REINSPECTION REPORT

The Learning Trust Reinspection

23 April 2005

ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

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

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

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

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

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

*   work-based learning for all people over 16
*   provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
*   the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
*   Adult and Community Learning
*   learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
*   education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The Learning Trust (the Trust) is a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee. It was established specifically to provide education services in the London borough of Hackney. The Trust took over responsibility for education services from the local education authority in August 2002.

2. The chief executive of the Trust is accountable to a board of directors which include the chief executive of the London East Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Hackney borough council's chief executive, who is also designated as the statutory chief education officer. Two elected members of the borough council, who are cabinet members for education and children and young people are also members of the Trust's board of directors. The borough council sets the overall strategic direction for the education service, having final approval of the Trust's corporate and annual plan, education development plan and other key strategic plans, including the adult learning plan.

3. The Trust is contracted to the London East LSC for the provision of adult and community learning in Hackney. The Trust's adult and community learning team, as part of the young people and community directorate, manages the adult and community learning provision. The Trust subcontracts the delivery of most of the adult and community learning programmes. The main subcontractor is a local college, which offers programmes at its main campus, and a wide range of outreach centres. The Trust also subcontracts its provision to a further 23 voluntary and community organisations in the borough. In 2003-04 there were 712 courses divided among 100 venues. The Trust itself manages a programme of family learning. During the period 2003-04, the Trust had 5,850 learners accounting for 8,999 enrolments.

4. Hackney has a population of over 210,000 and ranks as the second most deprived borough in the country. The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups is 41 per cent, compared with 34 per cent in inner London, and 9.1 per cent nationally.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Information & communications technology

5. Ninety-one learners were enrolled on information and communications technology (ICT) courses at the time of the reinspection. ICT courses are currently offered at seven locations in community centres throughout Hackney. Most of them are short courses scheduled for four to 12 weeks' duration. Classes average two hours, one or two days each week. Most of the courses offered in 2004-05 take place during the day. Evening and weekend provision is targeted at learners who use ICT to develop skills in a vocational area such as book-keeping, or used as a tool to develop learners' skills for life. Class sizes average eight learners. Most courses are first-rung, non-accredited courses. Of the 15 courses operating during the period 2004-05, 13 are non-accredited and two

are accredited. Learners on the accredited courses are able to work towards a basic information technology (IT) certificate. Most learners are women, and 64 per cent are from minority ethnic groups.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

6. At the time of inspection, 391 learners had enrolled in this area of learning, of whom 73 were on accredited courses. Courses are offered in gentle exercise and fitness, exercise for beginners and older adults, exercise and fitness for women, cake decorating and water sports. Almost all courses are at beginner level or targeted at the older adult, but there are few mixed-ability classes. Courses using canoes and kayaks, dinghy sailing, powerboat driving and pool lifeguarding lead to accreditation. The provision is subcontracted to two providers and is offered during the daytime, in the evening and at weekends at a range of venues which includes community centres, clubs, colleges and medical centres. Most courses are one to two hours in duration over 10-week periods. A small number of short courses last for six weeks and there are some intensive two-day courses. Nine tutors are employed on a part-time basis.

Visual & performing arts & media

7. This is the Trust's largest area of provision, having a total of 2,631 learners in 2003-04. The total number of enrolments to date in 2004-05 is 1,247. At the time of the reinspection, 279 learners were taking courses. Thirty-eight courses cover painting, drawing, crafts, photography, ceramics, art, soft furnishing, clothes making, dance, singing, music technology, percussion and instrumental classes. Courses take place on weekdays in the daytime and during the evening. They also take place on Saturday mornings. Three courses lead to accredited qualifications in music technology. Qualifications are offered at level 1, 2 and 3 for a nationally recognised qualification in sound recording. Accredited courses range in duration from one term up to three academic years. The non-accredited courses take from one to three terms.

8. Teaching is offered at college sites, with community providers, and at one recording studio. Most of the provision is at the Shoreditch centre of the main subcontractor. All 25 tutors are part time. Many teach one class each week, which can be one or two hours in duration. Some tutors teach up to eight hours each week. Two programme co-ordinators with the main subcontractor take specific responsibility for managing the area of learning. They divide the subject area in two for co-ordination and communication with tutors. A curriculum link person at the Trust acts for the other subcontractor.

Foundation programmes

9. The Trust contracts with 12 local community organisations to deliver a range of courses. These include English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), literacy, basic IT with established skills for life, gardening, music and creative arts and sports. There are 431 learners on foundation programmes. Learners can attend in the daytime and during the evening. Courses are usually 10 weeks long, but some learners re-enrol each new term with the same provider. Some of the community organisations have a special interest in supporting people with mental health problems or learning difficulties. Other providers have particular interests in developing learners' language and literacy skills through creative writing and music. Some organisations are dedicated to serving the needs of people from their immediate geographical area or their religious faith community. A number of providers offer accredited courses. The programme is managed by the Trust's quality assurance team. A skills for life co-ordinator has recently been appointed. Tutors are mostly part time and employed by the organisations.

Family learning

10. The Trust works with a range of partners, including primary and secondary schools and community organisations, to deliver family literacy, language, and numeracy and wider family learning programmes. Partners are formally contracted. Different models of delivery are used. Sometimes the children and parents learn together. In other classes the time is divided and includes some joint work. Occasionally, classes are exclusively for adults. Workshops are used to attract new learners. Parents and children share fun activities and are introduced to learning together. Short courses aim to encourage participation and increase confidence. Longer courses give parents opportunities to develop relevant skills, including what is taught in their children's schools. Family learning is offered across the borough in 31 locations. At the time of inspection, 166 adults and 184 children are taking part in family learning. The provision is managed by a family learning manager who links with a co-ordinator from each provider partnership. The teaching is mainly by part-time tutors who are employed by the partners, and teachers from the schools.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	7
Number of inspection days	36
Number of learners interviewed	110
Number of staff interviewed	63
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	48
Number of visits	48

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

11. The previous inspection in November 2003 found the Trust's leadership and management to be unsatisfactory and arrangements for quality assurance to be very weak. Equal opportunities arrangements were satisfactory. The provision was

unsatisfactory in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel and very weak in family learning. ICT, visual and performing arts and media and foundation programmes were all satisfactory. English, languages and communications was very weak. At the end of the reinspection process, all aspects of the provision were satisfactory or better.

GRADES

Grades awarded at previous inspection

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

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	3
Quality assurance	5

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

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	4
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	4

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

English, languages & communications	5
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	5

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Family learning	5
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	5

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

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	2
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	2

Foundation programmes	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

Family learning	3
Contributory grades:	
Adult and community learning	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

12. Learners develop and use new practical and technical skills with confidence throughout most of the provision. In ICT, many learners want to use their new skills to secure employment. In visual and performing arts, learners demonstrate good

techniques in performance and produce work to a very good standard. In family learning, parents develop the skills and confidence to work co-operatively with their children. Learners achieve well on accredited courses in ICT and visual and performing arts, and satisfactorily in hospitality, sport and leisure. Learners' punctuality has improved in most of the provision since the previous inspection. However, on foundation courses punctuality is poor in some classes. Staff and learners arrive late for classes.

Quality of education and training

13. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching is far less than at the previous inspection. Ninety-three per cent of all lessons observed were satisfactory or better. The significant weaknesses in teaching identified at the previous inspection have been resolved. The level of teaching involving good standards has remained the same. Teaching in visual and performing arts is particularly good. Teachers use practical demonstrations which involve, challenge and motivate learners.

14. Resources are generally satisfactory throughout the provision, although in family learning some of the learning spaces are untidy and cluttered. Some of the foundation classes do not have sufficient up-to-date equipment. In hospitality, sport, leisure and travel learners do not receive sufficient information and guidance about the course, either through course leaflets or at induction.

15. In visual and performing arts, foundation and hospitality, sport, leisure and travel there is a good range of community provision. The provision in family learning is satisfactory. Learners in ICT and family learning do not have sufficient progression opportunities.

16. In ICT, learners have good access to additional services from providers. Such services include employability training, support in obtaining work experience, support for jobsearch, and access to legal advice.

17. The monitoring of learners' progress is inadequate in ICT, family learning and hospitality, sport, leisure and travel. Initial assessment information is not used sufficiently by tutors in lesson planning. Individual learning plans are not used effectively in ESOL and literacy classes.

Leadership and management

18. The Trust has shown strong leadership in resolving the weaknesses of the previous inspection, and has established sound arrangements to further improvements. Resources are well deployed. The adult and community learning team has been extended and the Trust has a strong commitment to staff development.

19. Communications between the Trust and providers are particularly good. Providers receive frequent monitoring visits to support them in meeting their targets. A regular providers' forum allows information to be shared and staff are well supported in their professional development.

20. Curriculum management has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory in all areas of learning. However, some of the planning of courses in visual and performing arts and media is poor.

21. Since the previous inspection, the Trust has made progress in the management and use of data. However, the new arrangements are not supported sufficiently by all providers to ensure that up-to-date information is available for managers.

22. Strategies to widen participation have been extended successfully since the previous inspection. The targeting of under-represented groups has improved and there has been a significant growth in the number of learners with a learning difficulty or disability. Complaints procedures are not well developed. Most learners are not clear about what to do if they have a grievance.

23. Quality assurance arrangements have improved significantly since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. New arrangements for observing teaching have been established and learners' and providers' views are considered appropriately. Self-assessment is satisfactory. Staff and providers are involved in the Trust's self-assessment process. The most recent report reflected most of the findings of the inspection, although some of the strengths identified in the report were regarded as normal practice.

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

Leadership and management

Strengths
- strong leadership to further improvements
- particularly effective communications with providers
- good strategies to widen participation

Weaknesses
- insufficiently established management information system
- no clear complaints procedure

Information & communications technology

Strengths
- good attainment of skills by learners
- good support for providers
- good access to additional services for learners

Weaknesses

- inadequate planning and monitoring of learners' progress in most provision
- insufficient progression opportunities for learners

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good community links to attract learners
- good communications

Weaknesses

- insufficient monitoring and assessment of progress
- insufficient information and guidance for learners

Visual & performing arts & media

Strengths

- good achievement of skills by learners
- good, challenging teaching
- very good range of community provision

Weaknesses

- poor course planning in some cases

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good acquisition of new skills by learners
- good range and distribution of community-based providers
- good support for providers

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality in some classes
- insufficient learning resources to support language and literacy development
- ineffective use of individual learning plans in literacy and ESOL courses

Family learning

Strengths

- good development of learners' skills and confidence
- very effective strategies to widen participation
- strong curriculum leadership

Weaknesses

- poor learning environments in some schools
- inadequate monitoring of learners' progress

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

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

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

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

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

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

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT   Grade 3

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

Strengths

- strong leadership to further improvements
- particularly effective communications with providers
- good strategies to widen participation

Weaknesses

- insufficiently established management information system
- no clear complaints procedure

24. The Trust provides strong leadership to further improvements. The Trust's board has taken decisive action since the previous inspection to provide the leadership and resources necessary to resolve the weaknesses identified in the provision. Clear strategic decisions have included the establishment of an adult and community learning governance subcommittee. This subcommittee closely monitors the progress of improvement, the expansion of the adult and community learning team, and the training and professional development of the Trust's staff and providers. The board is supported well, by focused and effective senior and curriculum managers, many of whom have been appointed since the previous inspection. They have worked hard to establish a service which is supportive of its providers, and which bases its decisions upon clear management information and a strategic understanding of the learning needs of Hackney residents. Many aspects of the service to learners have improved, but not all measures are yet fully effective. This is recognised by the Trust.

25. The previous inspection found the management of providers to be weak, and communication with providers in a number of areas to be ineffective. Good improvements have been achieved. The Trust communicates effectively with providers. The Trust's staff frequently visit providers in a monitoring and advisory capacity, and providers take an active part in groups to share good practice. For example a 'provider forum', facilitated by the Trust, meets regularly for updating on the Trust's procedures, targeted training, and feedback. Providers recognise the value of this group in improving their service to learners. The Trust has been particularly active in providing a well-targeted professional development programme for tutors.

26. Since September 2004, all unqualified tutors have received teacher training to nationally recognised standards, as a requirement of provider contracts. The training is being provided at the Trust's expense. In addition, the Trust has used its own curriculum

leaders, and has contracted specialist consultants, to develop and introduce suitable documents to record and analyse learner information and progress. As part of its capacity-building arrangements, the Trust also supports smaller and less well-resourced providers with capital equipment. Twenty personal computers, for the direct use of learners, are currently on loan to various providers. Funds have been made available for the provision of interactive whiteboards in a few instances.

27. Curriculum management is satisfactory in all areas of learning inspected. The Trust has designated link managers, to provide appropriate support and monitoring to providers and their staff. Staff generally have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Staff employed directly by the Trust have a particularly clear understanding of their contribution to meeting the organisation's operational targets. All staff take part in a well-resourced professional development programme. This has contributed effectively to the improvements in learning identified during the inspection.

28. Overall, accommodation is satisfactory. Learners who attend courses at the local college of further education have access to appropriate specialist accommodation, such as those in sports and leisure, and in ICT. The Trust is successfully managing the need to deliver outreach programmes in the community in spite of the lower quality of accommodation often available in community-based education. A few centres have unsatisfactory access for learners with limited mobility. The Trust has made suitable arrangements to monitor the health and safety aspects of its provision. Regular checks are carried out, with appropriate follow-up. The need for adaptive equipment, such as hearing loops, is satisfactorily assessed and acted upon. Induction loops have been provided where necessary.

29. The fee-paying policies of the Trust are appropriate to its aims and strategic objectives. Courses are currently provided free of charge, but this situation is being reviewed for next year when charging will be introduced for some recreational courses. The strategic management of resources is satisfactory. The number of Trust-funded learners in the autumn of 2004-05 fell significantly, compared with the same period in the previous year. The Trust plans to increase its capacity by some 20 per cent in the next few years.

30. The Trust's management information system is not embedded sufficiently to provide information on quality improvement and strategic planning. Considerable progress has been made in the past year to ensure that monitoring and planning is supported by reliable and timely data. The Trust's management information system team has been appropriately strengthened, and new management information software has been introduced within the past year. The range and quality of evaluative data has increased from very low levels during 2003-04, to the point where baseline information can be used in monitoring and planning. However, these arrangements are not supported consistently by providers. Data returns, necessary to monitor retention and completion rates, are frequently delayed. At the time of the inspection, the Trust had reliable data only for the first term of 2004-05. Some of the provider's staff are not sufficiently aware of the importance of learner data as a tool for improvement. The Trust has not

recognised sufficiently the need for a variety of criteria in judging the success of its small accredited learning provision. Learning outcomes and the analyses of different learner intakes are not considered sufficiently in making improvements. The Trust has identified this weakness.

Equality of opportunity   Contributory grade 3

31. At the previous inspection, strategies to widen participation were a strength. This situation has been maintained and improved. All areas of learning report a continued and successful strategy of engaging diverse community groups, often in very deprived areas of the borough. Creative partnerships have been formed with voluntary and community-based organisations. The Trust is beginning to use available data held by other services such as the educational advice service and schools to identify shortfalls in provision. Courses are now banded in terms of first step, personal and community development, and employability to give the Trust a clearer picture of levels of provision. The Trust now targets its provision to specific groups more efficiently. It is currently targeting African-Caribbean men, and the Turkish and Kurdish communities. The commissioning process includes and reflects widening participation priorities. There has been a 25 per cent growth in work with people with learning difficulties or disabilities. Family learning is now a successful component of the Trust's strategy to widen participation.

32. Equal opportunities policies and procedures are satisfactory. The Trust has an equality and diversity policy which states clearly how the Trust will promote and ensure equal opportunities throughout its services. The adult and community service relies on the Trust's overall policy. The race relations scheme required by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 was completed in April 2004, followed by an equality and diversity action plan in June 2004. Adult and community learning has a team plan which indicates how it will fulfil the scheme and meet its other equality and diversity targets. The plan is monitored by the Trust's performance and equality team on a quarterly basis and by the adult and community learning team. A full audit of the accessibility of premises has been carried out under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA). This has been supplemented with some training for the commissioning team on the legal requirements of SENDA and on disability and access issues for training providers. A programme of work has been agreed and is being carried out in order of priority.

33. The complaints procedure is not developed sufficiently. Although the procedure is referred to in the learners' handbook, there is no clear complaints procedure. Many learners do not have a good understanding of complaints procedures or what to do if they have a grievance. This aspect of equality of opportunity is not promoted effectively. Providers are not consistent in what they record or report as a complaint. Reported complaints are discussed, but there is no collation or analysis of trends for complaints. The education and advice service has a separate and satisfactory set of procedures.

Quality assurance   **Contributory grade 3**

34. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Following the previous inspection, when quality assurance was judged to be very weak, the Trust has made very good progress in resolving the weaknesses identified. The current arrangements are adequate to assure the quality of the provision, and contribute to improvement. However, it is too soon to judge the full effectiveness of some very recently introduced procedures, and not all procedures are fully implemented.

35. Systematic policies and procedures exist at all levels of the Trust. These are well documented and fit for purpose. Quality assurance has a high profile within the organisation. Overall, arrangements are appropriate to ensure an effective review process, and are well documented in a handbook issued to all providers. Standards are now judged to be satisfactory or better in all the areas of learning inspected. A few providers have had contracts withdrawn, or have chosen to end their association with the Trust, following quality assurance action during the current year.

36. The views of learners, providers, and partners are taken in to account as appropriate. A learners' forum provides suitable feedback, and actions are taken to resolve matters raised. A providers' forum meets regularly, and promotes the sharing of good practice. The forum also briefs the Trust on matters of provider concern and interest. Providers now have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

37. Self-assessment is satisfactory. All the Trust's staff, and most providers, have an adequate knowledge of the Trust's self-assessment arrangements, and are involved with them. In a few cases, a provider's own self-assessment procedures are used. The latest self-assessment report largely reflects the judgements of the inspection. The Trust's self-assessed grades match those given by inspectors, although some aspects of the report, perceived as strengths in areas of learning, are only normal practice. The report's text is not sufficiently evaluative. Too much emphasis is placed on a description of the service. The Trust has an appropriate action plan, with clear targets.

38. Appropriate arrangements for the observation of teaching have existed since September 2004. Tutors are observed at least once each year by the Trust's curriculum management team. Where problems are identified, there is a timely second observation. Curriculum managers also audit the quality of providers' documents, including individual learning plans. Feedback to tutors and subsequent action-planning is not carried out consistently. Some staff have not received feedback. Routine Trust observations are not carried out frequently enough, although most tutors are receiving additional feedback as part of their teacher training.

39. The Trust has developed extensive provider commissioning arrangements since the previous inspection. The commissioning of provision, and the auditing of financial compliance, have been separated from curriculum management and improvement. Current commissioning criteria are very focused on processes, but not enough attention is given to learner outcomes. This weakness is recognised by the Trust.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information & communications technology   Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	91	3

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

Strengths
- good attainment of skills by learners
- good support for providers
- good access to additional services for learners

Weaknesses
- inadequate planning and monitoring of learners' progress in most provision
- insufficient progression opportunities for learners

Achievement and standards

40. Achievement rates on the two accredited courses offered in the first term were on average 75 per cent. In 2003-04, there were six accredited courses. Pass rates ranged from 65 per cent to 100 per cent. Learners attain good skills. This strength has been maintained from the previous inspection. Learners use computers and software with increasing confidence. Some learners are proud of overcoming their fear of using ICT. They enjoy using and sharing their new knowledge with family and friends. Many intend to use their skills to gain jobs. The average attendance in classes during the reinspection was 80 per cent.

41. Retention rates on ICT courses are good. The rate for 2003-04 was 86 per cent, Some providers infill learners on courses when there are vacancies. These learners are given sufficient assistance and support from tutors and other learners to enable them to settle into the course and make satisfactory progress.

Quality of education and training

42. Learners have good access to additional services from providers, such as employability training, support in obtaining work experience, support for jobsearch, and access to legal advice. Many of the learning centres are based in community venues where there are good additional services. A considerable number of learners are only able to attend classes because of the childcare and crèche facilities that are available at the venue. Some learners have gained jobs with assistance from the provider. Learners

have good access to independent information advice and guidance from the Trust and at community venues. Some providers encourage learners to carry out independent study by making resources available for ICT practice and jobsearch.

43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Thirty-three per cent of lessons observed were good or better. No lessons were unsatisfactory. In the better lessons, tutors identify differentiation strategies enabling learners to achieve the maximum benefit from the lesson, working independently and at their own pace. Standardised lesson plans have recently been introduced, but they are not used consistently. Some schemes of work and lesson plans do not identify and plan for the needs of individual learners. Tutors are well qualified and are experienced ICT practitioners. All tutors have or are working towards a nationally recognised teacher training qualification.

44. Resources and accommodation have improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. The Trust has helped providers to upgrade their resources. All the providers now have industry standard computers and a range of up-to-date software and internet access. Most classrooms have ergonomically designed workstations and adjustable chairs. Some accommodation is cramped. In parts of the borough where there are no computer courses, the Trust loans computers to community centres. Good use is made of these computers, and the community centres provide some tuition as well as open access.

45. The planning and monitoring of learners' progress is inadequate. This weakness was identified at the previous inspection. A new process for planning and monitoring learners has been developed, and providers are trained in its use. A few providers have responded well to the training and have implemented the process effectively, but many have not. In these cases, the results of initial assessments are not written into learners' individual learning plans and are not used as a basis to plan their learning. Many of the long- and short-term goals in the individual learning plans are vague and do not relate to learners' needs or to the timescale or programme of work that is being carried out. Learners' progress is not checked frequently enough against the individual learning plan, and plans are not updated on a regular basis.

46. The Trust has no provision for the support of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills on ICT courses. Courses are available in the foundation area of learning which enable learners to use ICT to develop their skills for life.

47. Learners do not have enough progression opportunities. In conjunction with local community groups, the Trust has targeted courses for certain groups. These courses do not offer a wide enough range of provision to meet the needs of all learners. Most of the courses offered are first-rung introductory courses that have been introduced to widen participation. The range is limited, and there are not enough opportunities for learners to progress beyond first-rung provision. Learners are reluctant to make use of the progression opportunities available outside their community groups and many discontinue learning when they have completed their courses. Many learners using the service are unemployed, and have joined their courses to acquire job skills. Strategic groups involving a range of partners are conducting needs analyses to identify ways of

overcoming shortfalls in the provision. This planning is still in its early stages.

Leadership and management

48. The adult and community learning team has been restructured and a curriculum co-ordinator has recently been appointed. Interim arrangements before this appointment enabled the quality of service to be maintained. Most of the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection have been resolved.

49. Good support is given to the development of providers. Providers' staff have had access to training opportunities sponsored by the Trust. For example, all unqualified teachers have been sponsored to study for a teaching qualification. The new observation system has identified and corrected weaknesses in teaching and learning. Communications have improved between the Trust and its providers, with regular visits and contacts. Providers are involved in discussions about the development of the service at strategic level. The involvement of tutors in the tutor network has enabled them to share good practice, and learners are able to feed back directly through the learners' forum.

50. Quality improvement strategies are being applied systematically. The Trust and providers' staff have adequate knowledge of, and are involved in, the self-assessment process. Inspectors agreed with most of the overall self-assessment judgements, but some aspects are reported as strengths that are normal practice. The self-assessment report did not identify some of the weaknesses found by the reinspection process.

51. Equality and diversity are discussed with learners at induction, but learners do not understand the full range of issues. Health and safety is routinely monitored by the teacher in class, and learners apply the principles effectively.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel   Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	391	3

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

Strengths

- good community links to attract learners
- good communications

Weaknesses

- insufficient monitoring and assessment of progress
- insufficient information and guidance for learners

Achievement and standards

52. Achievement and standards of learning are satisfactory. Skills are developed appropriately in relation to the learners' starting point. For example, in one water sports session, new learners develop an appropriate level of stability and confidence, and more experienced learners support their colleagues. In a session in the gymnasium, learners had gained sufficient knowledge, skills and confidence in the use of equipment to use the facilities on their own during holiday periods. Learners in exercise and fitness classes perform well and demonstrate an adequate understanding of correct body positioning and exercise techniques, in addition to improving their fitness, mobility and co-ordination. Learners gain relief from the symptoms of medical conditions such as arthritis and joint problems, as well as wider social benefits that are of particular importance to the older learner.

53. Achievement rates on accredited courses are satisfactory. In 2004-05, the average rate of achievement on the Trust's water sport courses was 80 per cent. Achievements in courses leading to qualifications in canoeing are low with only 66 per cent of learners achieving. Attendance is satisfactory. The average rate of attendance at classes observed was 74 per cent, compared with less than 50 per cent during the previous inspection. A follow-up system has been established with the main subcontractor for tutors to check on non-attendance, but this is not understood, or carried out routinely by all tutors.

Quality of education and training

54. The Trust and the main subcontractor have good community links to attract target groups of learners. The main subcontractor and the community centres have close working relationships to identify community needs and attract target groups of learners. Taster sessions are offered in partnership with the venues and, in the case of water sports, are used as good opportunities to assess levels of ability. The targeted provision has been successful in attracting relevant groups. The percentage of learners aged 50+ has risen from previous years to 36 per cent.

55. Standards of teaching and learning are now satisfactory and have improved since the previous inspection. Classes are well planned and structured. Tutors give good individual attention to learners by checking and correcting their performances. They ensure correct body alignment and build learners' confidence. Some tutors make good use of questioning to assess learners' understanding.

56. Resources were identified as a strength in the previous inspection. Accommodation and equipment are satisfactory. Venues are fit for purpose and a range of equipment is provided for learners in all sessions, such as mats, hand weights, balls and waterproofs for water-based activities. One venue has a good range of resistance and cardiovascular machines and free weights, the other venues are satisfactory.

57. The Trust does not carry out sufficient monitoring and assessment of progress. Attempts have been made to resolve this weakness since the previous inspection, but it was not identified in the most recent self-assessment report. Tutors have received training and support in the use of recording documents. This training has not been used comprehensively to improve the assessment of learners' progress. Some tutors have a good understanding of learners' abilities and needs and assess their skill levels at the beginning of their courses. This information is not used to plan learning sessions or to contribute to individual learning plans. Individual and group learning outcomes are not specific or measurable enough. Not enough short-term targets are set to build on learners' achievements. Learners' progress towards learning goals is not carried out routinely in all cases. Many learners are unaware of the progress they have made. There are some satisfactory examples where tutors monitor and record learners' level of ability each week.

58. The previous inspection identified insufficient health screening. An adequate amount of health screening is now carried out in all sessions for all learners. However, the results are not always used to plan lessons and provide variations for learners with particular medical constraints.

59. Learners do not receive sufficient information and guidance. Satisfactory course information sheets have been developed about the aims and objectives of the course, but these are not received by all learners. Induction is not carried out effectively. Learners are unaware of policies, procedures and available support. The Trust's learner handbook, which contains this information, has not been received by learners in this area

of learning. Most learners are not aware of the Trust and do not have a clear understanding of their rights and entitlements as Trust-funded learners.

60. Since the previous inspection, the main subcontractor has begun to offer a number of adult and community learning sport and leisure courses in addition to the Trust's provision. Progression routes to these courses and other internal and external provision are not shared with learners. Tutors have very little knowledge of progression routes and other courses that may be of benefit to learners. Within the accredited provision there are good opportunities for progression to more advanced classes, into employment, or other relevant courses, and these are communicated adequately to learners.

Leadership and management

61. At the previous inspection, curriculum management was judged to be ineffective. It is now satisfactory. Communication and support for providers is good. Providers have a dedicated contact person within the Trust with whom they work closely on developing and improving the quality of provision. A providers' handbook is used to provide guidance and standard documents for initial assessment, the monitoring of progress and individual learning plans. Tutors have found the handbook useful. Regular monitoring visits are made and providers' meetings have been established to provide support and to resolve problems. Tutors are well supported by their line managers through improved communications. This is an improvement since the previous inspection which is valued by tutors. Extensive staff development activities such as tutor meetings, regular line manager visits, improved observations of teaching and learning, and training on completing paperwork, have helped tutors to make improvements to their teaching. Tutors take the opportunity to share good practice through regular tutor meetings across curriculum areas, and well-attended occupationally specific meetings. However, the checking of tutors' qualifications is not consistent enough to ensure that their knowledge is current and appropriate for the lessons being taught. Not all tutors have the appropriate qualification for the lessons they are teaching.

62. Measures to improve quality assurance arrangements such as improved communication channels, the setting of targets for providers and improved monitoring have been successful. Quality assurance of the provision is now conducted satisfactorily. Most tutors have been observed when teaching by the Trust and their line manager. Observations are thorough and clearly identify actions for improvement. Tutors receive verbal and written feedback and any weaknesses identified are followed through. Tutors are adequately aware of the self-assessment process and welcome the improvements to the provision and the positive impact they have had on their teaching. Insufficient numbers of tutors have attended equality of opportunity training and many are not aware how equality of opportunity applies to the learners. This problem was also identified during the previous inspection.

Visual & performing arts & media   Grade 2

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	279	2

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

Strengths

- good achievement of skills by learners
- good, challenging teaching
- very good range of community provision

Weaknesses

- poor course planning in some cases

Achievement and standards

63. Learners' achievement of practical skills is good. This was also a strength at the previous inspection and was identified in the self-assessment report. Learners display a good level of performance skills. Dances and songs are performed with confidence, good technique and vocal tone. Learners demonstrate good posture and technique in lesson performances. Learners make good progress in their practical work during lessons and make real improvements to their techniques. In the visual arts and crafts sector, learners develop skills in using a wide range of materials. In textiles, clothing, painting and drawing classes, learners demonstrate confidence and commitment in widening their understanding of the creative process to make progressively better products. Learners are aware of their skill levels improving as they progress in their courses. The standard of drawing ability is good and learners have strong, creative ideas that are expressed in their portfolios and artwork. In one lesson, learners achieved a very good standard of floristry display. A good variety of cultural art forms are made or performed. Learners achieve qualifications well in the accredited music technology provision. They progress to further training and employment in the music industry.

Quality of education and training

64. The Trust provides good, challenging teaching. Good use is made of practical demonstrations in classes. Tutors give precise instructions. Learning levels are checked comprehensively before tutors move on to cover new points. Visual and performing arts sessions are well paced and well structured.

65. All learners are included in activities and encouraged to join in at their own pace. Tutors have a good understanding of learning styles and adapt their approach and

materials accordingly. Learners remain well motivated and many make good progress towards learning goals.

66. A very good range of community provision is responsive to learners' needs. Learning centres are spread throughout the borough close to public transport routes and in residential areas. Classes take place within a whole variety of venues. Learners study culturally relevant music and art, and tutors use a good repertoire with learners to extend their knowledge and appreciation of diverse art forms. Overall, the programmes and courses are well planned to meet the needs of local social and cultural groups. Specific groups, such as older learners and learners who are mental health service users, are targeted appropriately. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report.

67. Tutors give accurate advice about how to achieve particular aspects of performance. Learners are challenged to try new ideas and extend their learning goals. Those learners interviewed were very satisfied with the teaching standards and pleased with their new skills. Tutors demonstrate a professional level of practical skills and knowledge and carry out useful question and answer sessions with learners to stimulate discussion and interest. Tutors are able to successfully support all learners to realise their creative ideas in their finished work. Coaching is good. Tutors use creative and technical feedback to help learners develop their work. In some lessons, resources were not sufficient to support practical work and in some cases the good feedback and coaching offered by tutors was not recorded by learners. The course documents for recording and planning learning goals are now used more effectively by tutors. There are examples where tutors are recording learners' aims in better detail. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

68. The availability of information about progression opportunities and other courses is now satisfactory. Learners have access to adequate information about progression routes in the local provision and about alternative courses outside of the borough. Tutors all complete the progression maps. Progress has clearly been made in the provision of advice and guidance for learners.

Leadership and management

69. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. The planning of teaching by tutors has improved. Tutors are observed regularly and in some cases receive very useful feedback following observation. Course reviews are carried out with tutors to discuss and analyse good practice in classes. The Trust's documents are used consistently. Course files are clearly arranged and staff are able to produce information about the courses and learners efficiently. The self-assessment report identified most of the strengths of the provision but not the weaknesses.

70. Communications are satisfactory. Various methods are used to communicate with college tutors, including regular visits, tutor group meetings, regular observations, an adult and community learning newsletter, and briefings. A supportive working environment exists among tutors and managers. Tutors report that they are able to reach

their managers easily and can obtain specific advice and measures to support and sustain improvements.

71. Staff development opportunities are effective. Learning opportunities for staff include courses and briefings about the use of documents, lesson planning, the correct use of individual learning plans and how to incorporate differentiation into teaching. Some training has recently been given about good practice in initial assessment and dyslexia awareness.

72. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Tutors represent local communities and are from culturally diverse backgrounds themselves. Courses reflect and incorporate diversity well. However, most learners do not understand the complaints and grievance procedures.

73. Some aspects of the programme are not well planned. For example, a room change was extremely disruptive to a very large proportion of one class. Once the room and day of the class had been changed, only five of the 24 enrolled learners were able to continue attendance. The main provider's prospectus was issued very late in the term and some learners were still enrolling a number of weeks into the term. Continuous delayed enrolments disrupted some classes.

Foundation programmes   Grade 3

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	431	3

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

Strengths

- good acquisition of new skills by learners
- good range and distribution of community-based providers
- good support for providers

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality in some classes
- insufficient learning resources to support language and literacy development
- ineffective use of individual learning plans in literacy and ESOL courses

Achievement and standards

74. Learners acquire many new skills and confidence from attending classes. Many learners gain ICT skills while developing and improving their reading and writing skills. Learners attending a programme in horticultural therapy learn about protective clothing, how to use the correct tools, ratios of compost to sand, and how to prick out seedlings in disease-free pots. Dyslexic learners learn the use of punctuation and how to read new words. In ESOL classes, learners develop their vocabulary and reading skills by searching for detailed information about topical issues, in a citizenship context and on posters displayed inside and outside their classrooms. Older learners in a creative writing class learn how to use metaphors and similes while writing descriptions of places they know and like. Other learners improve their skills in completing job applications and writing personal statements. In the better classes, learners are set challenging tasks and are required to reflect on their own experiences and ideas.

75. During the inspection, the average attendance was satisfactory at 80 per cent, but punctuality was poor in some classes. Learners arriving late are not always challenged by tutors and sometimes cause disruption as they settle into tasks. In two instances, tutors were not sufficiently prepared to start the lesson on time and learners were kept waiting for the class to start. The retention of learners is satisfactory and was 85 per cent in 2003-04.

Quality of education and training

76. The Trust has established a very good range and distribution of community-based providers. Classes are held at locations throughout the borough with organisations that target particularly disadvantaged learners from within the local community. Classes are also held in venues on housing estates in very deprived areas. One organisation specialises in developing language and reading and writing skills by using creative writing and music. Another organisation uses ICT to develop its clients' literacy skills. Each organisation is skilled and experienced in working with its client group. The Trust also successfully contracts with organisations representing minority linguistic and religious faith communities, to reach a wider learner base in the community. This was identified as a strength at the previous inspection and in the self-assessment report.

77. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Forty per cent of the classes observed were good or better, 50 per cent were satisfactory, and 10 per cent were unsatisfactory. The better classes have good schemes of work, designed to meet learning needs. Lessons are well planned, structured and delivered. For example, in one class, following a warm-up exercise, learners practised using metaphors in describing their feelings when they first arrived in the UK. In an ESOL class, good opportunities were created for learners to practise using new vocabulary after it had been modelled by the teacher and they had repeated it many times. In many classes there is too much direct teaching and insufficient variety in learning activities. Board work is often messy. In some ESOL classes, insufficient attention is given to accuracy, pronunciation and intonation of the language. This was also identified as a weakness during the previous inspection. Lesson plans are detailed, but learning objectives are not clear enough and the activities planned do not always enable objectives to be achieved. In some lessons the pace is slow and too much time is wasted.

78. Support for learners is satisfactory. Learners can access additional resources and facilities provided by the organisations where they attend their classes. The organisations often have dedicated workers who will assist learners with more personal problems.

79. Overall, teaching accommodation is satisfactory. Learners are taught in accessible locations. Many ICT rooms have sufficient tables for group work away from the computers. One provider has a particularly good display of learners' work which uses digital photographs and explanatory captions. Some accommodation is inadequate, and classrooms have no windows and insufficient ventilation. Learners are attending lessons for up to three hours. Some classrooms do not have sufficient space to move around and are not conducive to pair and group work in language learning.

80. Some community venues do not have sufficient resources to support language and literacy development. In some classrooms, whiteboards are too small and there is no other equipment. Only a few venues have access to interactive whiteboards or projectors. Many classes have computers, but some of the literacy classes using ICT have no specialist software and only one ESOL provider has computer-assisted language learning software. ESOL tutors generally have a restricted but adequate range of books.

Not all tutors are aware of how to access additional resources. Some tutors make good use of materials such as application forms and job descriptions. Tutors also encourage the use of dictionaries and online dictionaries. One of the main providers has very good up-to-date resources and materials.

81. Some ESOL and literacy classes do not make effective use of individual learning plans. Although all providers conduct initial assessment, some are ineffective. In these cases the information gathered during the initial interview and assessment is not always used in the learning plan, or to set short- and long-term learning goals. Recorded learning goals are not used consistently in the design of schemes of work or lesson plans. The monitoring and reviewing of learners' progress does not always do so in relation to achieving the learners' goals. This weakness was also identified during the previous inspection. Two providers have a very thorough initial assessment process and their learners have very useful individual learning plans, which have been shared at a providers' forum. Good use is made of individual learning plans in classes for learners with learning difficulties.

Leadership and management

82. Subcontracted providers are supported well. Many tutors are attending training courses to obtain teaching qualifications. These courses are paid for by the Trust. Tutors are required to attend special skills for life training programmes. Providers have also received support in applying for and obtaining learning centre approval, to enable them to offer the new skills for life qualifications to their learners. All subcontractors receive regular monitoring visits and communications by e-mail and information bulletins. They have regular meetings with the provider.

83. Curriculum management and quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. A skills for life co-ordinator has recently been appointed. All providers have comprehensive quality assurance files and these are monitored regularly. Teaching and learning observations take place regularly, but some tutors do not receive copies of the observation reports sent by Trust staff to providers. Some of the Trust's learning session grades were higher than those given at inspection. The self-assessment report identified a greater number of strengths than those identified during the inspection, and did not identify the same weaknesses, but gave similar grades.

84. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Tutors have a satisfactory awareness of diversity, but there is no active promotion of equality of opportunity in the materials and resources used or in the induction packs. Only one provider had a well-presented induction pack with attractive images covering equal opportunities and health and safety.

Family learning **Grade 3**

Programmes inspected	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning	166	3

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

Strengths
- good development of learners' skills and confidence
- very effective strategies to widen participation
- strong curriculum leadership

Weaknesses
- poor learning environments in some schools
- inadequate monitoring of learners' progress

Achievement and standards

85. Learners develop good skills and confidence, enabling them to work co-operatively with their children. In one workshop, parents and children successfully constructed motorised robots together. They helped each other, worked through frustrations, had fun together and shared a sense of satisfaction with the end result. In another class a child sensitively supported her mother to find the correct word on a handout for healthy eating. Learners improve their language, literacy, numeracy or creative skills and increase their general knowledge and confidence. In one numeracy class, parents learnt a range of methods for doing long multiplication, extending their own skills and increasing their knowledge of teaching methods in school. A workshop session added to understanding of how the brain works, through a joint parent and child exploration of learning styles. Parents are more able to help their children in school. Head teachers interviewed confirmed the value of family learning programmes in their schools and talk of the positive effect on their schools and the wider community. They report that family learning helps parental contact with the school, improves communication and increases the confidence of parents and staff.

Quality of education and training

86. Very effective strategies are used to widen participation. The Trust has an effective structure with a named co-ordinator for each provider. Most providers' co-ordinators are very effective. They know the families, the wider family groups and the communities. These good links with schools and community groups help co-ordinators to access local communities. The Trust gains from these partnerships and provides resources to help the local communities. For example, a school community co-ordinator identified the need to

target the Bangladeshi community. A faith organisation is now providing learning programmes in a mosque, having identified a group of women who felt comfortable in that particular environment.

87. Learners from a wide range of backgrounds are evident in classes. The parent of a very challenging child worked successfully with him in a workshop. In another school the co-ordinator sensitively targets the parents of specific children to join the family learning provision. Letters of invitation are translated into appropriate languages to welcome different groups. Seventy-seven per cent of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Many classes have a combination of at least four minority ethnic groups.

88. Standards of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Sixty-seven per cent of the observed teaching sessions were good or better. Most lessons are well planned but some do not have sufficiently detailed learning outcomes. All of the sessions have an adult focus, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. In the better lessons, learners actively participate in the ongoing negotiation of course content. Class sizes are managed effectively. In one class the tutor skilfully created a good learning experience for a very small group of learners and their children by developing, recording and illustrating a collective group story. In larger groups, support tutors help with smaller group work or with individual needs. In a good lesson, two teachers worked well together to ensure that the first lesson met the needs of learners and inspired them to return. Family learning tutors know the school curriculum and relate the activities of the parents to their children's learning in school. In most classes the brisk pace of teaching, with a good range of learning activities, stimulated the learners. However, one class was poorly directed and learners were bored.

89. Resources are generally satisfactory. In a few sessions the materials available to learners for workshop activities are very good. In one creative class, learners can choose from an array of high-quality arts and crafts materials. Everyday objects are frequently used as a teaching resource. In a few lessons, choice is restricted. Worksheets and handouts are well prepared and presented with appropriate images. Access to ICT in classes is generally restricted. Most staff are qualified either as teachers of adults or of children. Some have ESOL, literacy or numeracy teaching qualifications. The Trust offers staff development and financially supports staff in provider organisations to gain adult learning teaching qualifications.

90. The range of provision in family learning is satisfactory. Innovative workshops and tasters in wider family learning attract new learners. There is also good targeting of provision. One tutor invited the parents of some children who, it was felt, might benefit from joint activities with their parents. They joined a small family learning group within the class. Provision is offered at a variety of times, including Saturdays and Sundays. However, progression opportunities within family learning are limited.

91. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory. The information, advice and guidance service has recently begun visits to classes to provide advice about further opportunities, including employment. The focus has been on re-launching family learning, with plans to develop the programme. Providers ensure personal contact in the

local communities to help prospective learners. Some schools write individual letters in first languages and most advertise through a newsletter. Learners are welcomed with refreshments and a healthy lunch was provided at one workshop day. At the same event an advice worker gave personal support to families. Crèche support is not offered consistently in schools and one learner could not attend because her childcare arrangements broke down.

92. The learning environment in some schools is poor. In one school the room allocated to family learning was very untidy and cluttered, with poor-quality furniture and no flipchart stand or whiteboard. In several lessons, adults sat on small chairs. In one class, cramped space prevented the teacher from moving among the learners, and in another class, it was difficult for parents and children to carry out their joint creative activities in the space available. Other schools offer light, airy and well-decorated rooms with plenty of space.

93. The monitoring of learners' progress is inadequate. In some classes, individual learning plans have been introduced. They are completed at the beginning of each course but are not revisited on a regular basis. Some initial assessments are carried out but the information gained is not integrated with planning. The system relies too heavily on the personal knowledge of the tutor. Sometimes a diary is used or individual evaluations are noted as part of lesson planning. One tutor has devised a good, informal recording system that works well with her small group, but generally there is no individual or overall monitoring. Many tutors do not understand the benefits of more formal monitoring of progress. The Trust is not able to use information about progress to feed into programme planning and the development of new provision.

Leadership and management

94. Curriculum leadership is strong. Many improvements have been made in a relatively short period of time. The volume of provision and improvements in the quality of provision have improved significantly. Good arrangements exist to assess and monitor the quality of the provision. A detailed plan charts visits and observations for all providers. A lot of progress has been made in implementing thorough observations of classes. Any new provision is observed within the first three weeks. The resulting feedback and action-planning is comprehensive, with detailed actions and timescales. Human resources are well deployed, and guided by good strategic planning and a sense of purpose.

95. Family learning partners are well supported. A comprehensive resource pack guides them in best practice, contributes to quality improvement and is appreciated by the providers. Targets are set through the commissioning process and providers understand what is expected of them. Communications have improved and regular calls and visits are made to providers to give support and to check on the quality of provision. Providers speak positively about the changes. They also feel that their contributions are welcomed. The providers' forum promotes the sharing of good practice. Many of the area of learning's strengths were identified in the self-assessment report, but not all of the

weaknesses were identified.

96. Equal opportunities arrangements are satisfactory. Participation by minority ethnic groups is good and many learners with weak educational backgrounds have joined classes. Attempts to attract more men include offering targeted courses. Most sites visited were accessible to learners with restricted mobility and one older four-storey school building has installed a lift enabling access to the family learning room on the top floor.