evening at a number of learning centres including schools, community centres and churches. Most learners are women and a small number are from minority ethnic groups. There is one manager responsible for hospitality and one for sport and leisure. They are responsible for a number of part-time tutors, most of whom work between two and six hours a week.

Visual & performing arts & media

7. Visual and performing arts and media is the second largest area of learning provided. In 2002-03, there were 1,616 learners on non-accredited courses and 336 on accredited courses. At the time of inspection no data were available for 2003-2004. Of the 76 courses provided at learning centres across the borough, 17 are daytime courses and 59 are evening classes. Most courses comprise one two-hour session each week for 10, 15 or 30 weeks. Some one-day workshops are also provided. There are 41 part-time teaching staff. Courses take place from September to June. Arts and crafts courses include watercolours, patchwork and quilting, china painting, pottery, upholstery, soft furnishings, art appreciation, stained glass, interior design and embroidery. There are also performing arts classes in ballroom and Latin American dancing, line dancing, acoustic guitar, singing, and play production. In most visual arts subjects learners can progress from non-accredited to accredited courses.

English, languages & communications

8. There are 88 part-time day and evening courses in Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Greek, Turkish, Portuguese, Japanese, British Sign Language (BSL) and lip reading. Courses are run at 15 learning centres. Modern languages are accredited at 3 levels by an open college network. Accreditation for BSL is provided at level 1 and 2 by an awarding body specialising in communication with deaf people. Non-accredited courses in lip-reading and short language taster courses are also provided. Most courses comprise one two-hour session a week for 30 weeks. There are currently 1,270 enrolments on languages and lip reading courses. Thirty-eight hourly paid sessional teachers and 1.5 salaried management staff are employed on the programme.

Foundation programmes

9. There are currently 138 foundation courses including literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), life skills/citizenship provision for learners with specific needs, family learning, return to learning and some prevocational areas. This is a distinct area within the provider and is referred to as The Learning Freeway. Learners are taught in small groups from pre-entry to level 2. All learners who achieve their agreed learning objectives are awarded a completion certificate. Most learners in this area can then progress to nationally accredited qualifications. The courses are provided at 19 community learning centres. Venues include schools, libraries, adult centres, and a house and a flat located on local housing estates. Most learners visit a learning centre for initial advice and assessment of their individual learning needs by a learning adviser before joining a course. At the time of inspection, 1,057 learners had enrolled on at least one of the courses. There is one senior manager and one quality assurance manager who manage a staff team comprising 14 team leaders, three learning advisers, 54 tutors, eight personal tutors and 50 volunteer tutors.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	12
Number of inspection days	60
Number of learner interviews	484
Number of staff interviews	99
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	62
Number of partner/external agency interviews	8

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

10. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory, as is the approach to equality of opportunity and quality assurance. The quality of land-based provision and English, languages and communication is good. The quality of ICT, sports, leisure and travel, visual and performing arts, and foundation is satisfactory.

GRADES

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

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

Land-based provision	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

Information & communications technology	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

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

Visual & performing arts & media	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

English, languages & communications	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

11. **In sports, leisure and travel learners achieve well** with most achieving what they set out to do at the beginning of the course. **Foundation learners develop their personal skills and self-confidence. Learners produce a good standard of work in land-based provision.** Learners' produce very good work both in class and in their portfolios. Some of the work is of such a high professional standard that it can be either sold or given as gifts. **There is good celebration of learners' achievements in visual and performing arts.** Learners exhibit their art and craft work and perform their plays and songs throughout the borough. A satisfactory number of learners move on to higher level courses. **In languages there is good progression from level 1 to level 2 courses.**

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
Land-based provision	0	1	4	1	1	0	0	7
Information & communications technology	0	2	4	2	1	0	0	9
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	3	5	1	1	1	0	11
Visual & performing arts & media	1	4	8	3	3	0	0	19
English, languages & communications	1	5	7	4	1	0	0	18
Foundation programmes	0	3	5	9	1	0	0	18
Total	2	18	33	20	8	1	0	82

12. **Teaching is good in many courses.** In land-based provision tutors use their considerable teaching and industrial experience to help learners develop and improve their designs. In ICT and sports, leisure and travel and languages tutors have good

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subject knowledge and lessons are generally well planned and structured to meet individual learners' needs. However, in foundation sufficient attention is not always given to the differences between learners.

13. **Resources are generally poor.** In land based provision there are not enough horticultural facilities. In common with visual and performing arts, there is an inadequate provision of learning materials and tutors often bring their own. Some language accommodation is badly heated, poorly lit and unclean. **Resources for ICT are generally good.**

14. There is some poor practice with the recording of learners' progress and other relevant information in foundation, land-based and sports provision. However, assessment practices for assessing and reviewing learners' progress are satisfactory in other areas.

15. **A good range of courses is provided throughout the borough.** The college responds well to national initiatives and community needs in providing courses in easy to reach locations. There are, however, not enough day-time courses, especially in computing and visual and performing arts and the range of courses in hospitality is small.

16. Support for learners is satisfactory across most of the provision. **Individual support for foundation learners is good.**

Leadership and management

17. **Support for staff is good.** New staff are well inducted and supported in their role. Staff are encouraged to gain a teaching qualification and are well supported in their professional development.

18. The self-assessment report was accurate and identified the key weaknesses of the organisation. Self-assessment is used well to improve the provision. Weaknesses identified are currently being tackled.

19. **There is insufficient use of management information.** The available information on courses and learners is not used to inform decision-making or planning. Targets are not adequately set or monitored.

20. **Quality assurance arrangements are incomplete.** One section of the college has well-established procedures and documentation, while the other two sections do not. Quality assurance arrangements are detailed and regularly updated in one section, but in the other section do not cover all the aspects of learning. In visual and performing arts the management structure is not clear, and in ICT learners experience of the same course is quite different depending on the learning centre they attend.

21. **The setting, monitoring and reporting of equality and diversity issues within the college is inadequate.** Although learners have a good understanding of complaints procedures, and use the system, managers do not collate or analyse the complaints.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good work by management to meet learners' needs
- good support for staff
- good initiatives to target hard to reach learners
- good use of self-assessment to make improvements

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of management information
- some poor accommodation
- no formal structures to promote equal opportunities
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements

Land-based provision

Strengths

- very good work produced by learners
- good retention rates on accredited courses
- good teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- weak recording of learners' progress
- poor accommodation, equipment and resources

Information & communications technology

Strengths

- good teaching
- effective course planning on non-accredited courses
- good resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate programme planning
- inconsistent management systems

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good achievement of personal learning goals
- good teaching to meet individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- poor monitoring and recording of information on learners' health and progress
- insufficient range of courses in hospitality

Visual & performing arts & media

Strengths

- good celebration of learners' achievements
- good progression
- wide range of learning activities
- good development of learners' technical skills
- effective support for tutors

Weaknesses

- poor accommodation and practical resources
- insufficient pre-course information
- weak curriculum planning
- incomplete implementation of quality assurance

English, languages & communications

Strengths

- good development of speaking skills in foreign language courses
- good teaching and learning
- wide range of provision
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates on BSL courses
- poor accommodation

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good gains in learners' self-confidence and personal skills
- very good range of effective and innovative courses and venues
- very good individual learner support

Weaknesses

- inadequate use of resources
- insufficient staff with specialist skills
- poor assessment practices

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WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HAVERING LEA:

- the good teaching
- the friendly atmosphere and helpful staff
- the initial advice and guidance and ease of enrolment
- the breadth and scope of courses
- the social contact and increased self-confidence

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HAVERING LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the cleanliness and heating in some of the rooms
- the provision of daytime classes
- the access to ICT facilities

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HAVING LEA:

- improve accommodation and resources
- ensure implementation of complete quality assurance systems
- consolidate foundation provision
- ensure adequate recording of learners' health issues for activity-based courses
- ensure development of formal structures to promote equal opportunities
- improve recording of learners' achievement on non-accredited 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.

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good work by management to meet learners' needs
- good support for staff
- good initiatives to target hard to reach learners
- good use of self-assessment to make improvements

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of management information
- some poor accommodation
- no formal structures to promote equal opportunities
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements

22. There is good work by management to meet learners' needs. The college collects feedback from learners during and at the end of courses. Staff use the feedback to ensure learners' needs are met and to identify new courses to run or alternative times and venues for existing courses. Surveys are also sent to households in the area so that potential learners are able to state their preferences from the wide range of courses provided. Management responds quickly and effectively to such requests and rectifies any problems or issues raised by learners. For example, where sites have been identified as either unsuitable for training or not geographically convenient, other more appropriate sites have been found immediately. However, some learners with a hearing difficulty were not supplied with a loop system until nine weeks into their course.

23. Support for staff is good. There is a detailed and well-structured induction pack for staff, supported by a mentoring system for staff to receive feedback on their performance and confidential advice. All new staff have a teaching session observed within the first two months of their employment, and then at six months, before they are part of the regular teaching observation cycle. The new staff appraisal enables good performance appraisal alongside identifying targets and training needs. Staff development is good and staff are paid for the hours in which they attend training. Staff are encouraged and supported in gaining teaching qualifications. There is good support for staff to gain access to relevant professional development. Managers ensure that staff are visited regularly and kept up to date with current information. There is good communication across the college. Many staff have attended recent professional updating. Although there are frequent meetings, not all produce adequate minutes or action points. Formal meetings between the three section leaders have only recently started. There is no formal line management system for part-time staff in the ICT provision.

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24. There is a three year development plan based on data collected within the college, information supplied by staff and learners and an analysis of community needs. There are clearly stated objectives relating to improving provision and the management information system and furthering inclusion. Staff understand the corporate objectives and their role within the college. All staff have up-to-date job descriptions.

25. There is insufficient use of management data. Detailed statistics have been collected and collated manually on enrolments, attendance, achievement and learning hours and have been used for some curriculum planning and target-setting. This does not meet the level of planning and target-setting required by the college. For many courses, there are no data relating to retention. There is a management information system used to store data relating to retention, achievement, ethnicity, gender and other variables. However, this system is not adequate to enable data to aid management decisions and planning.

26. Some accommodation is poor. A variety of accommodation is used by the provider to encourage participation, including schools, church halls, converted houses and flats. However, there is not enough suitable accommodation for daytime provision. Learner surveys have identified that many are concerned about the availability, cleanliness, accessibility, and security of accommodation. Some of the rooms do not meet the specific needs of some courses, such as classrooms with high ceilings which are acoustically unsuitable for language classes. Some of the rooms are not adequately heated and some buildings do not have adequate access for those with restricted mobility.

27. Although there is a good range of appropriate computers within the ICT provision, accommodation for this is poor. There are not enough television sets or cassette recorders for the language classes. There are insufficient resources for the floristry courses. In some areas there is too much reliance on tutors bringing in their own learning materials, such as the photography classes.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

28. There are good initiatives to target hard to reach learners, a strategic priority identified in the adult learning plan. Havering LEA commits considerable resources to meeting the needs of learners from some of the most deprived areas in the borough. It has a strong partnership with the London Development Agency to run courses aimed at hard to reach learners. The college has a good presence in regeneration areas. In one of the most deprived areas in the borough the college has converted a council flat into a learning centre to provide a range of first rung courses. On the same estate there is a well resourced IT facility and a nursery providing free childcare for learners. The facility attracts learners from both the estate and other regeneration areas.

29. There are no formal structures to promote equal opportunities. The borough has an equality and diversity policy that is a clear statement of intent in regards to equal opportunities. However, there is no clear relationship between the borough's policy and the adult learning service's practices. Specific targets for equality and diversity are not set in the adult college. There is also inadequate monitoring and reporting of equality

and diversity issues throughout the service. There is no forum for the formal consideration of equality issues. There is some reference to, and discussion of, equality issues in meetings. However, equality and diversity is not a standing item on any agendas. Although there is an adequate complaints procedure that is generally well recorded, there is no analysis or formal reporting of complaints to the senior management team or the council.

30. The borough has made an appropriate response to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. There is a race equality scheme, which describes adequately how the council will fulfil its statutory duties. The borough provides training in race equality for a large number of its staff, including those from the adult learning service. The borough has also responded to the demands of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and has undertaken an audit of its premises. Currently 41 per cent of its major sites are accessible to those with restricted mobility. Eleven per cent of the sites provide no access for people with restricted mobility. The LEA is currently undertaking work on the cost of making all sites fully accessible. The equality and diversity policy is appropriately covered in staff and student handbooks. Equality of opportunity is also appropriately introduced to learners at induction. At the beginning of each course learners are given a handbook with a clearly worded statement and are talked through their rights and responsibilities.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

31. Self-assessment is used well to make improvements. The self-assessment report was found to be accurate and self-critical. Inspectors gave the same grade as that given in the self-assessment report for most areas. A self-assessment development plan focused on the key developments to improve the provision. Identified weaknesses are currently being rectified through action-planning. Since the report was written in March 2003, improvements have been made in a number of areas of learning. Inspectors gave a higher grade for three areas of learning than the self-assessment report. Sports and leisure was found to be satisfactory by inspectors after rectifying key weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report, which also graded the area as unsatisfactory. Staff awareness of, and involvement in, the self-assessment process is good.

32. The system of course evaluations is satisfactory. Feedback is used well by tutors and managers to improve course planning and teaching. Learner evaluations help staff identify and improve aspects of the courses. Improvements based on feedback include incorporating observation of children being taught on family learning programmes, moving classrooms and in one case changing venues. However, not all learner feedback is recorded and a comprehensive analysis of trends or actions does not take place.

33. The college has a satisfactory programme of classroom observations developed in partnership with three other local providers. Observers attend a training programme that is externally accredited and can be used towards a qualification. They are provided with clear, detailed criteria to carry out observations. Following an observation, tutors receive comprehensive and constructive feedback. Appropriate support is provided when necessary. However, some action plans based on observations are not sufficiently detailed. The progress of tutors towards achieving identified actions is not always

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adequately recorded nor adequately followed through. The observation programme includes a useful and detailed moderation element. This has identified some areas for improvement and plans exist to tackle these. The frequency of observation varies across the college, from once a year to once every three years.

34. Assessment and verification are satisfactory. Where the college is running externally accredited courses it ensures that it meets the requirements of awarding bodies. For all other courses the college has incorporated some form of course assessment. There is, however, insufficient recording of learners' progress and achievement in many areas of the provision.

35. Quality assurance arrangements are incomplete. Management practices are inconsistent across the different sections of the college. The quality assurance arrangements are good in one area but poor in the other areas. One section of the college has a comprehensive quality assurance manual with detailed procedures that are regularly reviewed and updated. The other two sections have not been adequately resourced to enable the same high standard of quality assurance. In these sections there is a selection of procedures for tutors in the tutor handbook and in a quality assurance box at each learning centre, which do not adequately cover all aspects of the college's work. The procedures are not very detailed and there are insufficient control mechanisms to ensure staff are aware of and are using the current version. In part of the college there is insufficient recording of quality assurance issues. In other parts there are varying practices for example mid-course reviews are not recorded consistently across the college. Some staff do not fully understand quality assurance.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Land-based provision

Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	154	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- very good work produced by learners
- good retention rates on accredited courses
- good teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- weak recording of learners' progress
- poor accommodation, equipment and resources

Achievement and standards

36. Most learners produce good standards of work, particularly in floristry. Learners build on their previous knowledge and skills and improve their own performance. Many learners use effectively their own ideas and designs. For example, in one session, learners' Christmas topiary trees were made to a professional standard, and although based on a common model, each individual design was very distinctive. Many learners have gained confidence in their own skills and produce arrangements that can either be given as gifts or sold professionally. Learners' portfolios are produced to a high standard with evidence clearly annotated and a wide range of photographic evidence to illustrate their work.

37. Retention rates are good on the accredited floristry and floral art courses at 85 per cent in 2001-02 and 89 per cent in 2002-03. Achievement rates are satisfactory. On accredited courses the pass rate in 2002-03 was 75 per cent. Achievement on non-accredited courses is measured by those who complete the programme and was 88 per cent overall in 2002-03. The achievement rates on some shorter courses were 100 per cent. On one horticulture course the achievement rate was only 60 per cent.

38. Forty-four per cent of learners on accredited courses progress to higher level courses either with Havering LEA or with other local training providers. Some learners on non-accredited courses return to the same course to increase their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Because of the LEA policy of not duplicating provision within the borough there are not enough opportunities for progression other than in floristry.

Quality of education and training

39. Teaching and learning are good and tutors give very clear demonstrations. Tutors are all well qualified and have relevant industrial experience. Learners are encouraged to explore their own ideas. For example, in one floral art class the tutors' demonstration showed quick and easy methods of producing a Christmas table decoration and learners were able to easily produce a similar arrangement of their own. Learners quickly develop skills beyond the level of the course. The tutor support systems ensure that all tutors teach to a high standard. Many classes have learners with different levels of experience and tutors differentiate well enabling learners' to produce work to their own levels.

40. Satisfactory advice and guidance is given to the learners before enrolment. Learners are encouraged to take a one-session taster course to ensure the course will suit their needs. Guidance on further courses is also satisfactory with learners being given all options available at Havering LEA and other training providers. Literacy, numeracy and language support is available for learners who identify a need and tutors give good support in the production of portfolios.

41. Recording of learners' progress is weak. Learners on accredited courses follow the awarding body standards and assessment is carried out in accordance with these standards. Progress towards the qualification is monitored through the assessment schedule. Floristry learners self-assess their work at the end of each session and this evidence is used as part of their portfolio. Individual learning plans are not used across the area for either accredited or non-accredited courses and there is no record of individual learners' needs. Learners' progress is not recorded and learners on non-accredited programmes have no record of their achievement. A new system is being piloted but is not in the land-based area.

42. Accommodation, equipment and resources are poor. There are not enough practical horticultural facilities. Small-scale practical activities, such as planting seeds in seed trays, are demonstrated in the classroom but larger scale practical activities, such as landscaping and planting beds, are not possible. The provision of learning materials is inadequate on some courses. Tutors are expected to provide learning materials, such as plants, flowers and foliage to demonstrate techniques for floral displays. Some tutors also bring their own reference books. Horticultural tutors supply their own materials and are not able claim for reimbursement. Some rooms used for floristry and floral art do not have water available. In some learning centres there is poor access for people with restricted mobility. Some rooms used for floristry have desks that are not at a suitable height for flower arranging.

Leadership and management

43. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Support for tutors is good. New tutors are particularly well supported through the mentor system and early observations of their lessons. Staff development is good and all tutors are encouraged to take a

teaching qualification when appointed. Courses are planned well to meet learners' needs. Course reviews are used to inform the planning process and feedback from learners is used to improve the provision. The programme is designed to compliment the provision by other providers to ensure that all needs can be met. At some learning centres there are insufficient enrolments to enable the courses to run. In these cases learners are offered an alternative course at a different learning centre. This is not always convenient to the learners because of timing and travel difficulties.

44. Targets for retention, achievement and progression are set annually but these are not monitored thoroughly. A new management information system was introduced last year but there is insufficient historical data available for complete monitoring and evaluation to be carried out. Most evaluation undertaken so far has needed to be done manually.

45. Although the LEA is targeting areas of deprivation within the borough, enrolments do not reflect a diverse group on land-based courses. Quality assurance of the teaching programme is based around a good lesson observation system. This has been developed recently and provides good feedback to tutors and managers. Action plans are produced to improve performance but managers do not have a record of the results of reviews of the plans, or if they were carried out.

Information & communications technology**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1196	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good teaching
- effective course planning on non-accredited courses
- good resources

Weaknesses

- inadequate programme planning
- inconsistent management systems

Achievement and standards

46. Data for accredited courses in 2002-03 show 52 per cent of learners achieved a full certificate with most other learners gaining a partial certificate. Of 490 learners registered at the Brittons Learning Village in 2002-03, 49 achieved more than four exam modules, with 53 learners achieving one to three modules. Other learners followed non-accredited courses of study. The attainment of learners on non-accredited courses is satisfactory. Learners fully understand their progress and can see benefits from their learning in their lives. For example, one learner's self-confidence improved during the course and she is now able to help her husband with his work at home. Suitable learning outcomes are set at the beginning of courses and tutors monitor progress against these appropriately. Currently, the number of learners on courses is low. However, current learners receive very good individual tutor attention. Retention rates are satisfactory.

Quality of education and training

47. Teaching is good. Tutors have good subject knowledge. Lessons are generally well planned and structured to meet learners' needs. Tutors prepare a good range of appropriate teaching materials to support learners and encourage independent learning. Most tutors have good working relationships with learners and help them to improve their self-confidence and promote learning. One tutor taught the spreadsheet application first to help learners with poor keyboard skills. The learners were then able to progress at a more equal level. Learners are encouraged to collaborate and get support from their peers. Attendance is generally good on most courses.

48. Tutors plan effectively for the non-accredited courses. Planning is imaginative and appropriate to the needs of learners. Learners are consulted about the planned course

outline and their individual preferences are sometimes incorporated. One tutor set a presentation project for the whole course and learners added to it as skills were obtained. Learners gained self-confidence as they were able to monitor their own progress on the course.

49. The teaching and learning resources for ICT are good at most venues. Computers are well maintained and most run up-to-date software. Laser printers are available at all sites. Equipment is well maintained and adequate communication systems exist for technical support. Teaching rooms are generally large, comfortable and well lit with suitable attention to health and safety. However, one learning centre at a site shared with a secondary school does not provide adjustable seating. Tutors are well qualified in their subject areas and most have a basic teaching qualification.

50. Assessment on accredited courses is satisfactory. Work is set and marked by tutors and verbal feedback is given to help learners improve. Since the appointment this year of the curriculum quality assurance co-ordinator, work to be submitted to an examining body is sent to her for verification before being sent off to the awarding body. Most tutors across the range of courses keep checklists of the skills achieved by their learners. Appropriate verbal guidance and encouragement is given to learners to help them assess their progress and identify what they need to do to improve. A variety of initial assessment forms devised by individual tutors are used in all courses. These vary in effectiveness and use but generally only give basic information to the tutors about learners' starting points.

51. Havering LEA intends its ICT provision to complement other providers in the borough. However, planning of the programme of ICT courses is not adequate. There is not enough provision of daytime courses. Those daytime courses that are currently running are located in the south of borough. Small numbers of learners are currently attending courses. In some instances this is due to the roll-on roll-off nature of the course. Most learners are women over the age of 50. There are no learners from minority ethnic groups. There is not enough evidence of work carried out by staff to assess the needs of the local community in relation to ICT training provision. Where tutors identify that learners' needs have not been adequately identified or met, they discuss this with the learner and refer them to specialist staff. If appropriate the learner completes a diagnostic test and is referred to a suitable course. In courses provided as part of the Learning Freeway, all learners complete a diagnostic test at their initial interview. This information is given to tutors and where necessary, learners are provided with individual support in the classroom.

Leadership and management

52. Management systems are not consistent across the provision. Learning centres with different funding arrangements make different decisions about appropriate minimum numbers for courses. Some learners on free courses are required to pay exam registration fees, but others pay for courses and exam registration is free. Support for part-time tutors is good but informal. Part-time tutors choose who they go to for support. The lesson observation system generally operates well in this area but there are

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examples of the curriculum action plans not being followed through systematically.
Good paper based quality assurance systems are starting to be put in place but it is too early to judge their effectiveness.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	761	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement of personal learning goals
- good teaching to meet individual learners' needs

Weaknesses

- poor monitoring and recording of information on learners' health and progress
- insufficient range of courses in hospitality

Achievement and standards

53. There is good achievement of personal learning goals. Learners complete an initial assessment to establish their personal learning goals and to state what they hope to gain from their course. The initial assessment forms are completed consistently. Learning goals are then regularly recorded and updated on learners' self-evaluation forms in discussion with tutors. Personal learning goals relate to lifestyle improvements including improved cardiovascular and muscular fitness, improved posture, flexibility, balance, joint mobility and a generally improved sense of physical and mental well-being. Learners also develop new skills and routines in exercise, yoga and tai chi sessions. In badminton learners develop new skills very quickly. End of course surveys indicate that 90 per cent of learners achieved all or most of their learning goals. Staff provide learners with very good individual feedback on their progress.

54. Attendance rates are low. Attendance is currently 63 per cent, however, many of the learners are older learners and absences are generally due to a medical condition.

Quality of education and training

55. There is good teaching to meet individual learners' needs. Tutors are appropriately qualified and have good relevant experience. Lessons are well planned with good schemes of work and detailed lesson plans. These enable progression both within lessons and over a period of time. Tutors make good use of questioning to monitor learners' understanding and provide additional help and support where necessary. Good handouts are provided in some classes to support learning and to help learners exercise at home. For example, in a tai chi class learners record their own progress and update this in following sessions. Careful attention is paid to health and safety in terms of safe exercising in general fitness and yoga classes. In most cases appropriate strategies are in place for differentiation between ability levels in classes.

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56. Accommodation and resources are generally satisfactory for sports courses and comprise church halls, drama rooms, general purpose rooms and a registry office. However, there is not sufficient accommodation available to provide enough daytime provision. There is some unsatisfactory accommodation for hospitality courses. For example, one room used for evening cookery is used as an arts and crafts room during the day. The room is poorly maintained and not adequate for the provision of a cookery course.

57. There is poor monitoring and recording of information on learners' health progress. Although tutors understand the progress of their learners this is not recorded. Some learners do not receive regular formal feedback on their progress. A number of different documents for recording progress have been produced. Some of these are kept in tutors' files, but are not used. Some tutors produce their own recording sheets and regularly collect and record relevant information on their learners' progress. Other tutors do not carry out or record regular assessments. Tutors do not collect enough information to help them to advise learners on how to progress. There are not sufficient data to establish learners' achievements on non-accredited courses. There are inadequate procedures for collecting health information from learners and no central record is maintained. Learners are not formally assessed on their fitness levels on starting exercise programmes. Although an initial assessment form requires learners to record medical information, most learners do not carry this out. Learners also complete and sign pre-exercise checklists that require them to visit their doctor if they suffer from certain specified medical conditions. However, this form does not provide details of learners' medical conditions. Some tutors keep their own written records but these are generally poorly detailed. Some tutors do not record any health information on their learners.

58. There is an insufficient range of hospitality courses. Most of the provision is non-accredited short cookery courses covering a variety of ethnic cuisines. A basic level wine appreciation course is also provided. Only the food hygiene course enables learners to progress to more advanced learning. Most of the courses take place in the evening. There is a satisfactory range of sport and leisure courses. Over 70 per cent of sport and leisure classes take place during the day. Although progression routes are not generally available in sport and leisure, they are available in bridge, tai chi and yoga.

Leadership and management

59. Two managers are responsible for this area of learning, with one for hospitality and one for sport and leisure. Team meetings are held but there is not enough formal recording or discussion of relevant issues or sharing of good practice. Tutors have a good awareness of, and take adequate account of health and safety issues in their classes. However, there is insufficient overall management of health and safety. Some areas used for cooking classes are not adequate. Health screening of sport learners is carried out but not systematically recorded. There is a good policy of employing staff with good industry qualifications and experience in sport and leisure. Staff are well supported and regular staff updating is encouraged and recorded.

60. There is particularly good targeted provision for discrete men's and women's keep fit sessions and exercise classes for the over 50s. Two exercise for retirement classes successfully recruited 40 learners each. Both classes are currently well attended. The self-assessment process has been used to improve the provision in this area. The self-assessment report identified key weaknesses and good progress has been made on actions to rectify them. Some weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report were found by inspectors to be satisfactory.

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

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1952	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good celebration of learners' achievements
- good progression
- wide range of learning activities
- good development of learners' technical skills
- effective support for tutors

Weaknesses

- poor accommodation and practical resources
- insufficient pre-course information
- weak curriculum planning
- incomplete implementation of quality assurance

Achievement and standards

61. There is good celebration of learners' achievements. Learners are able to exhibit their art and craft work in venues across the borough, during Adult Learners' Week and at the Havering Show. Learners in performing arts achieve performance standard. For example, a play production class gives regular public performances across the borough and is due to perform a pantomime at six venues. The singing class takes its production to residential homes and at Christmas will sing carols in the town centre. Retention and attendance is good in most classes.

62. Progression is good. Learners progress through a good range of non-accredited courses and can move on to further courses at levels one and two. Many learners progress through these levels.

Quality of education and training

63. There is a wide range of learning activities in most classes. Learners carry out a variety of demanding practical tasks and activities. Learners are challenged to examine and develop their own personal perceptions of art. Tutors are appropriately experienced and have good subject knowledge, providing learners with good demonstrations of tasks and activities. Learners are provided with good instructional information. There is effective use of group discussion and debate to help learners formulate ideas. Learners are encouraged to work towards higher standards through good displays of tutors' work.

They are often able to contextualise their own work through study of a good range of visual reference materials. For example, in one class learners were able to study reproductions of the work of Michelangelo. Learners' individual learning needs are not always accurately identified. New versions of individual learning plans are currently being piloted and evaluated in a small section of the provision.

64. Learners develop good technical skills and are motivated by their acquisition of new skills each week. Learners acquire skills that are used in their professional lives. For example, painters and decorators attend the paint effects class to enhance their professional services. Learners build an extensive portfolio of different skills learnt each week. In patchwork and quilting, learners make samples using different techniques each week to later construct a large quilt. They consecutively complete shorter projects which are often seasonal or thematic. Learners in singing classes develop skills of breath control and harmonisation. In dance classes learners rehearse steps individually before combining them into complex dance patterns.

65. Although there is a satisfactory range of courses, there are not enough daytime courses. For example, when a soft furnishings group began a day course, three evening class learners immediately transferred. There is insufficient market needs analysis in local communities to help develop the course programme in line with the needs of the local community.

66. Accommodation and practical resources are poor. Some rooms are too small for the number of learners and the practical nature of the work. Some classrooms are not adequately heated and some are poorly decorated. Access to arts classes at three learning centres is poor for learners with restricted mobility. There is inadequate provision of consumable resources and basic essential equipment. Some learners are dependent on tutors providing resources. For example, in one dance class the tutor provided the CDs as well as the CD player and microphone. In one art class the tutor provided a projector each week to show the class slides of art work. The photography tutor provides lights and other basic equipment for learners. Essential learning handouts were for sale in some classes.

67. Assessment is generally satisfactory. However, there is insufficient recording of assessment on some non-accredited courses. Initial assessment procedures are not implemented effectively and learners' starting points are not adequately identified. Goal setting is poor for many learners and learners are not always able to identify what they need to do to improve. Feedback is good, but in the poorer classes critical feedback is not provided.

68. There is insufficient pre-course information. Prospectuses are delivered to most homes within the borough, but these do not fully inform learners of the cost of materials or the content of the courses available. Course titles do not always adequately reflect the course content or what level learners can expect to work at. Learners receive course information sheets during their first session. Guidance provided during the course is satisfactory, with tutors and learning centre managers providing information when required.

Leadership and management

69. There is good support for tutors through an effective tutor support programme. All staff are encouraged to access teacher training and professional development is good. New tutors are provided with a good induction and ongoing support in the classroom. Annual staff meetings are held at the start of each year and learning centre managers hold regular termly meetings in the learning centres. A regular newsletter is distributed with class registers.

70. Curriculum planning systems are weak. New course suggestions are generally based on tutor expertise and availability, ideas from staff and feedback from learners. The management structure is not clear and staff do not understand their responsibility for developing the provision.

71. The quality assurance process is incomplete and does not promote continuous improvement. There is inadequate evaluative information in learners' feedback and course evaluations. There is a new observation system in use. Inspection findings and grades are similar to the observation profile of the system. Action plans for individual tutors have been identified and are being implemented.

English, languages & communications**Grade 2**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1270	2

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good development of speaking skills in foreign language courses
- good teaching and learning
- wide range of provision
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- poor pass rates on BSL courses
- poor accommodation

Achievement and standards

72. There is good development by learners on modern language courses of their speaking skills. They speak confidently and accurately in pairs and to the whole group and use the target language to ask for clarification. Learners on BSL courses make good progress in developing learning skills. They become confident about receiving help from each other as well as from their tutors and can risk making mistakes in order to learn. There is good progression from level 1 to stage 2. Learners make satisfactory progress in understanding and signing. Pass rates in modern languages are satisfactory, but are low in BSL.

Quality of education and training

73. Teaching and learning are good in modern languages and BSL. Lessons are well structured, with learning progressing by small logical steps. Tutors plan activities to suit different learning styles and learners' previous level of attainment. Lessons are lively, and teachers use a wide variety of different activities to hold learners' attention and make lessons enjoyable. They give individual learners careful attention with positive feedback and clear guidance on how to improve signing or speaking. Tutors in modern languages are skilful at introducing grammar. They integrate it into the lessons in a non-threatening manner. Sign language tutors help learners understand the differences in structure between signed and spoken English and to use these correctly. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of facial expression. Learners arrive punctually, set about tasks quickly and concentrate well on their work. Learners confidently ask questions of their teachers and help each other.

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74. The college provides a wide range of courses, including less commonly provided languages, in a large number of learning centres across the borough. There is a good proportion of daytime classes in foreign languages although only one learning centre provides daytime BSL courses. Most languages are provided at three levels to enable learners to progress. A small amount of teaching is unsatisfactory. Learners' signing skills are not tested before enrolment on level 2 courses. There is insufficient preparation for signing examinations including regular use of video to record learners' communications.

75. Staff are appropriately experienced and qualified. Most teachers are native speakers or signers and have teaching qualifications. Some BSL teachers are very well qualified.

76. Assessment is satisfactory. Learners on foreign language courses are asked to write their personal aims before they start their courses. Their ability is assessed informally by tutors during the first session. Tutors provide good verbal feedback at every lesson. Homework is marked regularly and learners are shown how to improve. Tutors keep records of individual learners' progress and ensure that awarding body requirements on final assessment are met. There is inadequate individual target-setting and recording of achievement of personal learning goals for learners who choose not to pursue accreditation.

77. There are satisfactory arrangements for guidance and support. Guidance in the prospectus on the different levels within foreign languages helps learners choose an appropriate course. Hearing loops are installed in some locations. Where learners with restricted mobility experience problems, classes are moved to a more convenient location. Learners are given the opportunity to practise their signing skills at local clubs for deaf people. Enrichment activities in foreign languages include exchanges with the borough's twin town in Germany, Italian holidays and day trips to France.

78. Some accommodation is unsatisfactory. Several learning centres are cold and poorly decorated, with inadequate and poorly maintained furniture, poor lighting and unclean toilets. In some centres toilets are locked in the evenings. At one learning centre, lessons are sometimes interrupted by members of a neighbouring youth project. Although a number of schools used in the evenings have very good ICT facilities, including video conferencing facilities and interactive software, these are unavailable to adult learners. The Europa centre is cited in the self-assessment report as a resource available to the college but only four out of 78 classes are located there. Some teaching equipment and learning resources are inadequate. There are insufficient teaching materials for some languages. Whiteboards in some learning centres are too small. Some cassette players are of inappropriate design.

Leadership and management

79. Curriculum management is good. Staff identify their professional development needs annually and training is paid for where it is relevant to the priorities of the college or curriculum area. There are good communications between managers and all tutors. Meetings are held regularly and tutors receive information on college developments. Good practice is shared with colleagues from other boroughs at meetings of the East

London Partnership and at awarding body moderation meetings and training events. BSL tutors meet at a number of events across London. The language department meets for end of term social events

80. There is effective use of the teaching observation framework. New staff are prioritised for observation. Strengths and weaknesses are accurately identified and useful action points noted in a supportive manner. Mentors are allocated to new staff. Recorded tutor support visits also take place but these do not always identify weaknesses in teaching where the visitor is not a specialist in the subject. Tutors have some input into the self-assessment report which accurately identified most strengths and weaknesses.

81. There is a strong commitment to promoting achievement among deaf people. Lip reading, BSL and communication tactics courses are free to deaf people from Havering and neighbouring boroughs. Race and gender issues have a lower profile. The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups is lower than the proportional representation in the local community. Retention, achievement and progression are not monitored in relation to race or gender. Most teaching materials do not reflect diversity.

Foundation programmes**Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	1057	3

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good gains in learners' self-confidence and personal skills
- very good range of effective and innovative courses and venues
- very good individual learner support

Weaknesses

- inadequate use of resources
- insufficient staff with specialist skills
- poor assessment practices

Achievement and standards

82. Learners demonstrate good progress in the development of personal skills and self-confidence. The provision has a positive impact on the lives of learners. Most learners work confidently and cooperatively with tutors and other learners. Most learners work well towards achieving learning goals that have been identified in individual learning plans. To date 88 learners have been entered for literacy and numeracy tests at levels 1 and 2. Sixty-six learners have been entered for assignments from entry level 1 to 3. Retention rates are satisfactory. In 2002-03, 86 per cent of starters completed.

Quality of education and training

83. There is a very good range of effective and innovative courses and venues. Managers respond quickly to new national initiatives and develop innovative programmes which meet the needs of local communities. New prevocational courses with support have been recently introduced. In addition, a new programme of tasters that reflects the interests of learners and includes literacy, numeracy and language, has been developed as part of a national initiative. Courses are provided in premises that are centrally located in disadvantaged communities. These include a flat, a house and shop front premises.

84. All learners receive very good individual support. Tutors have good working relationships with the learners and fully understand their needs. Learners are made to feel welcome and supported in a professional manner. There is a good strategy to encourage and support volunteer tutors. Volunteer tutors are appropriately trained and used effectively by tutors to support the learning process. For example, in one session a

volunteer tutor was used effectively to bring a learner who missed the previous session up to date. All Learners are offered confidential interviews to discuss their learning needs and aspirations at key stages of their programmes. Initial information on provision is produced in different styles, formats and is accessible to all learners. Learning centres in the most deprived areas provide good access to childcare facilities.

85. The use of resources is inadequate. There is too much reliance on paper-based resources and not enough use of interactive ICT software to support learning. Many classrooms have insufficient working space for the activities. There are inadequate arrangements for the display of learning resources to enable learners easy access and to aid independent learning.

86. Although there is a clear strategy to tackle the national shortage in basic skills tutors, by encouraging and supporting volunteer tutors to become part-time tutors, there is nevertheless a shortage of staff with the required expertise. Not all of the newer tutors, for example, have sufficient teaching experience and expertise to cater confidently with the differing abilities of learners. Many of the new tutors are not confident in using ICT as a teaching and learning tool to enhance the learning experience. Some of the activities do not motivate learners towards independent learning.

87. There are some poor assessment practices. In some cases, assessment of learning support needs is poor. All learners complete diagnostic testing. However, in some cases it is not used to produce individual learning plans. There is not always a clear link between progress reviews and some individual learning plans. Target-setting for some learners is not specific enough to ensure good progress. Most learners have sufficient understanding of their progress towards qualifications. However, some learners on family learning and literacy, numeracy and language courses do not understand the relevance of assessment to their learning goals.

Leadership and management

88. Managers of this area of learning set a clear direction through strategic objectives and targets. Full advantage is taken of the different funding streams for literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Managers ensure that it is targeted effectively in the interest of learners. Staff development for all teaching staff is well managed. Managers give high priority to staff training. Take up of training is good. Most staff have a good understanding of the important developments in this area of learning. Staff are well supported with many staff having progressed from unpaid volunteers positions to become paid support workers and tutors. Management information systems are mostly paper-based and do not always provide staff with accurate information to plan provision.

89. The quality assurance arrangements are systematic and well recorded. The teaching observation system is systematically implemented. The teaching observation profile in the self-assessment report reflects that of the inspection profile in relation to teaching and learning. However, some action plans have not yet led to the identified training. There are explicit aims, values and strategies that promote diversity. Provision is wide-ranging and targeted at disadvantaged areas of the borough. Much of the provision is highly

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innovative and socially inclusive. All categories of learners in the skills for life agenda participate in the learning provision. Most learning venues provide good access for people with restricted ability, but is difficult at some sites. A separate prospectus has been designed for learners with learning difficulties.