INSPECTION REPORT

Ealing LEA

10 February 2006

ADULT LEARNING

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 aged 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.
• adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**)

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.

Pre-inspection analysis

The resources allocated to a cycle 2 inspection are primarily determined by the findings from the previous inspection. Account is also taken of information about achievement and retention obtained from the funding body, and any significant changes in the size or scope of the provision.

Where a provider has received good grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is relatively light. If the provider offers a number of areas of learning, a restricted sample is inspected.

Where a provider has received satisfactory grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is less intensive and it is possible that not all areas of learning are included.

Where there are significant unsatisfactory grades from cycle 1, the intensity of the cycle 2 inspection is broadly the same as cycle 1, and all significant areas of learning are inspected.

Providers that have not previously been inspected will receive a full inspection.

Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half of the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and in at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning.

Grading

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

• *grade 1 - outstanding*
• *grade 2 - good*
• *grade 3 - satisfactory*
• *grade 4 - inadequate*

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The London borough of Ealing (the borough) contracts with the London West Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for the provision of accredited and non-accredited adult and community learning in the borough. The adult learning service (the service) is within the customer services division of the borough. Although family learning is provided directly by the service, most other provision is subcontracted to a range of large and small providers. The director of cultural services, reporting to the executive director for customer services, has overall responsibility for adult learning. The service is headed by the head of libraries, information and adult learning. At the time of the inspection, the quality assurance and curriculum development manager was the interim adult learning manager. The service employs four full-time staff and seven part-time staff. Forty-four part-time teachers were employed during the week of the inspection.

2. The service provides courses in 12 areas of learning in a wide range of locations throughout the borough, including schools and community centres, as well as subcontractors' own premises.

3. The borough is one of the largest in London, with a population of 308,000. Ealing is an ethnically diverse community with 58.7 per cent of the population describing themselves as being of a white ethnic background. Unemployment is slightly higher than the national average for England. The long-term unemployed figure for people aged 16-74 years is 1.1 per cent. Some wards within the borough have high levels of social deprivation. Seven of these wards are within the 20 per cent most deprived in England, and one is within the top 10 per cent.

4. Significantly, more of Ealing's residents are educated to degree level than the average for England and Wales. The population also contains fewer people with no qualifications than the national average. More than 50 per cent of Ealing's population of working age are educated to national vocational qualification (NVQ) at level 3 or above, and over 33 per cent have qualifications equivalent to NVQ at level 4 or above.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS   Grade 4

5. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate.** Leadership and management are inadequate, as are the arrangements for quality improvement and equality of opportunity. The provision is good in family learning and satisfactory in information and communications technology (ICT) for users, but it is inadequate in fine arts, and crafts, and in other languages, literature and culture.

6. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment report for 2004-05 is a very critical and honest evaluation of the service. It clearly recognises that there is a need to build capacity and accurately identifies key priorities for leadership and management. Subcontractors are involved in the process, but it is still not collaborative enough. Inspectors' findings matched the provider's

grades for the areas of learning, except in family learning where inspectors gave a higher grade. Some strengths are overstated in the self-assessment report. Development plans are generally weak and do not set sufficiently specific targets or timescales.

7. **The provider has demonstrated that it is in a poor position to make improvements.** There is insufficient corporate commitment to the service. Its development and capacity to improve are severely restricted. The borough does not identify a clear role for adult and community learning within its corporate objectives, nor does it set challenging objectives for the service. The borough has been slow to respond to the findings of a best value review carried out in 2000 which identified many key weaknesses. The service has recognised the need to restructure and develop a provision that is more closely allied to national and local priorities, and to provide better value for money. However, leadership and management are inadequate, quality assurance is weak, and staffing levels are low. Development of the provision and the capacity to improve are inadequate.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR EALING LEA:

- improve the corporate commitment to the service
- improve management of the provision and of subcontractors
- develop structures to provide more focused curriculum leadership
- improve the quality of teaching
- improve the quality of provision in other languages, literature and culture, and in fine arts and crafts
- improve the promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity
- develop the extent of the provision
- ensure the availability and use of timely and reliable data to help manage and improve the provision
- build upon the successful developments in family learning to support the skills for life strategy, which is the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language

GRADES

grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = inadequate

Leadership and management	4
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	4
Quality improvement	4

Information and communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ICT for users		*3*
Adult and community learning	36	3

Arts, media and publishing		4
Contributory areas:	**Number of learners**	**Contributory grade**
Fine arts Adult and community learning	10	4
Crafts Adult and community learning	32	4

Languages, literature and culture		4
Contributory areas:	**Number of learners**	**Contributory grade**
Other languages, literature and culture Adult and community learning	146	*4* 4

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	**Number of learners**	**Contributory grade**
Adult and community learning Adult and community learning	129	*2* 2

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

8. The provision that was inspected and graded included leadership and management, fine arts and crafts, ICT for users, other languages, literature and culture, and family learning. The inspection took place over five days in February 2006.

Number of inspectors	8
Number of inspection days	5
Number of learners interviewed	149
Number of staff interviewed	26
Number of subcontractors interviewed	19
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	27
Number of visits	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

9. **Learners' achievements in family learning are good, across a broad range of objectives.** They develop good parenting skills. Learners also achieve their personal objectives, making significant gains in self-confidence and self-esteem, and their listening

and understanding skills in English improve a great deal. In ICT for users, and fine arts and crafts, learners' achievements in lessons are largely satisfactory and they make adequate progress. **In other languages, literature and culture, however, the progress of learners in developing their speaking skills is slow and in fine arts and crafts, learners' do not develop sufficient skills in drawing.**

10. Learners' level of achievement of qualifications is good in family learning. In ICT, it is at least satisfactory. **Retention rates are satisfactory in family learning, but poor for other languages, literature and culture courses, and the rates are low and declining in fine arts and crafts.** Learners' attendance and punctuality are largely satisfactory, but learners are not punctual for some lessons in fine arts and crafts.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Information and communications technology	0	3	2	0	5
Arts, media and publishing	0	0	4	1	5
Languages, literature and culture	0	0	3	1	4
Family learning	1	5	4	0	10
Total	**1**	**8**	**13**	**2**	**24**

11. Overall, much of the teaching is no better than satisfactory. Only 37 per cent of all the lessons observed were better than satisfactory and none of these were in fine arts and crafts, or other languages, literature and culture areas of learning.

12. **Standards of teaching and learning are good in adult and community learning and in ICT.** In family learning, lessons are enjoyable and include a range of practical activities and language development for parents and children. In ICT, tutors pay particular attention to learners' individual needs and plan their lessons well. **In contrast, in other languages, literature and culture and in fine arts and crafts, most teachers use a narrow range of learning materials, and many aspects of learning programmes are not planned sufficiently. Tutors do not consider learners' individual learning styles sufficiently.**

13. Individual learning plans are not used consistently throughout the provision, either in areas of learning or between subcontractors. Learning plans are often used particularly well in ICT, although not by all subcontractors, but in other languages, literature and culture, and fine arts and crafts they are not used sufficiently to plan teaching and learning. Except in family learning, plans are not used enough to measure and record learners' progress. Assessment is inadequate in other languages, literature and culture. **In adult and community learning, there is not enough target-setting for learners on longer courses.**

14. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The quality of accommodation varies widely between venues, with some high-quality information technology (IT) facilities, but some very basic resources for fine arts and crafts. Tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced.

15. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory in adult and community learning but not for other languages, literature and culture, and fine arts and crafts. **In these areas, learners do not receive sufficient information about the support available to them**, such as additional support in literacy skills.

16. **The learning provision is restricted in fine arts and crafts and in ICT.** There is a narrow range of courses and subjects in fine arts and crafts. The range of opportunities for learners in this area to improve their knowledge and skills across an essential range of activities is seriously restricted. **Key ICT courses are not offered in some parts of the borough. There are not enough opportunities for learners to progress in fine arts and crafts and in adult and community learning.**

Leadership and management

17. **The service has developed a good family learning programme to widen participation, and to meet the needs of learners in areas of significant social and economic deprivation.** It has responded well to meeting the needs of the school improvement agenda and the language needs of a significant minority ethnic population.

18. **There is insufficient corporate commitment to the adult community learning service. The development and quality of provision are severely restricted.** The borough's overall education plan does not include strategic plans for the service, to indicate continuity and opportunity within the provision.

19. **The management of the subcontracted provision is weak.** Although there are clear contracts detailing the service's requirements, these are not monitored routinely and the quality of the provision and the performance of contractors is not thoroughly evaluated.

20. **The management of the provision is inadequate.** This situation was identified in three of the four areas of learning inspected. **Curriculum co-ordination is inadequate and the range of provision is restricted in some areas. Data is of poor quality and is not used adequately in planning and quality improvement.** The arrangements to share good practice, and to provide subject-specific staff development are ineffective. **Equally, the arrangements to provide informed planning of the curriculum across the borough are ineffective.** The subcontractors' assessments and recording of learning on non-accredited courses are weak.

21. **The provision for literacy, numeracy and language support is inadequate.** The service has a recently developed a skills for life strategy, and an ambitious three-year action plan, but implementation is slow.

22. **The service does not have sufficient quality assurance arrangements. Those that it does have are not used consistently to raise standards.** A recently introduced quality assurance framework offers a useful starting point for quality improvement activities, but this does not have sufficient details about key procedures and monitoring and evaluation requirements. The service relies too heavily on the subcontractors' own quality assurance arrangements. Monitoring visits are not thorough enough and there are no formal records of visits and actions. Self-assessment and the service's scheme for the observation of lessons are also not thorough enough.

23. The service has an overall objective to include learners from all sectors of society, but equality and diversity are not promoted sufficiently. The range of provision does not reflect the diversity in cultures and social groupings in the borough. Equality and diversity are not integrated sufficiently in induction and teaching programmes, and progress reviews and good practices are not shared between providers.

24. The service does not carry out regular reviews of the effectiveness of equal opportunities arrangements. **It does not monitor compliance by subcontractors effectively, and relies too much on the subcontractors' monitoring arrangements**.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good development of adult and community learning to widen participation

Weaknesses

- insufficient corporate commitment to the service by the borough
- weak management of subcontractors
- inadequate management of the provision
- inadequate provision of literacy, numeracy and language support
- poor provision and use of data in planning and quality improvement
- insufficient promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity
- insufficient quality assurance to raise standards throughout the provision

Information and communications technology

ICT for users   *Grade 3*

Strengths

- good standards of teaching and learning
- productive partnerships to extend the provision

Weaknesses

- insufficient provision in some locations
- poor overall management of the provision

Arts, media and publishing

Strengths

- good use of handouts in pottery and Asian fashion lessons
- good use of demonstration to support teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of drawing to develop ideas and designs
- insufficient attention to the different abilities and needs of learners
- no use of additional activities to support learning
- narrow range of courses and subjects
- poor opportunities for progression

- inadequate leadership and management

Languages, literature and culture

Other languages, literature and culture *Grade 4*

Strengths

- good recruitment of council employees to pilot courses in Spanish and Italian

Weaknesses

- poor retention of learners
- insufficient planning of learning
- inadequate assessment and recording of learners' achievements
- inadequate planning and management of the curriculum

Family learning

Adult and community learning *Grade 2*

Strengths

- good achievement of a wide range of objectives
- good standards of teaching and learning
- very effective strategy to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups
- good programme management

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting in longer course reviews
- poor progression opportunities

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT EALING LEA:

- the helpful and friendly staff
- 'teachers who are interested in their subjects and in what you want to do'
- 'the often convenient and local learning venues'
- meeting with friends each week
- the opportunity to 'catch up' with the skills of children and grandchildren

WHAT LEARNERS THINK EALING LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the opportunities to attend more of the longer courses
- the opportunity to have more tuition hours on adult and community learning courses
- the provision of help and guidance on what to do after finishing a course
- the affordability of some courses, where fees have gone up a lot recently

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 Mentor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them
Learning goals	Main learning goals Secondary	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. 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 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 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.
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 self managing, sustainable communities.

Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT   Grade 4

Strengths

- good development of adult and community learning to widen participation

Weaknesses

- insufficient corporate commitment to the service by the borough
- weak management of subcontractors
- inadequate management of the provision
- inadequate provision of literacy, numeracy and language support
- poor provision and use of data in planning and quality improvement
- insufficient promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity
- insufficient quality assurance to raise standards throughout the provision

25. The family learning provision has been well developed and represents approximately 15 per cent of the total service budget. The service has developed a good family learning programme to widen participation, and to meet the needs of learners within areas of significant social and economic deprivation. The service has responded well to meeting the imperatives of the school improvement agenda and the language needs of a significant minority ethnic population. This is directly managed provision and represents an important and growing focus by the service on contributing to the regeneration of communities.

26. The service has recognised the need to restructure, improve, and develop a provision that is more closely allied to national and local priorities, and to provide better value for money. The service has recently been repositioned within the directorate of cultural services, alongside libraries and information services. There are new staff at all levels throughout the borough, and recent appointments include the head of service for libraries, information and adult learning. Clear reporting lines have been established. Staff work hard to respond to the changing demands placed on the service, and to develop new and improved arrangements. These include the creation of an infrastructure to manage the key role of improving adult learning. There are low staffing levels in the service. The provider is restricted in its ability to develop and improve its service. Action has been taken to resolve some significant weaknesses, but at the time of inspection, it was too soon to judge whether these actions were contributing to sustained improvements.

27. There is insufficient corporate commitment to the adult community learning service. The development and quality of provision are severely restricted. The borough's overall education plan does not include strategic plans for the service, to indicate continuity and opportunity within the provision. The borough has experienced significant changes over a number of years. Currently it is undergoing a major restructure, including a considerable cultural shift, as it develops a more responsive and modern service. During this period, adult and community learning has operated within a vacuum where there has been little political commitment to the service. The borough has been slow to respond to the findings of a Best Value review carried out in 2000, which identified many key weaknesses. The

borough does not identify a clear role for adult and community learning in its corporate objectives, nor does it set challenging objectives for the service as an integral part of the borough's lifelong learning strategy.

28. New objectives and priorities for the allocation of contracts were adopted for the 2005-06 provision. These were introduced to take better account of national and local priorities and the needs of learners, and to start the process of building a more coherent and efficient service. The new process has provided a good focus for widening participation throughout the borough. However, the details for the delivery of courses do not ask providers to include clear targets for retention and achievement, or to identify specific learning objectives to measure learners' progress. At the time of the inspection, it was too soon to judge if these new processes were supporting closer management of the provision.

29. The management of the subcontracted provision is weak. Although there are clear contracts detailing the service's requirements, these are not monitored routinely, and the quality of provision and performance of the subcontractors is not thoroughly evaluated. The criteria for the collection of recruitment, retention and achievement data are not made clear in the contracts. The management of the provision is inadequate. This situation was identified in three of the four areas of learning inspected. The curriculum co-ordination is inadequate and the range of provision is narrow in some areas. The arrangements to share good practice, and to provide subject-specific staff development are ineffective. Equally, the arrangements to provide informed planning of the curriculum across the borough are ineffective. The subcontractors' assessments and recording of learning on non-accredited courses are weak. The implementation of the national procedure for recording learners' progress and achievements is slow. Not enough action has been taken to improve the quality of provision among the subcontractors.

30. The service does not make adequate provision for literacy, numeracy and language support throughout the borough. A skills for life strategy has been introduced recently, together with an ambitious three-year action plan. However, the implementation of these measures has been slow and a number of actions, such as awareness training for staff, have not been carried out within the timescale of the action plan. Language needs are not identified and supported adequately on some courses. The service does not monitor the quality of support given by subcontractors adequately enough. Literacy, numeracy and language support is good for learners at one college, and within the family learning programmes, but access to information, advice and guidance is restricted. This weakness is recognised in the self-assessment report.

31. Data is of poor quality and does not provide information for planning and quality improvement adequately enough. Apart from reports about learner enrolments, gender, ethnic background and disability profiles there is little monitoring of performance, or analyses or explanations of variations in performance. The management information system is not compatible with the subcontractors' systems. There are also serious problems with timely returns of data from some subcontractors. It is not possible to share or use data effectively to improve performance. Inspectors were unable to gain an accurate appraisal of the current participation of learners. This weakness is identified in the self-assessment report, but its effect on the reliability of judgements about retention and achievement are not recognised by the service.

Equality of opportunity
<div align="right">**Contributory grade 4**</div>

32. The service has an overall objective to include learners from all sections of society, but equality and diversity are not promoted sufficiently. The borough has begun to widen participation through a small programme of family learning, and many increasingly effective partnerships are being built. However, the range of provision does not reflect the diversity in cultures and social groupings. Targets set in 2003-04 for attracting men, and black male learners in particular, have not been met. There has been a reduction in the range of ICT provision, and there is now no ICT provision in Southall. The range of fine arts and crafts courses is particularly restricted. The service has no effective corporate image for its provision, and subcontractors are responsible for marketing their own courses. The borough's internet website for adult and community learning courses is a very recent addition, and there is not enough promotion of the whole range of provision. Buildings used for learning purposes are poorly signposted.

33. The service does not integrate equality and diversity within teaching programmes sufficiently and good practice is not being shared between providers. Learners are generally well supported by their tutors, but there are no arrangements to ensure that they all adopt an inclusive approach to learners. Except in family learning, where the promotion of equality and diversity is carried out very effectively, inspectors noted few instances where tutors used the potential of the diversity of their groups to help in teaching and learning. Equality and diversity are not covered on most induction checklists, or in progress reviews. Recently produced guides for tutors and learners cover aspects of equality of opportunity well, but do not include details of how to make a complaint. It is too soon to judge the effects of these guides.

34. The service does not carry out regular reviews of the effectiveness of equal opportunities arrangements. Contracts require subcontractors to have an equal opportunities policy and a complaints policy, and delegate to the subcontractor the responsibility for providing suitable learning support, access, support for disabilities and crèche facilities. However, the service does not monitor contract compliance effectively and relies too much on the subcontractors' arrangements for monitoring. The borough's equal opportunities policy has been shared with staff and subcontractors. Staff have received training to help them understand the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, and further training is planned for disability awareness. Most of the subcontractors' self-assessment reports include issues of equality of opportunity and have targets for inclusion. Subcontractors also collect data on disabilities, ethnic background and gender, but the service does not analyse this data, or use it to measure retention, achievements and progression of learners.

Quality improvement
<div align="right">**Contributory grade 4**</div>

35. The provider does not have sufficient quality assurance arrangements. Those that it does have are not used consistently to raise standards. The service recognised this weakness and appointed a quality assurance and curriculum development manager just over a year ago. A recently introduced quality assurance framework places self-assessment at the centre of a continuous quality cycle. The framework offers a useful starting point for quality improvement activities, but does not have sufficient details about key procedures, and monitoring and evaluation requirements. Key documents are often not dated and action plans are too generalised.

36. The service recognises the need to improve support for tutors, although much of this responsibility lies with subcontractors. A new tutors' handbook and termly news bulletin have been introduced. Four conference days each year have been introduced to improve communications with providers and contract managers. A range of meetings is used to promote effective working practices and the sharing of ideas. Three learning networks in each key area of the borough are used for development of the provision, and the adult learning development group acts as a forum for the borough as a whole. All quality improvement issues are taken to the quality partnership group which includes staff from the borough, an LSC representative and providers' representatives. Attendance has been low at some of the meetings. Network arrangements are not used sufficiently to share good practice and to develop a coherent approach for the whole provision. A review of the work of these groups is being carried out.

37. Service level agreements with subcontractors include appropriate standards for health and safety, and subcontractors give satisfactory attention to this aspect. However, until recently the service has been too reliant on the individual subcontractors' own quality assurance arrangements. Monitoring visits are not thorough enough and there are no formal records of visits and actions taken.

38. The service has arrangements for the observation of all tutors' teaching and learning sessions. The observation forms are comprehensive. Lessons are graded and the completed forms provide helpful feedback. Some lesson observations are carried out by staff who are not area of learning specialists. Not enough attention is given to the quality of learning. The grades given to learning sessions are generous and do not match the findings of the inspectors. A new system has been developed to ensure that actions outlined in observations are reviewed.

39. There are procedures to collect learners' views, and a systematic analysis of feedback from questionnaires is carried out. The quality partnership group discusses these analyses and the feedback has been used to improve the provision, although there has been little progress in resolving learners' main complaint that the courses are too short. A learners' handbook has been developed recently.

40. The self-assessment report for 2004-05 is a very critical and honest evaluation of the service. The report recognises clearly that there is a need to build capacity within the service, and accurately identifies key priorities in the leadership and management section of the report. Subcontractors were responsible for completing individual reports which were summarised into an overall report for the service. The process was not collaborative enough and there was some confusion among subcontractors about the grading process. Subcontractors' self-assessment reports were weak.

41. Although inspectors agree in part with the overall judgements in the report, some of the strengths were overstated. In particular, inspectors were unable to find any strengths relating to retention and achievement. Insufficient data was available and it was not clear how success rates were measured. There was little evidence to support the judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. Development plans were generally weak and did not set sufficiently specific targets and timescales, and some identified actions had not been carried out. In the four areas of learning inspected, inspectors' findings matched three of the self-assessment grades and they gave one area of learning a higher grade. Inspectors gave a lower grade for leadership and management than that of the

self-assessment report.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information and communications technology   Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ICT for users		*3*
Adult and community learning	36	3

42. In 2004-05, 556 learners were enrolled for this provision, which was offered by eight subcontractors. Thirty-three per cent of learners were men and 63 per cent were from minority ethnic groups. Most courses are short courses, lasting for up to 10 hours. In 2005-06 there has been a reduction in the range of provision offered. In the autumn term of 2005, 93 learners were enrolled. At the time of the inspection, five courses were operating, offered by two subcontractors at three sites. In the lessons observed, which constituted of most of the provision, 36 learners were enrolled. Two previous subcontractors are currently unable to offer this provision. There is a shortfall in ICT for users courses in some locations.

ICT for users   *Grade 3*

Strengths

- good standards of teaching and learning
- productive partnerships to extend the provision

Weaknesses

- insufficient provision in some locations
- poor overall management of the provision

Achievement and standards

43. Achievements on accredited courses are at least satisfactory. In 2004-05, 40 of the 50 learners enrolled on introductory ICT courses offered by the main subcontractor, a local college of further education, completed them successfully. For the current academic year, this subcontractor has introduced suitable schemes of accreditation through a number of recognised awarding bodies. The assessment of achievement on non-accredited courses is through the use of individual learning plans. For courses managed by the college subcontractor these plans are used effectively, recording individual learner goals, following initial assessment. Progress against these goals is reviewed regularly and evaluated and recorded on completion of the course. In the case of other subcontractors, the systems used for recognising and recording progress and achievement are not so thorough and achievement is based on completion of the course.

44. Learners make satisfactory progress in lessons and their work reflects the level of the course on which they are enrolled. They gain ICT skills which they use at home or at work, or to help them find work. For many learners, the courses also help them to develop their language skills and their confidence.

The quality of provision

45. Standards of teaching and learning are good. Inspectors found no lessons that they considered to be inadequate. This strength is not identified in the self-assessment report. The provision offered by the local college of further education is thoroughly planned and tutors have access to comprehensive guidance notes and documents through the subcontractor's well-structured virtual learning environment. Tutors make consistent and effective use of schemes of work and lesson plans. Good progress has been made with the national procedure for recording learners' progress and achievements. Individual learning plans include personal and group learning goals, derived from the outcomes of diagnostic assessments. Tutors with the other main subcontractor make good use of differentiated learning materials which are available to learners through the subcontractor's intranet. The provision here is offered in newly refurbished, state-of-the-art accommodation. The accommodation in some learning centres is unsuitable and the computers are out of date with no internet connections.

46. Tutors generally make good use of information learning technology and provide good individual tuition. They provide a very good level of support, monitor their learners' progress closely and give good explanations and guidance. Learners' responses are encouraged and valued and there is a culture of mutual support among the learners. Learners attending courses provided by the local college of further education have access to the virtual learning environment, where they can download course materials and supplementary exercises. In a well-planned lesson for parents of infant school children from minority ethnic groups, the tutor developed the learners' self-esteem and their language skills through differentiated learning, and effective question and answer sessions. The learners made good progress in developing ICT skills and they were very enthusiastic about the skills of the tutor.

47. A number of subcontractors take part in active partnerships to improve their provision. At the Dormers Wells site, one of the most deprived local authority wards in the country, this provides a 'holistic' approach to the personal and social well being of learners. The accommodation, provided by a charitable trust, is used by the subcontracting college to provide outreach ICT classes. This accommodation and equipment is being updated by the charitable trust, using new opportunities funding through a partnership bid.

48. Guidance and support are satisfactory. On joining a course, learners with most of the subcontractors self-assess their existing skills and knowledge. In the provision managed by the college of further education, this information is used to prepare individual learning plans, outlining clear individual and group learning goals. Learners review and record their progress regularly and systematically, and at the end of their courses they evaluate their progress. Tutors make recommendations for progression through the subcontractor's information, advice and guidance services. However, there is no consistent approach to information, advice and guidance throughout the borough, and the standard of the advice given depends on the knowledge of individual tutors and subcontractors. The small class sizes experienced during the inspection allowed very good levels of individual support for learners.

49. With some subcontractors, the planning of teaching and provision of progress reviews are not thorough enough. The schemes of work and lesson plans are not sufficiently detailed and individual learning plans are not used effectively to record achievements

against learning goals. One subcontractor does not provide cover for absentee tutors and classes are cancelled.

Leadership and management

50. Although the development of ICT is identified as a strategic priority by the borough, there is no clear plan to achieve a provision that meets learners' needs throughout the geographical area. The overall management of the provision is poor. There are no clear, signposted progression routes for learners. Progression relies on the knowledge of individual tutors, or subcontractors. The borough does not have access to current data about the location of learning provision and the number of enrolments. The provision has been withdrawn from some geographical areas where there is a significant demand. Enrolments have declined significantly during 2005-06.

51. The provision is not monitored sufficiently and there are not enough clear links between review activities and development planning at subcontractor or borough level. As noted in the self-assessment report, the recording, monitoring and analysis of data are not used adequately in management decisions. The self-assessment report does not recognise the strengths in teaching and learning and overstates the provision's strengths in widening participation and achievement. The weaknesses concerning the overall management and extent of the provision are not recognised. Good practice is not shared sufficiently. Although some revised quality assurance documents have been distributed recently, they are not fully established.

52. Learners work in an environment which values equality of opportunity and diversity, which they appreciate. However, the promotion of equality of opportunity is not monitored adequately enough, and tutors do not receive adequate guidance about how to promote cultural awareness in their teaching.

Arts, media and publishing   Grade 4

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Fine arts		
Adult and community learning	10	4
Crafts		
Adult and community learning	32	4

53. The provision in pottery, dressmaking, and drawing and painting, is offered by two local colleges of further education and one other provider. Inspectors were not able to confirm the exact number of learners on courses during the week of the inspection, but in the five lessons they observed, they recorded 42 enrolments. This represents a significant decline in enrolments compared with the same period in 2005. Courses do not lead to national qualifications. Lessons take place throughout the day and in the evening. They last for two hours and usually run for 10 weeks. Courses are taught at various venues including community centres, schools and colleges.

Strengths

- good use of handouts in pottery and Asian fashion lessons
- good use of demonstration to support teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of drawing to develop ideas and designs
- insufficient attention to the different abilities and needs of learners
- no use of additional activities to support learning
- narrow range of courses and subjects
- poor opportunities for progression
- inadequate leadership and management

Achievement and standards

54. Most learners' work is satisfactory. Learners make satisfactory progress in lessons and produce work of an appropriate standard. However, managers and tutors have no effective method of recognising and recording the progress and achievement of learners.

55. Attendance by learners during the week of the inspection was 82 per cent. Retention for 2004-05 was low and declining, at around 72 per cent. In some lessons, learners' punctuality is unsatisfactory. Many classes are small, with less than 10 learners. In these classes, learners are not sufficiently challenged and there is not enough interaction and debate. Drawing is not used sufficiently to develop ideas and designs, and there is little use of sketchbooks and references to source materials or the work of other artists to support learners' development. Learners' work generally demonstrates insufficient personal development and individual style.

The quality of provision

56. Standards of teaching and learning are generally satisfactory, with most tutors having basic lesson plans and schemes of work. Learners value the level of teaching they receive. Tutors and learners make good use of handouts in pottery and Asian dressmaking. Comprehensive notes and worksheets are collated and used by learners for future reference. In one lesson in dressmaking, learners annotated a diagram of a sewing machine, naming each part to test their knowledge. Tutors make good use of demonstrations to support teaching and learning, especially in practical lessons.

57. Tutors are experienced and practise their skills in their specialist fields. Accommodation and resources are adequate, and provide learners with a basic level of specialist facilities. However, one venue is particularly cold. Some of the cutting tables used for dressmaking are unstable and too small for the range of work being done. Most of the accommodation is maintained satisfactorily. The venue for Asian dressmaking is well sited in the Asian community.

58. Not enough attention is given to learners' different skills levels and learning needs. Learners' competences and progress are not assessed sufficiently. Initial assessment is informal and recorded very briefly. The quality of some of the teaching and learning is inadequate. Aims and objectives are not always shared with learners and not enough attention is given to learning outcomes. Learners are not always challenged in some lessons, but in others the tasks set are too difficult. Tutors are not sufficiently aware of learners' different learning styles and individual learning plans are not reviewed regularly during lessons. When progress reviews take place they are superficial and there is little explanation or discussion of learners' progress. There is no recorded information to help learners to understand what they need to do to improve.

59. Additional learning activities are not used to support learning. This weakness is not recognised in the self-assessment report. Learners do not visit galleries and exhibitions in London to stimulate ideas for their work, or to generate discussion of the work of other artists and designers. There is no evidence of the use of ICT in any aspect of learners' work.

60. An induction booklet for learners, produced recently by the main subcontractor, provides some useful information about appeals, but not about how to make a complaint. There is no evidence of support provided for learners who require help in literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). A few of the learners attending pottery and dressmaking classes have difficulty with the English language. One learner is on a waiting list to attend appropriate English classes.

61. A narrow range of courses and subjects is offered by the service. Learners are seriously restricted in their ability to improve their knowledge and skills in an essential range of activities. The provision has been significantly reduced in recent years and recruitment is in decline. The existing provision does not reflect the culture and diversity of the borough. Information about courses is inadequate.

62. Opportunities for learners to progress are poor. This area of learning does not offer progression routes from introductory to advanced level. All classes have learners with mixed levels of ability. Managers recognise that there are not enough levels of progression and that the progress that learners make is not monitored or recorded. Some learners

attend the same course year after year.

Leadership and management

63. Leadership and management of the provision are inadequate. There is no managed overview of the area of learning and the service is not fully aware of what is being offered by its subcontractors. Leadership and management are inadequate. Curriculum management is poor, with no sense of direction for subject areas, or for the overall area of learning. Internal communications, and those among the different providers, are inadequate. Tutors are invited to attend a meeting each term, but there are no links between providers. There is no sharing of ideas and there are not enough opportunities for tutors to contribute to debates about the nature of the current or future provision. Management information systems are inadequate, and managers do not have reliable information to use in planning and strategic decisions.

64. The organisation and structure of the provision is under review. However, the changes being implemented are not having any significant impact on the learners' experiences.

65. Quality improvement systems are inadequate. The self-assessment report recognises that too much of the teaching and learning is at best satisfactory, or at worst inadequate. Findings from the lesson observations carried out by the subcontractors show inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. However, the outcomes of such work are not having a sufficient effect on the quality of teaching and learning, and many of the weaknesses identified have not been resolved. There are not enough professional development opportunities for tutors. Self-assessment within the area of learning is not thorough enough. It is not evaluated sufficiently and does not include all the key questions outlined in the Common Inspection Framework.

66. The service's integration of equality and diversity into the curriculum is inadequate. Differentiation was not identified adequately in lesson plans, or in the lessons observed by inspectors. Learners' support needs are not being met. Some venues have poor access for wheelchair users. There is a significant decline in enrolments. Not enough is being done to widen participation, or to extend and develop courses to attract and involve learners from specific communities.

Languages, literature and culture   Grade 4

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other languages, literature and culture		*4*
Adult and community learning	146	4

67. Five of the 10 courses that the borough currently offers in other languages, literature and culture are provided by a local college of further education. These are all courses for people who have just begun to learn their chosen language and are offered in Spanish, Italian, French and Portuguese. Sixty-five learners currently attend these 10-week courses that take place on college premises and community venues throughout the borough for two hours each week, during the evening. Since January 2006, the borough has employed two part-time teachers for additional beginners' courses in Spanish and Italian. Sixty-five learners currently attend these lunch time courses, which are designed specifically for council employees. The borough also directly provides the only A level course, which is for Italian. Most of the 16 learners on this course have attended for the past two to three years. The borough's language courses do not lead to national qualifications.

Other languages, literature and culture   Grade 4

Strengths

- good recruitment of council employees to pilot courses in Spanish and Italian

Weaknesses

- poor retention of learners
- insufficient planning of learning
- inadequate assessment and recording of learners' achievements
- inadequate planning and management of the curriculum

Achievement and standards

68. Most learners make satisfactory progress with pronunciation, and in learning useful vocabulary and general conversation. Some learners on the courses provided for the council's employees quickly develop their confidence in speaking and comprehending the target language. However, many learners make slow progress in developing speaking skills. Although learners develop satisfactory skills in using some basic rules of grammar, many of them rely too much on written prompts when speaking.

69. The learners on the direct provision have attended well for between two and three years and have made good progress in learning Italian. However, overall retention is poor. In 2004-05, only 49 per cent of the 305 learners who attended subcontracted language courses completed the courses. Retention remained very low in the autumn term of 2005, ranging between 31 per cent and 66 per cent. The borough does not measure the achievements of learners on these programmes.

The quality of provision

70. The borough's recent promotion of language learning to its employees has been successful. The response to the notice on the intranet advertising the Spanish courses was very good. Managers quickly added Italian to the course offer and set up a total of four lunchtime courses. Most learners are very keen to develop the basic language skills in preparation for visits abroad. However, some learners are unable to attend each week and are concerned that they are not keeping up with the progress made by the rest of the group.

71. Standards of teaching are satisfactory. Tutors are native speakers of the languages that they are teaching, and they make good use of this language during lessons. Learners quickly become used to hearing the language that they are learning and many develop a good understanding of useful basic phrases and vocabulary. Some tutors are particularly skilled at providing helpful tips in learning pronunciation and grammar. A number of tutors also include interesting background information about the variations in the language as spoken in different countries. For example, learners on a Spanish course receive useful clarification of how the words and phrases they are learning are used in Spain and Latin American countries. However, most tutors use a narrow range of learning materials and do not develop learners' speaking skills sufficiently.

72. Many aspects of learning programmes are not planned well enough. The borough has identified this weakness in its self-assessment report. Although most courses include satisfactory systems to collect information about learners' reasons for joining the courses and their educational backgrounds, tutors do not use this information enough when planning learning programmes. Tutors do not consider learners' different learning styles sufficiently. Most courses are based primarily on published textbooks. These books and photocopied worksheets tend to dictate the context of many lessons. Tutors do not check that these contexts are relevant and appropriate for all their learners.

73. Support and guidance for learners is not fully established. Most learners receive satisfactory information before they join a course, which confirms that courses are for people new to learning the particular language, and gives the arrangements for attendance. However, learners do not receive sufficient information about the support available to them to help them complete their courses, such as additional support in literacy skills. The short courses are successful in whetting learners' appetites for learning a modern foreign language. However, insufficient information is provided regarding suitable progression routes.

74. The measurement and recording of learners' progress in developing language skills are inadequate. Most tutors record learning goals on the individual learning plans, and some learners add their own personal goals. However, assessment practices are poor. Learners do not receive sufficient feedback about their performances during lessons. Similarly, the borough's implementation of the national procedure for recording learners' progress and achievements is very slow. Tutors do not have sufficient information about how to assess learners' progress in achieving identified learning goals. Assessment is based primarily on learners' own assessments of their progress. Learners on the shorter courses do not receive a permanent record of their achievements.

Leadership and management

75. The self-assessment report identifies that curriculum planning is inadequate. The borough does not have an adequate strategy for developing this language provision. The selection of courses offered is based mainly on the range of courses previously provided, and responses to requests by learners or potential learners. For example, the new provision for council employees was based on these criteria, not as part of the council's employee development strategy.

76. Tutors are appropriately qualified, but most of them work in isolation and do not receive sufficient advice or guidance to help them develop and update their skills. The management of the curriculum is inadequate. Systems for managing learning and sharing good practice are unsatisfactory. Attendance at staff development events is not monitored effectively. Most tutors do not receive enough guidance about how to implement and promote new systems, such as the revised individual learning plan.

77. Arrangements for quality improvement are also unsatisfactory. The self-assessment report for 2004-05 is critical and identifies most of the key weaknesses in the provision. Inspectors' grading matched the overall grade for the area. However, the self-assessment process itself is weak. The range of evidence is narrow. Action-planning is also weak, with insufficient detail about any planned developments to improve the quality of the programme. Retention is still poor and has decreased on some programmes. Plans to implement thorough systems for assessing and recording learners' progress and achievements are unclear. Most tutors have already been observed in their teaching this academic year. Records show satisfactory feedback to tutors on generic aspects of teaching, but the tutors do not receive sufficient feedback about specific aspects of teaching modern foreign languages. Judgements about the quality of learners' achievements, and on assessment practices and the feedback to learners, are inadequate. Observation records do not support the grades given for lessons.

78. The promotion of equality of opportunity is not monitored adequately. Although most tutors receive information if learners have a disability such as a hearing impairment or epilepsy, they do not receive sufficient support or guidance about how to provide additional support. Similarly, tutors do not receive effective guidance about how to promote cultural awareness in their teaching. The use of data is inadequate. Managers do not use information about learners' backgrounds adequately enough to gauge the effectiveness of any strategies to promote social inclusion.

Family learning   Grade 2

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning		*2*
Adult and community learning	129	2

79. There are programmes of learning in family language, literacy and numeracy (FLLN) and some 'keeping up with children' courses. There is also a range of short, non-accredited courses, which include taster courses, to attract parents and carers into learning in order to support their children's schooling. The courses are offered in seven of the deprived wards of the borough, at adult learning centres and in 15 schools. Most courses are non-accredited, although since last year learners on courses of over 30 hours duration have been offered accreditation through the open college network (OCN). Since the beginning of this academic year, the borough has provided seven family language and literacy courses, and two family numeracy courses, five short 'keeping up with children' courses and two longer ones. The borough has also provided four language and play courses and four short workshops.

80. During the inspection week, 129 learners attended daytime courses, most of whom were learners from minority ethnic backgrounds who speak English as an additional language. Most learners are at entry level. Six courses were provided directly by the borough, and seven schools used their own teachers to deliver courses. A touch-typing course is offered in collaboration with a voluntary agency for dyslexia. Three per cent of the learners are from white groups and 2 per cent are men. The provision is work is managed directly by the borough through a full-time literacy, numeracy and language, and family learning manager. He is supported by a full-time senior ESOL tutor and three part-time tutors.

Adult and community learning   *Grade 2*

Strengths

- good achievement of a wide range of objectives
- good standards of teaching and learning
- very effective strategy to meet the needs of disadvantaged groups
- good programme management

Weaknesses

- insufficient target-setting in longer course reviews
- poor progression opportunities

Achievement and standards

81. Learners' achievements are good, covering a broad range of objectives. Principally, they develop good parenting skills. Many parents have not had any experience of education in this country. They now see clearly the contribution they can make to their children's education. For example, parents have gained skills in story telling, in talking to

the children to develop their language, and actively watching television programmes with them. They learn to sing nursery rhymes and play with the children. Parents develop good listening skills and spend quality time with their children. More advanced learners gain an insight into the national curriculum. Many parents now fully understand what their children learn, and how. They hold meaningful discussions with their children.

82. Parents' own motivation to learn and teach has improved. They notice much-improved relationships at home and at school. Many parents have become active members of the school community. Learners also achieve their own personal objectives. They make significant gains in self-confidence and self-esteem. Their understanding of English improves a great deal and they are able to make effective use of the telephone to make appointments, to fill in forms, and to make better use of public services.

83. The standard of learners work is good for those attending family learning lessons in primary schools. It is satisfactory for learners taking lessons in secondary schools and excellent in community-led family learning programmes. Learners on the 'touch-typing' course make very quick progress to achieve higher levels of typing skills in a safe learning environment. Many learners with dyslexia make good progress to improve their reading skills.

84. The achievement level of qualifications is good. In 2004-05, 55 per cent of the learners gained credits and units of accreditation from OCN. The achievement of numeracy units was particularly good. Twenty-four learners gained units at entry level and one learner gained units at level 1. This is a significant achievement for many of the learners who have not gained qualifications before. Twenty-seven learners have gained units of accreditation at entry level in reading and writing, listening and speaking and ICT.

85. The retention of learners on longer courses in family learning programmes is satisfactory. It varies between 79 per cent for ESOL learners, to 93 per cent in numeracy. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

The quality of provision

86. Standards of teaching and learning are good. Seven of the 10 lessons observed were judged to be good or better. Schemes of work are detailed and well planned. The topics chosen are of particular relevance to parents and children alike, such as healthy eating. Tutors are sensitive to learners' anxieties and concerns. The learning environment is safe. Much of the teaching is stimulating and challenging. Lessons are enjoyable and include a range of practical activities and language development exercises that the parents and children enjoy. Tutors, learners and children get on well together and learners participate well in class discussions. For example, in one excellent lesson the two tutors worked very effectively together, and with the learners, to teach a group of 14 children and 11 parents touch typing.

87. Resources are used well. IT facilities are good and several rooms have interactive wipe boards. In one good ESOL lesson, the learners read about the various courses on offer, discussed their career options and followed this by looking at the information on the internet in the well-equipped computer room. Some schools have poorer resources. Tutors are well qualified and suitably experienced.

88. As recognised in the self-assessment report, the strategy to meet the educational needs

of the most disadvantaged groups is very effective. The planning of the provision is good. Staff have drawn up a map of the characteristics of the catchment area. In addition to the general indices of deprivation, they have identified areas where educational achievement is comparatively low. Classes have been set up in local schools, which have made bids to offer courses. Bilingual staff work very hard to promote the courses sensitively to parents with the greatest need. The topics of ESOL classes have been carefully negotiated with the learners and incorporated in the schemes of work. The timing of the courses has been co-ordinated with learners' other commitments and courses are often provided locally. In some venues, the schools have dedicated community rooms and learning centres. The format of external qualifications also meets the needs of the learners very well.

89. Study support and in-class support are satisfactory. Learners are very appreciative of the help and support they receive from tutors. They are also very appreciative of the crèche provision, which is well organised and appropriate for their needs. Formative assessment is satisfactory. Tutors give good feedback and praise learners appropriately when they have done well. Summative assessment is also satisfactory. The good standards of work are being maintained. This is confirmed by the satisfactory reports from external verifiers.

90. Learners are not set sufficient targets for their learning goals on the longer FLLN courses. This weakness was not identified in the self-assessment report. Tutors review learners' progress appropriately on an ongoing basis, but they do not set interim targets. Learners are aware that they are improving, but they do not have sufficient targets against which they can measure their progress.

91. Opportunities for learners to progress to other courses are poor. The signposting arrangements for learners are poor. The borough is in the process of arranging the provision of information, advice and guidance, but it is currently not available. The demand for courses far outweighs the funds available, and there are some long waiting lists. Many learners wish to continue learning and would like more classes in the local venues that they are used to. Some of the learners wish to attend job-related ESOL courses to improve their employability but are unable to do so. The borough has not been able to negotiate higher-level classes with other providers in the area.

Leadership and management

92. The service has provided a clear strategic direction for family learning. Programme management is good. All the partners and tutors fully understand the purpose and values of the family learning service. Communications are very good, with regular, well-prepared meetings and good use of e-mail and networks. Teamworking is particularly effective, even though most of the tutors work part time. The senior ESOL tutor supports them well. Staff have good access to training and development. They are able to update their skills and to share good practice. Staff appraisals are not well established.

93. Resources are restricted, but well managed. The service's partnerships with the schools are strong. Needs identification is thorough. The literacy, numeracy and language skills and family learning manager is a member of various family learning networks regionally and nationally, and is able to introduce good practice from the other parts of the country.

94. Managers monitor the performance of courses well. The service has systematic

procedures to continuously improve the provision, which is evaluated effectively by the tutors, partners and head teachers, and to some degree by the learners. However, data is not readily available to help monitor and manage the provision. Inspectors saw many examples of curriculum innovations and quality improvements in response to feedback from the stakeholders. Recently, the senior tutor has begun to observe lessons in order to support and challenge tutors to improve their teaching. Feedback from these observations have also been effective in supporting improvements and in identifying staff development opportunities.

95. Ninety-five per cent of the learners are from minority ethnic groups. Equality of opportunity is promoted very effectively in lessons through the careful choice of storylines and resources. For example, in one nursery school, the story of Red Riding Hood was rewritten and used the names of the pupils.