INSPECTION REPORT

Bexley LEA

25 November 2005

ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

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*

INSPECTION REPORT

Bexley LEA

Contents

Summary

Detailed inspection findings

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Bexley LEA (the LEA) contracts with the London East Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for the provision of accredited and non-accredited adult and community learning in the London borough of Bexley (the borough). Provision is delivered directly by the LEA, largely through the Adult Education College (the AEC). The AEC is an integral part of the LEA and operates under a scheme of delegated local management with its own governing body. The LEA also has a lifelong learning team, which leads the development of the LSC-funded adult and community learning community-based programme, working in partnership with the AEC.

2. The LEA provides courses in all areas of learning at 10 main locations and at numerous other community venues, including schools and libraries. The areas of learning covered by the remit of this inspection were health, public services and care, information and communications technology (ICT), leisure, travel and tourism, arts, media and publishing, languages, literature and culture, preparation for life and work, and family learning.

3. The deputy director (learners) has overall responsibility for adult and community learning, as part of the borough's directorate of children's and young peoples' services. The principal of the AEC, with a senior management team of three and nine curriculum managers, is responsible for the AEC provision. The borough's head of lifelong learning and youth service is responsible for lifelong learning provision, including family learning. The **adult and community learning provision of the LEA employs 25 full-time staff and 115** part-time staff, including those in support staff roles. Approximately three hundred and fifty part-time tutors are employed at any one time.

4. Overall, the borough presents a good economic and social environment, with below average levels of unemployment, but with marked variations in its wards. The southern part, including Sidcup, is reasonably affluent, while the middle of the borough, including Bexleyheath and Welling, is less affluent. The northern part of the borough contains three wards with significant levels of deprivation. The borough has one of the smallest minority ethnic populations in London, at around 9 per cent of the population at present. There is a significant traveller population of some 1,000 families in the areas of Cray Valley and southeast Bexley. Estimates are that 9 per cent of the borough's adults have significant literacy or numeracy difficulties, and a further 15 per cent have some needs. The LEA has identified low levels of aspiration in the adult population as a significant problem.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS   Grade 3

5. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** Leadership and management are satisfactory, as are the arrangements for quality improvement and equality of opportunity. The provision is good in health, public services and care. In all other areas inspected it is satisfactory.

6. **The inspection team had some confidence in the reliability of the self-assessment**

process. The annual self-assessment process is well established and all staff are involved in providing evidence and determining judgements. Learners' views are systematically collected and analysed and these are used in making judgements. Tutors contribute to the self-assessment process by agreeing the strengths and weaknesses and area grades. Self-assessment contributes to quality improvement, but is not thorough enough and is not applied consistently. End-of-course evaluations by tutors, which are used to help write the report, vary in thoroughness and detail. Data is not used comprehensively in the process. Inspectors' grades matched those given by the college in its self-assessment report, but they considered that some conclusions were not critical enough. The development plan includes a clear direction for improvement.

7. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** The LEA has a good appreciation of its weaknesses. Inspectors noted substantial activity to bring about improvement and a recognition by the LEA and the AEC of the large amount of work still to be done. There is a strong commitment by the various elements of the provision, including the LEA, to continue with the improvements already made. The current review by the LEA of its strategy for adult and community learning attaches importance to the role of the AEC, and the need to continue with the recent substantial investment in accommodation and resources.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR BEXLEY LEA:

- improve the planning of teaching and learning to meet individual learners' needs
- develop the use of information technology (IT) in teaching
- ensure consistent quality in curriculum planning and management
- further develop the analysis and use of data to help management and quality improvement
- improve the effectiveness of teaching observations
- further develop the quality of accommodation

GRADES

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

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

Health, public services and care		2
Contributory areas:	**Number of learners**	**Contributory grade**
Complementary health services Adult and community learning	180	2
Other subjects and vocations allied to medicine Adult and community learning	80	2
Counselling Adult and community learning	174	2
Early years Adult and community learning	70	2

Information and communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	**Number of learners**	**Contributory grade**
ICT for users Adult and community learning	704	*3* 3

Leisure, travel and tourism		3
Contributory areas:	**Number of learners**	**Contributory grade**
Sport, leisure and recreation Adult and community learning	778	*3* 3

Arts, media and publishing		3
Contributory areas:	**Number of learners**	**Contributory grade**
Dance Adult and community learning	274	3
Music Adult and community learning	102	3
Fine arts Adult and community learning	552	3
Crafts Adult and community learning	786	3
Media and communication Adult and community learning	48	3

Languages, literature and culture		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Language, literature and culture of the British Isles Adult and community learning	200	3
EFL Adult and community learning	75	3
Other languages, literature and culture Adult and community learning	950	3

Preparation for life and work		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL Adult and community learning	465	3
Literacy and numeracy Adult and community learning	400	3
Independent living and leisure skills Adult and community learning	97	3

Family learning		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning Adult and community learning	193	*3* 3

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

8. The provision that was inspected and graded included leadership and management, health, public services and care, ICT, leisure, travel and tourism, arts, media and publishing, languages, literature and culture, preparation for life and work, and family learning. The inspection took place over five days in November 2005.

Number of inspectors	16
Number of inspection days	74
Number of learners interviewed	1102
Number of staff interviewed	197
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	63
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	10
Number of visits	1

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

9. **Learners' achievements are satisfactory and sometimes good.** In all of the areas inspected, most learners develop their confidence and skills significantly and successfully achieve their individual learning goals. **For example, in lessons for sport, leisure and recreation, learners make very good personal, social and health gains** and their performances are satisfactory or better. **In many drawing and painting lessons, learners' achievements are excellent** and those learners on English and English as a foreign language (EFL) courses are set challenging tasks. They make good progress and achieve a standard that is above the norm in relation to their prior achievements. **In family learning there is good development of parenting and personal skills.**

10. Retention and achievement rates are largely satisfactory or better. **In health, public services and care, retention and pass rates on accredited course are very good and pass rates in EFL and ICT are also high. Learners on preparation for life and work courses have good retention and achievement rates on accredited programmes. Learners on family learning, literacy and numeracy courses have good levels of achievement.** In the area of languages, literature and culture, **achievement levels for British Sign Language (BSL) level 2 are unsatisfactory, and retention rates for modern foreign languages at entry level are low.** Attendance during the inspection was satisfactory and most learners were punctual.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Health, public services and care	2	6	5	0	13
Information and communications technology	2	10	9	2	23
Leisure, travel and tourism	1	3	7	0	11
Arts, media and publishing	2	6	15	2	25
Languages, literature and culture	2	9	11	3	25
Preparation for life and work	1	11	24	1	37
Family learning	0	4	4	3	11
Total	**10**	**49**	**75**	**11**	**145**

11. **Overall, much of the teaching is satisfactory or better.** Forty-one per cent of all lessons observed were better than satisfactory, 7 per cent were judged outstanding and 7 per cent inadequate. **The best teaching is in health, public services and care, ICT and BSL and EFL lessons,** where lessons are well planned and prepared and there is effective use of resources to support a good variety of teaching approaches. **Individual tuition in ICT is good and in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)** tutors use an unusually good range of classroom activities to interest and involve learners.

12. In all areas, tutors do not pay sufficient attention to identifying and meeting learners' individual needs. For example, the use of individual learning plans is still evolving and the setting and monitoring of individual targets are not effective enough.

13. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although some of

the accommodation is old, good efforts are made to improve it and there has been considerable investment recently in accommodation and resources. **In sport, leisure and recreation, many lessons are provided in unsuitable accommodation.**

14. The guidance and support of learners is satisfactory, although their progress is not monitored consistently enough and targets are not used sufficiently to promote and measure progress. **In arts, media and publishing, learners receive good, additional support from tutors.**

Leadership and management

15. **Governance of the AEC is good,** by committed and knowledgeable governors. They carry out their responsibilities expertly to determine AEC's mission and character, and to ensure that it is managed well. They use their wide range of life and work experiences very effectively in support of the work of the AEC. The governors are focusing more on ensuring the quality of provision.

16. **The AEC has a good, three-year strategic plan and planning process.** The plan meets the LSC's objectives, and the LEA's and its own priorities, clearly prioritising its targets for development and continued partnership working.

17. **Very effective widening of participation has been achieved through partnerships.** In many areas of its work, AEC successfully attracts learners who would not normally involve themselves in learning. The provider takes full advantage of additional project funding, and works closely with a wide range of community, private and public sector groups.

18. Curriculum management is satisfactory, and is bringing about improvements, but it is not effective consistently throughout the AEC. **In particular, managers have been hampered in their evaluation and planning by insufficient data.** New management information systems have begun to produce useful data. Some areas have been slow to respond to the need to develop new courses. Internal communications are satisfactory.

19. Equality and diversity are promoted effectively. Equality of opportunity and diversity are central to the LEA's strategy and objectives. Management arrangements give appropriate status to aspects of equality. However, not enough opportunities are taken to integrate equality and diversity with teaching programmes.

20. Arrangements to secure quality improvement are adequate. AEC has a good and detailed set of quality improvement policies and procedures, but the extent of their implementation varies throughout the provision. AEC satisfactorily collects and uses learners' views about their courses and the quality of service that they receive. The complaints procedure is detailed and thorough. The inclusive and well-established self-assessment process contributes to quality improvement, but is not thorough or consistent enough. Inspectors' grades matched most of the grades in the self-assessment report.

21. **Equality of opportunity data is not analysed and used to its full potential.** AEC has experienced problems with its management information system. Work has started to improve analysis and there are now some targets, including that of increasing the number of male learners, to focus the work of senior managers and staff.

22. **AEC's assessment of the quality of its own teaching and learning is weak.** Many lesson observation reports are descriptive and many managers are not curriculum or vocational specialists. They are unable to evaluate the specialist content of courses to judge the progress made by learners, or to provide the specialist advice necessary to help tutors improve their teaching. The proportions of good and outstanding grades awarded by the provider to lessons are considerably higher than those given by inspectors.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good governance
- good strategic planning
- very effective widening of participation through partnerships

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data to manage the curriculum
- incomplete analysis and use of equality of opportunity data
- weak assessment of the quality of teaching and learning

Health, public services and care

Strengths

- good achievement and retention on accredited courses
- good teaching
- good additional support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient curriculum planning and development

Information and communications technology

ICT for users   *Grade 3*

Strengths

- good achievement and retention on courses in basic computer literacy and examination-based qualifications in IT
- good individual tuition
- good widening of participation

Weaknesses

- poor planning for differentiation in teaching
- insufficient sharing of good practice between teaching teams
- poor data collection, recording and analysis for quality improvement

Leisure, travel and tourism

Sport, leisure and recreation   *Grade 3*

Strengths

- very good personal, social and health benefits for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient planning and monitoring of individual learning
- unsuitable accommodation for many lessons

Arts, media and publishing

Strengths

- excellent achievements in many drawing and painting lessons
- good additional support from tutors

Weaknesses

- no overall strategy to develop the curriculum
- inadequate measures to improve the quality of teaching

Languages, literature and culture

Strengths

- good achievement in most English and EFL lessons
- very good pass rates in EFL examinations
- good teaching and learning in BSL and EFL lessons
- extensive range of modern language provision

Weaknesses

- low pass rates on BSL level 2 courses
- low retention rates for entry level foreign languages programmes
- insufficient planning of teaching
- insufficient management of aspects of the curriculum

Preparation for life and work

Strengths

- good achievement on accredited programmes
- good retention on most programmes
- good range of classroom activities in ESOL
- good partnerships to meet local needs

Weaknesses

- insufficient planning to meet individual learners' needs
- insufficient feedback about spoken language in ESOL lessons
- ineffective observation of teaching and learning

Family learning

Adult and community learning   *Grade 3*

Strengths

- good achievement on intensive literacy, language and numeracy (FLLN) programmes
- good development of parenting and personal skills
- good initiatives to increase participation among disadvantaged communities

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of individual learning plans
- insufficient planning and consideration for the needs of adult learners
- insufficient programme planning

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT BEXLEY LEA:

- the speedy response to learners' initial enquiries
- the friendly, helpful and supportive tutors
- the opportunity to meet with friends
- the canteen facilities
- learning in a safe environment

WHAT LEARNERS THINK BEXLEY LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the quality of some accommodation and facilities
- the provision of some equipment, to avoid learners having to buy it
- its communications with learners
- the administration of courses - there is too much paperwork for learners to complete
- the flexibility of hours and the affordability of the crèches

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 3

Strengths

- good governance
- good strategic planning
- very effective widening of participation through partnerships

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of data to manage the curriculum
- incomplete analysis and use of equality of opportunity data
- weak assessment of the quality of teaching and learning

23. Governors are committed to, and are knowledgeable about, the work of the AEC. They have a wide variety of backgrounds and experience. Governors carry out their responsibilities expertly to determine the mission and character of the AEC and to ensure that it is managed well. They play an important role in maintaining the positive working relationships with the LEA, and in promoting and developing the work of the AEC in the local community. Links are being established between one governor and the curriculum areas. The governing body will have access to better information. Another governor, with extensive experience of adult education, is a member of the AEC's teaching, learning and assessment team.

24. The provider has a good, three-year strategic plan and planning process. The principal of the AEC drafts the plan after discussions with the governors and with the assistance of the senior management team. AEC consults its staff and each of the three student associations before the plan is submitted to the LEA. The plan meets the LSC's objectives and the AEC's priorities, clearly prioritising the provider's targets for development and continued partnership working. An executive summary of the plan is provided to tutors and a digest is included in the AEC's newsletter. The LEA is further developing its strategy for adult and community learning in which it plans to confirm its approach to commission, but not deliver, learning provision.

25. AEC has a clear management structure that is understood by all staff. The four senior managers have clearly defined responsibilities. A regular programme of meetings takes place at all levels, contributing effectively to the good internal communications. A monthly newsletter is sent to all tutors and is given to all learners. Appropriate policies and procedures support management, including those for the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language, or skills for life. This policy requires updating and development.

26. Curriculum management is satisfactory, but is not consistent throughout the AEC. For example, in some areas, managers provide good support for tutors, but in other areas the tutors feel that managers who are not subject specialists are unable to provide them with the support that they need. Managers have been hampered in their evaluation and planning by insufficient data. New management information systems have begun to

produce data which of is use to them. In some areas, there has been substantial development of courses to widen participation, but some managers have too little time for curriculum development. All curriculum teams meet formally at least once each term, but not all managers keep formal records of these meetings. Staff development and training is satisfactory. AEC encourages tutors, and makes finance available for them to attend course-related staff development. New tutors who are not qualified teachers are required to take teacher training. Appraisals, based on a two-year cycle, include the outcomes of lesson observations, a review of the tutors' course planning and records, learners' feedback and staff development needs. Tutors have not been trained to help them prepare for appraisal.

27. The management and quality of resources are satisfactory. Most staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. The quality of accommodation is generally fit for purpose. AEC has sufficient computers, computer software and other specialist resources. Health and safety is given appropriate priority.

28. Data is not used sufficiently to manage the curriculum. AEC collects data, but curriculum managers are at different stages of development in using it effectively for course management and reviews. The new computerised management information system and software, in use since the beginning of the 2004-05 session, is available to curriculum managers at each of the main sites. The system will be able to produce reports to meet each manager's requirements, but some initial problems have delayed its implementation. The new system produced some useful reports to help inspectors plan for the inspection.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

29. Equality of opportunity and diversity are central to the LEA's strategy and objectives for adult and community learning. Equality of opportunity is one of the borough's six core values. Key plans deal with many aspects of equality of opportunity, particularly in relation to the widening of participation. Management arrangements give appropriate status to equality of opportunity. AEC's development plans and its strategies to widen participation still further are fully discussed at the borough's meetings, within the context of the LEA's overall plans. Senior managers implement AEC's equal opportunities-related policies as part of the borough's overall policy framework, although there is no overall implementation strategy for AEC's policies. The learner handbook and staff handbook each make the equality of opportunity policy and commitments clear.

30. Partnerships between AEC, local community groups, organisations and agencies contribute successfully to increasing the participation of learners who would not normally involve themselves in learning. There are many initiatives to achieve this aim. The successful LSC-funded 'neighbourhood learning in deprived communities' project, now in its third year, has promoted learning within the community, to help involve the hardest-to-reach learners. Capital funding has provided new facilities for construction, hairdressing and horticulture. The learning support manager works closely with the main day centres for learners with disabilities and with travellers, and with the ageing carers of those people with disabilities. AEC's guidance activities are widened considerably through partnership. For example, it has helped to establish a local borough forum for literacy, numeracy and language skills, and is currently providing open guidance sessions for the staff of a local food catering company, who may be declared redundant. AEC has recognised that it needs to increase the proportion of male learners.

31. The borough's and AEC's equality of opportunity policies, cover all categories and provide a sound basis on which to establish equality and inclusion. AEC's overall policy is brief, but sets out associated procedures in some detail, and there are separate policies for key aspects of equality. The provider's equality and diversity committee provides a useful forum for these matters. Learners receive satisfactory information about AEC's stance on equality and diversity. Summary information is contained in the learners' handbook, although many learners do not easily recall being introduced to these matters either before or during their programmes.

32. Tutors promote equality and diversity adequately. Learners from different backgrounds, age groups and ability levels work well together in lessons. However, teaching materials and activities are not developed sufficiently to reflect the cultural resources represented by learners. There were few examples of the integration of aspects of equality and diversity in teaching. Some useful staff development takes place on aspects of equality of opportunity, but there is no planned programme of ongoing development for staff.

33. AEC meets most of its obligations under race equality and disability legislation. Preparations for meeting the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, estate adaptations, and the ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Act have been sound. Very little of the accommodation owned by the borough is not readily accessible to learners with mobility problems. Community venues are not always similarly accessible.

34. AEC's managers do not make sufficient use of data to monitor the effectiveness of their strategies, and to plan further work to promote inclusion and equality of opportunity. Equality of opportunity data is not used routinely to help frame strategic planning and development plans and there are no quantitative targets for AEC's policies. Shortfalls in the provision are identified, but not systematically enough. The provider has recently introduced targets for male enrolments and for the success rate of minority ethnic learners and for learners overall, as a part of the LSC's equality and diversity impact measures. At area of learning level, managers do not analyse or use data effectively or consistently enough in planning.

Quality improvement   **Contributory grade 3**

35. The college has a good and detailed set of quality policies and procedures, but to what extent they are implemented varies throughout the AEC. Policies and procedures are given to all staff on a CD-ROM. Associated documents outline the elements of the process and define the principles and scope of the quality improvement arrangements, to ensure continuous improvement. These documents list the responsibilities of senior managers, curriculum teams, administration teams and the quality improvement group.

36. AEC collects and uses learners' views about their courses and the quality of service that they receive. Learners are surveyed annually, complete an end-of-course evaluation and sometimes also complete a mid-course evaluation. Their views are analysed and used to improve the quality of provision. Learners are informed, through the provider's newsletter, and large poster displays, about actions taken to resolve issues for which there was less than a 70 per cent satisfaction response. Course evaluations are analysed by curriculum managers and the outcomes are used in end-of-year evaluations and in the self-assessment process.

37. The complaints procedure is detailed and thorough. A student guide advises learners what to do if they are unhappy with the provider and outlines the complaints process. A record of all complaints includes the manager responsible, the dates of letters sent and the age, gender and ethnic background of the person making the complaint. The number of complaints increased slightly last year.

38. The annual self-assessment process, carried out for the past four years, is well established and includes all staff. It contributes to quality improvement, but, as the self-assessment report identifies, is not thorough enough or consistent in its application. Each tutor completes a standard end-of-course evaluation that includes an analysis of how well learners were retained and achieved, and the tutor's own appraisal of their teaching. These evaluations vary in how thoroughly they are completed. Curriculum managers use the course evaluations, together with tutor appraisals, course data, learner surveys, and end-of-course comments to help draft the curriculum self-assessment report. Data is not used comprehensively in this process. Tutors contribute to the debate on the list of strengths and weaknesses and area grades. Inspectors' findings matched most of the grades given in the self-assessment report, but considered that the judgements were not critical enough.

39. The provider's scheme to assess the quality of its own teaching and learning is weak. The scheme aims to observe all tutors once every two years. AEC-trained assessors attend the whole lesson, give feedback to tutors and write a graded lesson report. They complete detailed lesson observation forms, but many of these are descriptive, with little evaluation. Managers who are not curriculum or vocational specialists are not able to evaluate the specialist content, to judge the progress made by learners, or to provide specialist advice to help tutors improve their teaching. The proportion of good and outstanding grades given to tutors in the AEC scheme fell to 82 per cent in 2004-05, compared with the 41 per cent of lessons judged to be good or outstanding by inspectors. As part of the LEA's commitment to improving the quality of the work of AEC, it has begun to observe 25 sessions each year. The first observations were not graded, but a report is being prepared for the next governors' meeting.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Health, public services and care   **Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Complementary health services Adult and community learning	180	2
Other subjects and vocations allied to medicine Adult and community learning	80	2
Counselling Adult and community learning	174	2
Early years Adult and community learning	70	2

40. Courses are offered in complementary therapies, counselling, pre-school practice, childminding, play-work and first aid. In 2004-05 there were 880 learners and 77 courses. So far, in 2005-06, 549 learners have enrolled, and 504 were attending classes at inspection. Seventy- nine per cent of learners are on accredited courses. These are taught at two sites and operate for between seven and 48 weeks. They include level 3 anatomy and physiology, reflexology at level 2, counselling at level 2 to 4, the certificate and diploma courses in pre-school practice, and level 2 play-work. Three levels of first aid courses and the level 1 certificate in health and safety are also offered. Non-accredited courses and 'taster days' include level 1 aromatherapy, Indian head massage and interpersonal skills development. Courses are offered in the morning, afternoon, the twilight hours and in the evening. In 2004-05, 9 per cent of learners were men and less than 1 per cent came from minority ethnic groups. All tutors are part time, the curriculum manager is part time and there is a part-time co-ordinator for childcare courses.

Strengths

- good achievement and retention on accredited courses
- good teaching
- good additional support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient curriculum planning and development

Achievement and standards

41. Achievement and retention rates on accredited courses are very good, which is a strength recognised in the self-assessment report. In 2003-04, the achievement rate for all counselling courses was 99 per cent and in 2004-05, 98 per cent of counselling learners, most of whom completed their courses, were successful. In 2003-04, all learners on the diploma and certificate pre-school courses obtained their qualifications. The results of the individual units completed by those early years learners who began in 2004-05 show a 100 per cent pass rate for the certificate and the diploma. Achievement rates for learners in complementary therapy are more varied, but are still 84 per cent overall for 2004-05. Only

one first-aid course has a pass rate of less than 100 per cent.

42. The standard of learners' written work and developing practical skills is satisfactory. Several counselling and early years learners have gained distinctions for their assignments. Many learners gain confidence and have developed important skills which will improve their employment prospects. These skills include those required for good childcare practice and the professional and safe use of complementary therapies.

The quality of provision

43. Teaching is good. Sixty-six per cent of the lessons observed were judged to be good or better, and none were inadequate. Schemes of work are comprehensive. All lessons are well planned and prepared. Many tutors prepare effective resources such as question dice, quizzes and handouts, which are tailor-made for the group and the taught subject. A few of the handouts were of a poor quality. Practical lessons include a lot of individual guidance and demonstrations, which accommodate the different learning needs of individual learners. Tutors are good at encouraging learners to share their work experiences and to exchange good practice. This was particularly effective in a lesson looking at childminding practice. Tutors use learners' experiences to skilfully develop topics and extend learning, especially in counselling, play-work and pre-school practice lessons. Tutors are aware of the different needs of individuals and teach them in ways which provide for these needs, although there are inconsistencies in the recording of the differentiation in lesson plans. All the learners interviewed were very satisfied with the teaching.

44. Additional support for learners is good. Learners who are identified or who present themselves for additional support are referred to the appropriate support departments within AEC. Support is relevant and effective. For example, two learners on childcare courses attend an ESOL lesson which incorporates childcare, where they are able to learn the specific vocabulary and basic principles of working in this area. Some tutors encourage learners to use the career profiling office where they receive help with curriculum vitae writing and other skills useful for gaining employment.

45. All tutors are well qualified and most have recent occupational experience, which they use to good effect in their teaching. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory overall.

46. Tutors provide a satisfactory level of support to learners. They all have a good rapport with their learners, who feel able to ask for extra help, or discuss any difficulties they may be experiencing. Learners like the friendly atmosphere and the helpful staff within the AEC, and look forward to their lessons. Tutors regularly monitor and keep good records of learners' progress. Initial assessment is satisfactory, although there are inconsistencies in the completion of the standard form, as noted in the self-assessment report. Where tutors have devised more extensive initial assessment routines the results are good, and are used to identify individual learning needs and goals.

47. The range of courses is satisfactory, and meets the needs of current learners. There is a progression route in counselling from level 1 in interpersonal skills, to level 4 in counselling. A range of courses is available in complementary therapies. AEC has increased the number of courses for level 3 anatomy and physiology to meet additional demand.

Leadership and management

48. Learners receive good teaching and do well in their examinations and assessments. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily by tutors. In some lessons, inspectors noted good examples of positive promotion and stimulating discussions on diversity. Quality improvement is satisfactory overall, although there is no formal procedure to ensure that internal verification or moderation takes place in a timely and planned way. Inspectors' findings matched most of the judgements in the self-assessment report, but sometimes inspectors identified additional strengths and weaknesses. The self-assessment report does not focus sufficiently on the learners' experience. Although communications between the teams teaching the same speciality have improved and regular meetings take place, records of the meetings are not sufficiently detailed and rarely have action points.

49. Some aspects of curriculum planning and development are not managed sufficiently. A coherent plan for the provision of courses throughout the borough is still being developed. Data is not used well in planning and development and insufficient research takes place to determine needs on a geographical basis, or appropriate timings. For example, five diploma courses in anatomy and physiology are all taught at one learning centre in the south of the borough. The LEA has recognised this situation and has begun to develop courses in other geographical areas. A few 'taster' and short courses are planned for 2006 in an identified geographical area of deprivation. Not enough planning and monitoring of changes to courses takes place. In one case, a long course was split into units for teaching purposes. There is not enough time for learners on this course to complete a background knowledge unit and then to complete a series of case studies. In another case, a level 4 programme, with significant additional resource needs, has not been provided with relevant books and journals and learners do not have easy access to computer facilities.

Information and communications technology   Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ICT for users		*3*
Adult and community learning	704	3

50. The LEA provides approximately 150 ICT courses each year to learners whose ages range between 14 and over 90 years. Courses range from entry level to level 3, including courses in basic computer literacy, and examination-based qualifications in IT, together with a number of short courses to meet the needs of all age groups. So far, in 2005-06, 704 learners have enrolled. Many learners progress to further courses with the AEC. Courses take place at three main sites and three community centres, together with a number of outreach centres. There are six start dates during the year. Of the learners currently on programme, 76 per cent are women. Approximately 80 per cent of learners attend during the day in a range of learning centres, and the remainder attend twilight, evening and weekend lessons. All tutors are part time. AEC is also a learndirect centre, but this aspect was not included in the inspection.

ICT for users   *Grade 3*

Strengths

- good achievement and retention on courses in basic computer literacy and examination-based qualifications in IT
- good individual tuition
- good widening of participation

Weaknesses

- poor planning for differentiation in teaching
- insufficient sharing of good practice between teaching teams
- poor data collection, recording and analysis for quality improvement

Achievement and standards

51. Learners' achievement and retention rates are good for introductory courses in basic computer literacy, computer literacy and business technology courses, and the examination-based qualifications in IT. They are particularly good for the latter. Most other courses have satisfactory results, with the exception of short, unitised courses and courses with very few guided learning hours. In the former, the retention of learners is good, but pass rates are poor.

52. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory and generally reflects the level and stage of the course for which they are enrolled. Learners enjoy their studies and are proud of their achievements and progress. Learners with no experience of using computers gain in confidence and improve their ICT skills which they use at home and at work. Many older learners use their newly acquired skills to work with their grandchildren on school projects, and to keep in touch with widely dispersed family.

The quality of provision

53. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The best lessons are well planned. Tutors make good use of information and learning technology when available and give good individual tuition. In these lessons, tutors provide a very good level of support, they monitor their learners' progress closely, and give good explanations and guidance. Learners' responses are encouraged and valued and there is a spirit of mutual support between learners. Handouts are generally of good quality and easy to follow. Progress is monitored appropriately by tutors, and learners complete a checklist of their progress against weekly objectives. Tutors usually provide constructive criticism in their marking of written work, to encourage learners to produce work of a higher standard.

54. In a few lessons, individual learning needs are met very well. For example, in several lessons a series of graded exercises was used effectively to consolidate learning and to provide extension tasks for the quicker learners. In a good introductory lesson for learners with additional needs, a high level of priority was given to building learners' self-esteem, and quiet, relaxing background music was played. In one lesson a tutor displayed a very good level of patience and support for a learner with a specific medical condition.

55. Successful work has widened participation by people who would not normally be involved in learning. This strength was noted in the self-assessment report. The range of courses and times, together with the number of venues, has increased. Lifelong learning programmes in libraries, neighbourhood learning initiatives in deprived communities and free 'taster' courses have attracted new learners. Learners readily transfer between taught programmes and the AEC's successful learndirect provision. Consultation takes place with other departments, and with outside agencies that provide IT training, to ensure that programmes are agreed with learners in a spirit of co-operation rather than competition. Community venues are accessible and very safe with good security and parking facilities.

56. All tutors have appropriate experience or qualifications and most have at least a level 3 or 4 teaching qualification. A rolling programme of computer replacement has ensured that many computer rooms are equipped with modern computers and the latest versions of software. There are not enough data projectors or other devices to display images. In some outreach centres, ageing computers, with slow internet connections, severely slow down the pace of learning. The small number of computers available in libraries limits course numbers. There are long waiting lists.

57. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. On joining a course, all learners assess their existing skills and knowledge. Those learners with learning difficulties are given a thorough test to identify the most appropriate course for them and the additional support is appropriate. Induction is systematic and there are good examples of individual learning plans, which are completed regularly and updated with learners' progress. Support for individual learners in lessons is good. Learning support assistants are allocated to those learners' with identified needs. Special technological aids are available for learners with physical impairments.

58. Overall, there is not enough planning for differentiation in teaching. Some standardised lesson plans are badly written, with unclear objectives. Extension activities are seldom available for the more able learners. Most learners progress at the pace dictated by the tutor. In the poorer lessons, planning is sketchy and the information gathered at initial

assessment is not used to plan lessons. The pace of learning is slow and tutors do not make sufficient use of directed questioning to involve the more passive learners, or to check understanding. Tutors are not always clear whether a learner has reached the level of competence required for a planned assessment. Techniques are not always demonstrated and learners sometimes become confused.

Leadership and management

59. As the self-assessment report indicates, curriculum planning is good and resources are now much improved. Two separate departments provide ICT courses. Tutors in each department have a good team spirit and they often work well together to improve courses. Quality audits, learners' evaluations and course evaluations are completed and contribute to the self- assessment report. In many respects, the judgements in the self-assessment report match inspectors' findings and it is a serious attempt to identify the department's strengths and weaknesses. Strategies have been developed to resolve the weaknesses. All tutors' teaching is observed annually, but the grades given internally are far higher than those given by inspectors.

60. Equality and diversity are promoted strongly throughout the area of learning in the development of new courses, particularly in areas where some parts of the community are under-represented in education. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily in lessons.

61. There are no systematic arrangements for the sharing of good practice. Although the two managers meet regularly, the two teams of tutors have no opportunities for organised discussions of the curriculum. Staff development is used only to help in the preparation of new courses and has not been used for the development of lesson-planning and teaching skills.

62. The recording, monitoring and analysis of learners' data about achievement, retention, progression and attendance rates are inadequate. Although there is a thorough analysis of data concerning the pass rates of minority ethnic learners, no judgements are made about retention, pass or success rates in course evaluations, or in the self-assessment report. Individually, tutors record learners' progress on accredited courses, but these results are not held centrally to allow the curriculum manager to monitor them. Achievements are not recorded for many of the non-accredited courses.

Leisure, travel and tourism   Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Sport, leisure and recreation		*3*
Adult and community learning	778	3

63. Sport and leisure programmes represent approximately 9 per cent of the LEA's provision. To date in 2005-06, 778 learners have enrolled on courses which include yoga, tai chi, Pilates, keep fit, medau, badminton and short-mat bowls. At the time of inspection, 668 learners were attending 36 courses. None of the provision is accredited. Most courses recruit on a yearly basis and last for 28 or 34 weeks. Thirteen per cent of the learners are men. Two per cent of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Ten learners have a declared disability or learning difficulty. Seventeen per cent of learners are new. Forty-nine per cent of learners receive reduced course fees. Courses take place at the three main college sites and in three other community venues. Twenty-two part-time tutors work for between one and seven and a half hours each week and are managed by the curriculum manager.

Sport, leisure and recreation   *Grade 3*

Strengths

- very good personal, social and health benefits for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient planning and monitoring of individual learning
- unsuitable accommodation for many lessons

Achievement and standards

64. Personal, social and health benefits for learners are very good. They are very enthusiastic about the significant differences made to their lives by attending exercise classes. They benefit from increased mobility, stamina, flexibility, co-ordination and balance. Some learners report significant relief from medical conditions such as back and joint problems and improved recuperation following a stroke or surgery.

65. Older learners in particular benefit from the mental stimulation and the improvements to their memory skills by learning extended, and sometimes complex, sequences, particularly in tai chi and keep fit. Learners gain greater confidence, a sense of well-being and develop a more positive outlook on life. Their ability to perform everyday tasks involving bending, stretching and walking is improved. New learners joining courses find that the welcoming and supportive atmosphere helps them to settle easily into the group and to make new friends.

66. Learners' performances in lessons are satisfactory or better. They develop body awareness and demonstrate understanding and practical application of safe exercise practices. Retention and attendance rates are satisfactory overall, although in some lessons attendance levels are low. Appropriate procedures are in place to follow up

non-attendance. Most learners arrive punctually for lessons.

The quality of provision

67. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The pace and structure of lessons are appropriate, with a satisfactory range of activities. Demonstrations by tutors are at least adequate, but the tutors are not always positioned well enough to ensure that all learners are able to observe the exercises. Explanations of technical terms are appropriate and learners are adequately informed about the benefits of particular exercises. Tutors provide some good individual advice and feedback to help learners improve their techniques. Adaptations are suggested, but these are not always individualised sufficiently to meet learners' needs. In the better lessons, learners receive particularly good individual attention from tutors who are well aware of learners' needs.

68. Tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced within their disciplines, although not all have teaching qualifications and their professional development is not checked sufficiently.

69. The range of programmes is adequate to meet the needs of learners. A significant proportion of learners are elderly. Seventy per cent of the courses are designed to meet their needs. Progression opportunities are available in yoga, tai chi and Pilates. In response to demand, the LEA provides some short continuation courses in the summer to allow learners to continue exercising regularly. Taster courses are offered in tai chi and Pilates. Forty per cent of learners who participated in taster sessions subsequently enrolled on full courses. Learners in one keep fit class also develop the social aspects of learning by taking part in displays.

70. Pre-course information is satisfactory. The prospectus provides adequate basic information for learners and includes a brief summary of course content and progression opportunities. Potential learners are able to contact the curriculum manager to receive more specific advice and guidance. Support for learners is satisfactory. Learners who have identified additional support needs are appropriately supported in mainstream lessons. For example, a visually impaired learner is able to fully participate in a keep fit class with support from the tutor and other learners. Arrangements are made to support learners who identify numeracy, literacy or language development needs and tutors have adequate information about how to refer learners for skills for life support.

71. There is insufficient planning and monitoring of individual learning. All learners complete a health screening questionnaire, but the information is not used enough in lesson planning to meet individual needs. Learners also complete a generic initial assessment form, but this is not subject-specific and tutors do not have sufficient information about learners' fitness and skills levels, or their prior experience in any related physical activity. The use of individual learning plans is still being developed and the setting and monitoring of individual targets are not effective enough. Group learning outcomes are identified, but these are often too general. Not enough individual learning goals are identified and these are also too generalised to be a useful measurement of achievement. However, in a few lessons, tutors are beginning to help learners to identify clearer personal targets. In these cases, learners' experiences are improved and their achievements and progress are monitored more effectively.

72. Accommodation is unsuitable for many lessons, as recognised in the self-assessment

report. In two of the three main sites, linoleum-covered concrete floors are cold and inappropriate for exercise lessons, particularly for mat work. In the same two venues, there is insufficient wall space for learners to use to help their balance, particularly in yoga lessons and they sometimes lean against windows. Temperature control is inadequate in the rooms. Some learners work in draughts while others are too hot when working close to heaters. The large number of single-glazed windows makes the rooms cold and learners are in public view. The flooring is slippery and is a potential hazard when learners use chairs to support balances and postures. No changing facilities are available. However, the LEA balances the poor accommodation against the need to provide courses to meet demand. No alternative, suitable accommodation is currently available, despite much effort by the provider to find alternative venues.

Leadership and management

73. Although there is no formal strategic plan, curriculum development is satisfactory. The results of course monitoring, feedback from tutors and learners, and course enquiries are used adequately to review and plan the curriculum, although the data and targets are not used sufficiently. The curriculum manager has a fractional contract and a wide range of responsibilities. Time available to develop the curriculum is very restricted. Nevertheless, a new golf programme is to be introduced in the north of the borough next year, in partnership with a golf club. Regular meetings are held with the neighbourhood learning manager who works closely with community groups. A new football leaders' course is just starting, in conjunction with a local premier football club, and the course has attracted substantial demand. Planning is in the early stages of development for a variety of other courses aimed to attract new learners and to increase the participation of men and people with disabilities. There is still not enough planning to attract learners from minority ethnic backgrounds. Insufficient use is made of data and targets related to equality of opportunity.

74. Internal communications are satisfactory. Tutors' meetings are held at least twice each year and tutors receive newsletters. Attendance levels at some tutor's meetings are low, but all tutors are provided with minutes of the meetings. Tutors receive some good support, through appraisals and class visits, but their performances are not monitored sufficiently. No clear links have been established between recommendations made in lesson observations and tutors' appraisals. Few training needs have been identified and these situations are not monitored systematically. Few staff have attended training related to equality of opportunity and diversity.

75. The internal scheme of lesson observations is helpful, but has not been developed sufficiently to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Not enough opportunities are created to share good practice. The self-assessment process includes all relevant stakeholders and makes appropriate use of learners' feedback. The self-assessment reports' findings match those of inspectors in recognising the weaknesses identified during inspection, but too much normal practice was identified as strength of provision.

76. Satisfactory risk assessments of activities, by trained subject specialists, have been introduced. However, these are generic to the particular discipline and do not take full account of the accommodation and equipment, and the information collected from the learners' profiles.

Arts, media and publishing   Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Dance Adult and community learning	274	3
Music Adult and community learning	102	3
Fine arts Adult and community learning	552	3
Crafts Adult and community learning	786	3
Media and communication Adult and community learning	48	3

77. A range of arts, crafts, music and dance courses is offered in three main learning centres and in three smaller venues throughout the borough. The courses take place during the day, in the evenings, and on some Saturdays. The duration of courses lasts from one day to 32 weeks. At the time of inspection, there were 1,818 enrolments on 99 courses, constituting 23 per cent of total enrolments. Currently, there are 1,762 learners attending classes. Subjects covered include drawing and painting, life drawing, stained glass, silversmithing and jewellery, pottery, bookbinding, ballroom and Latin American dance, Egyptian dance, piano and guitar playing and choristry. Accreditation is offered in three of the courses, but most courses are not accredited. In 2004-05, 78 per cent of learners were women, 3 per cent were under 25 years of age and 41 per cent were over 65 years. There is one full-time curriculum manager, who is responsible for 55 part-time tutors and four learner support staff.

Strengths

- excellent achievements in many drawing and painting lessons
- good additional support from tutors

Weaknesses

- no overall strategy to develop the curriculum
- inadequate measures to improve the quality of teaching

Achievement and standards

78. In many drawing and painting lessons, learners' work shows excellent innovation and experimentation. They develop the ability to work successfully with a range of materials to create art works which show an understanding of composition and perspective. Learners work to a large scale, using bold brushwork. Some of them sell their work and receive commissions.

79. In crafts lessons, learners have a good understanding of the skills necessary to make work of quality, and some learners use good experimental and creative design solutions. In one jewellery lesson, for example, excellent use was made of the drop-casting method in

gold and silver to make pendants and brooches of professional design quality. In a bookbinding class the standard of traditional craftsmanship was exemplary. In all crafts classes, learners produce work to a satisfactory level of design. Dancers develop the ability and confidence to dance to a realistic tempo and to demonstrate satisfactory posture. The performance skills they acquire are adequate for them to continue the courses and to meet their creative goals of performing with confidence and attending social dances.

80. Overall, learners are well motivated, with good listening skills and good attendance records. Learners improve their personal development by taking part in organised outings to crafts centres and exhibitions. AEC's data indicates that a significant number of learners achieve their goals. Overall achievements on non-accredited courses reached 78 per cent in 2004-05, although the achievement level was only 44 per cent for the very small number of accredited courses.

The quality of provision

81. Tutors provide good additional support for learners. Tutors use a range of measures to help with learners' personal development and help them to achieve very good standards of creative work. Learners with disabilities are fully supported to achieve good standards of work, and tutors create alternative approaches to learning to help these learners to stay in mainstream classes. Tutors assume a strong pastoral role, helping older learners to organise their paperwork, reminding learners with short-term memories to come to planned performances and telephoning to ensure that learners attend lessons. Tutors share their own materials and help learners to contact other groups and suppliers. Study-related social events are organised in most lessons. One tutor researches current art exhibitions and collates slides and brochures for learners who are unable to make personal visits.

82. Standards of teaching and learning are largely satisfactory, and a significant minority of lessons are good or better. In the best drawing and painting lessons, tutors use a wide range of teaching strategies. In one lesson, for example, a data projector presentation of the Rubens exhibition at the Royal Academy was followed by observation and painting of an exciting and challenging still-life group, a revision demonstration of tonal values and a final group critique of all learners' work. In dance lessons, tutors give intensive individual feedback and provide very good practical demonstrations. Crafts lessons are sometimes well planned and use clear handouts which give learners good reference points and allow them to continue without waiting for the tutor.

83. Tutors are suitably qualified. Many have good industry experience which they use to motivate the learners. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. Learners in pottery and jewellery lessons have particularly good accommodation, but some of the classrooms and resources are unsatisfactory, as noted in the self-assessment report. For example, there no mirrors in the main dance hall, and dance tutors are forced to shout over the music where no vocal microphones are provided. Some of the arts workshops are crowded, with insufficient storage and drying space. Some other environments are uninspiring for performance-based subjects.

84. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory. Tutors work closely and positively with learners at all stages of their programmes, although many tutors do not give formative feedback and use only brief verbal comments to tell learners of their progress. Initial and summative assessments have been introduced, but are not fully implemented by all tutors, as recognised in the self-assessment report.

85. In many lessons, learners are not challenged sufficiently to go beyond their normal expectations and methods of working. Too much of the work in arts groups, for example, consists of copying and reproducing images, without innovation and experiment. Not enough attention is given to varying the content of lessons, dependent upon the various needs of learners. Many lessons do not use ICT as a teaching aid, or for learning, or recording progress.

Leadership and management

86. Managers and tutors work hard to overcome the difficulties of communication with such a large group of casual, part-time tutors. Learners' achievements are often good and they are provided with often innovative additional support.

87. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily in relation to learners with learning disabilities, but equality and diversity are not promoted through the curriculum offer or course content. Learners show little awareness of arts and crafts from broader cultural backgrounds.

88. There is no overall strategy for the coherent development of the curriculum. There are few opportunities for progression within a subject and there is a significant trend towards re-enrolment and very large numbers in many lessons. Course development relies on informal tutors' and learners' preferences, with little formal market research. It is not clear why certain courses have ceased and why others have changed their location. Initiatives to expand the curriculum and diversify the curriculum by, for example, targeting younger learners and men, have not yet been successful. Taster courses in painting and crafts do succeed in recruiting learners to longer courses. The AEC offers very limited opportunities for accreditation.

89. Arrangements to improve the quality of teaching are inadequate. Teaching observations are not carried out by curriculum specialists and post-observation feedback does not contain adequate detail to resolve subject-specific issues, or to promote better teaching. The grade profiles from the AEC's teaching and learning assessments are considerably higher than those given by inspectors. Some tutors have not received an observation within the past year. The self-assessment report does not recognise some good aspects of the provision and does not identify some major weaknesses. It is not critical enough.

Languages, literature and culture   **Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Language, literature and culture of the British Isles		
Adult and community learning	200	3
EFL		
Adult and community learning	75	3
Other languages, literature and culture		
Adult and community learning	950	3

90. The LEA provides 85 classes in 11 languages, including BSL and 12 classes in EFL. Since September 2005 there have been 1,390 enrolments and, during the week of the inspection, there were 1,225 learners. Most language classes are in Spanish and French. All languages are offered at beginners' level, except Latin, and most are also available at intermediate level with French, German, Italian and Spanish at advanced level. Sixty-six per cent of language classes and 83 per cent of English classes lead to qualifications. Classes are held at seven venues, mainly adult education centres and schools, but also a youth and family centre. They take place in the morning, afternoons and evenings, and there are seven language classes at two learning centres on Saturday mornings. Lessons are mostly of two hours' duration each week, lasting from 26 to 28 weeks. In 2004-05, 62 per cent of learners were aged between 35 and 65 years, and 67 per cent of learners were women. Four part-time curriculum managers are responsible for the programmes. AEC employs 54 part-time tutors.

Strengths

- good achievement in most English and EFL lessons
- very good pass rates in EFL examinations
- good teaching and learning in BSL and EFL lessons
- extensive range of modern language provision

Weaknesses

- low pass rates on BSL level 2 courses
- low retention rates for entry level foreign languages programmes
- insufficient planning of teaching
- insufficient management of aspects of the curriculum

Achievement and standards

91. Learners' achievements and standards of attainment are satisfactory overall. In most English and EFL lessons learners are set challenging tasks and attain a standard that is above the norm in relation to their prior achievements. Learners in EFL lessons make good progress and achieve very good pass rates in their external examinations. Learners make satisfactory progress in most modern foreign languages and on BSL courses at level 1. In the former, standards of learners' attainment are satisfactory at level 1 and above, but not so good at beginners' level.

92. Learners' achievements in English examinations are satisfactory or better. In 2004-05 pass rates for general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) in AS and A2 English literature were 71 per cent and 82 per cent, respectively. For GCSEs at A2 level in particular, there is an improving trend in retention and pass rates, and very good standards are maintained. Although there is a downward trend in the pass rates for GCSE English, they are still satisfactory and retention is improving.

93. Learners' retention at entry level in modern foreign languages is unsatisfactory. In 2004-05 only 26 per cent of learners on non-accredited courses, and 45 per cent of those on accredited courses were retained. Pass rates for the BSL at level 2 are very low, with only 17 per cent and 26 per cent pass rates for 2004 and 2005, respectively.

94. Learners enjoy their studies and improve their communications and social skills. They value the opportunity to meet with others and to share their experiences in using their newly acquired skills, especially in modern foreign languages.

The quality of provision

95. Standards of teaching and learning are good in EFL and BSL and satisfactory for English and modern foreign languages. In the better lessons, planning is good and lessons are managed and delivered effectively. Tutors use appropriate teaching strategies. In one outstanding EFL lesson the tutor skilfully used a variety of materials, including a song, to increase understanding of emphasis and tone. In BSL, placement and location are clearly explained so that learners can fully explore new signs in context, in order to achieve a good standard of signing skills. Most learners use the signing skills effectively to tell stories and are confident in the use of finger spelling and non-manual features. In modern foreign languages, there are some imaginative activities to enable learners to practise new vocabulary. For example, in one lesson for beginners the tutor used a torch beam, which was projected to various areas of the room in order to practise words indicating place.

96. The range of modern foreign language provision and the number of separate classes is particularly extensive. Eleven languages are offered at beginner and intermediate levels, with many opportunities for progression in small stages. Courses are distributed throughout the borough and almost 50 per cent take place during the day. In some cases the courses are free of charge to encourage participation by learners who would not normally be involved in learning. There are short courses, courses to brush up rusty language skills, and an 'early riser' course at 0700 each Monday to cater for learner demand.

97. Tutors are appropriately qualified. All have relevant degrees and most have teaching qualifications. Accommodation is adequate. Access to ICT in the teaching rooms is restricted at all the sites. There is not enough teaching equipment, the electrical equipment is of poor quality, and materials are mainly paper-based. Tutors find it difficult to obtain photocopying facilities when they need them to support their teaching.

98. Support for learners is satisfactory. A clear and informative brochure helps learners to choose a suitable class. Where a course is unavailable, learners are told of courses which are available elsewhere. In languages, useful course leaflets indicate the topics to be covered in lessons, and many courses have an initial guidance lesson. Learners are well supported in lessons. Additional learning needs are provided for satisfactorily. Inspectors

agreed with the self-assessment report's conclusion that tutors know their learners well. In one lesson, which included a group of vulnerable young people, the tutor integrated literacy support at an appropriate level and in an outstanding manner. Some tutors arrange visits, some of which are to other countries. Learners are consulted about their progression needs, although formal feedback is usually only collected towards the end of the course. All tutors set regular homework and this is returned to learners promptly, with helpful comments. On accredited courses, assessment is carried out in accordance with the requirements of the examining body.

99. In weaker lessons, teaching is not planned sufficiently. Tutors do not provide activities that are sufficiently differentiated to take into account learners' variations in levels of ability, learning styles and prior experience. At beginners' levels in foreign languages, tutors use too much English when giving simple instructions and praise. They rely on translation into English to convey meaning, with very little use of pictures or mime. Learners in these lessons have few opportunities to develop their listening and speaking skills. In English lessons, individual learning plans are not completed consistently. In poorer lessons, activities are focused on the tutor with insufficient pair or group work. Teaching materials are not varied enough and are mainly paper-based. Photocopied exercises are often of poor quality. There was no use of ICT in the lessons observed by inspectors.

Leadership and management

100. Communications and support for tutors are good and they value the support provided by the curriculum managers. In modern foreign languages there are termly team meetings, although not all tutors attend. In BSL the team meets informally if the need arises, but there are no formal meetings to share good practice.

101. Quality assurance is satisfactory overall. In English and EFL a system to moderate standards is being developed. Tutors' self-evaluation contributes to the self-assessment report and development plans. The system for the observation of teaching and learning achieves a balance between specialist and non-specialist observations. The grades given by the AEC's observers are higher than those given by inspectors and present an overly positive view of the quality of teaching. There have been no lesson observations or appraisals of BSL tutors since 2001. The judgements in the self-assessment reports for English and EFL have a close correlation with the inspection findings. In languages, the grades correlate with inspectors' findings but there is little agreement in terms of the specific strengths and weaknesses.

102. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily by tutors and managers. The wide range of courses throughout the borough, encourages learners from all backgrounds and learners' diverse life experiences are welcomed.

103. Four distinct curriculum teams manage this area of learning and they have little formal contact with each other. As the self-assessment report recognises, there is insufficient sharing of good practice between the separately managed areas. There are no formal mechanisms for cross-curricular links between English and the skills for life area, although there are informal links between EFL and ESOL tutors. Tutors are provided with opportunities for continuous professional development through a regular schedule of meetings. However, these opportunities are not taken up by all staff. In modern foreign languages, weaknesses highlighted through the observation of teaching and learning are not always used as a basis for continuous professional development.

104. AEC's management information system is relatively new. Managers have had some basic training and further training is planned, but currently data is not used effectively for planning, monitoring and quality improvement. AEC does not have a system for monitoring learners' progress relative to their different starting points, although some monitoring is done through course objectives.

Preparation for life and work   **Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL		
Adult and community learning	465	3
Literacy and numeracy		
Adult and community learning	400	3
Independent living and leisure skills		
Adult and community learning	97	3

105. The LEA provides courses for adults with literacy and numeracy needs, for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and for those learners studying ESOL. The provisions for literacy and numeracy and for ESOL, each of a similar size, constitute approximately 90 per cent of the total provision. At the time of inspection there were 1,081 enrolments, representing 962 learners. Most of the courses take place during the day, although just over 25 per cent of the provision is during the evening. There are 126 courses in 12 learning centres throughout the borough.

106. Literacy and numeracy courses range from pre-entry level through to level 3, with optional accreditation. National tests at level 1 and 2 are also available. The ESOL provision ranges from entry level 1 to level 2. It consists of general English language classes which are offered for between four and eight hours each week over 32 weeks, intensive courses of 15 hours each week and short courses on topics such as advanced speaking, childcare and ICT. Courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities include a range of pottery, exercise and leisure activities, basic education, independent living, and communication skills. Most of these are at pre-entry level, although some are at a higher level and are largely accredited.

107. Three full-time curriculum managers manage 66 tutors, 22 learning support assistants and over 30 volunteers. Over 50 per cent of the tutors work for only two hours each week. Almost all the lessons for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or those with mental health concerns, have a learning a support assistant working alongside the tutor.

Strengths

- good achievement on accredited programmes
- good retention on most programmes
- good range of classroom activities in ESOL
- good partnerships to meet local needs

Weaknesses

- insufficient planning to meet individual learners' needs
- insufficient feedback about spoken language in ESOL lessons
- ineffective observation of teaching and learning

Achievement and standards

108. Inspectors agreed with the self-assessment report that learners' achievements on accredited courses are good throughout the range of programmes. Achievements on accredited pre-entry courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very good, with 96 per cent of learners gaining their target qualifications.

109. The retention rate on most courses is good. On courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, retention is very good, at 95 per cent, and on literacy courses it is 79 per cent. For ESOL courses, retention increased from 67 to 70 per cent during 2004-05. Very few people who begin courses drop out before the end of the programme. Attendance is satisfactory, with averages in excess of 80 per cent over the three areas of learning.

110. The achievement of skills for life accreditation is satisfactory. Fifty per cent of ESOL learners in 2004-05 entered for one or more of the available examinations and 77 per cent gained certification. Learners at level 1 and 2 did particularly well in their examinations.

111. All learners make satisfactory progress. On courses aimed at the development of literacy and numeracy, learners make good progress with their speaking and listening skills, as well as gaining in confidence and self-esteem. One learner in numeracy improved her mathematics skills and level of confidence, and successfully applied for a position as a classroom assistant in a local primary school.

The quality of provision

112. Imaginative and interesting activities in ESOL lessons generate many opportunities for speaking. They allow the learners to practise their speaking skills by working in pairs and in small groups, as well as whole-group sessions. For example, in one lesson, learners learnt how to produce an overhead transparency describing their learning. They used this as the basis for a presentation to the whole group. Computers are used well in one learning centre to teach learners new skills in English, as well as word-processing. Learners in ESOL do not receive sufficient feedback about their spoken language, in particular their pronunciation of English words, stress and intonation patterns, and their use of grammar.

113. The courses are planned well to meet the needs of specific groups of learners. AEC works closely with local statutory and community groups to identify the needs of particular groups. For example, a group of mature learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whose elderly parents and carers may not be able to continue caring for them, are gaining significant benefits from a course which prepares them for transitions in their care arrangements.

114. Support for learners is well managed, and is provided effectively by learning support assistants and volunteers. They enable learners to concentrate on the task, provide physical and verbal prompts and help to maintain the pace of activities. Many of the lessons for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also include a large number of adult care workers who accompany learners to courses from their residential homes. The quality of additional support they give varies significantly. There are no general guidelines for them and many are unclear about their roles within the lessons. Effective support is available for learners with additional needs. In one literacy class a learner with a profound hearing loss

was provided with specialist lip-reading support. ESOL learners are well supported inside and outside of the classroom. They receive appropriate advice on course options and are counselled on the choice of accreditation available to them. However, the tutors do not have enough time to offer individual tutorials and progress reviews.

115. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Inspectors observed only one lesson that they judged to be inadequate, but only 32 per cent of lessons were graded good or better. The quality of schemes of work varies in the level of detail. In literacy and numeracy, schemes of work often show details of how the course will be adapted to meet the individual needs and interests of learners, and such detail is also reflected in the level of planning for individual sessions. Tutors incorporate the individual starting points of learners into their individual learning plans, schemes of work and lesson planning. The pace of most lessons is challenging, and tutors provide a varied range of interesting activities. Literacy and numeracy skills are often successfully included as a natural part of leisure activities. In a handbell lesson for older learners with severe learning difficulties, the tutor used the notation associated with the number of beats in a bar to reinforce pre-entry level numeracy skills.

116. Tutors and learning support assistants are appropriately qualified and experienced. Most learning venues are fit for purpose and the accommodation for literacy and numeracy lessons is good. Some of the rooms used for learner support are cramped, with unreliable heating facilities and no access for wheelchair users.

117. There is a good range of courses at learning venues throughout the borough, although there is not enough ESOL provision in the northeast of the area. Most courses are accredited, although 33 per cent of the courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are non-accredited leisure courses.

118. Many lessons are not planned sufficiently to meet learners' individual needs and abilities. The individual starting points of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not identified sufficiently and individual learning plans do not provide sufficient opportunities for learners to identify their own learning goals, or to set and review achievable targets. The assessment of ESOL learners' language skills is satisfactory. There is a procedure and materials for initial and diagnostic assessments, which some tutors use well to plan meaningful, language-specific targets. However, the targets set by many tutors are not explicit enough and records of progress reviews do not have sufficient information about learners' progress in language learning. In all three areas, the end-of-course review form is used well to record achievements and attainments.

Leadership and management

119. The LEA maintains effective partnership arrangements with a wide range of statutory bodies, local schools, community groups and voluntary organisations. The curriculum managers meet regularly with other organisations throughout the borough to discuss the broad range of services on offer, and opportunities for collaboration. These opportunities include working with a local charity for blind people to establish a reception skills course, and more specialised training for particular learners. This strength is noted in the self-assessment report.

120. Communications with staff are satisfactory and are achieved through regular staff meetings. The AEC offers effective support to all staff, who speak very well of the prompt

and effective support that they receive from curriculum managers. Staff have regular opportunities for continuing professional development. However, there are not enough opportunities to share good practice, or to reflect on common themes in this curriculum area.

121. The area of learning actively promotes diversity through its range of courses. However, not enough opportunities are taken by tutors to promote equality of opportunity to such a diverse group of learners.

122. The arrangements for self-assessment are satisfactory, with staff making an appropriate contribution. The development plan that accompanies the self-assessment report is reviewed regularly. The judgements on strengths and weaknesses made in the most recent report are broadly similar to those made by inspectors. To support the quality assurance of classroom practice, a small number of tutors have been appointed as senior tutors who support the curriculum managers in monitoring planning and record-keeping on a regular basis. There is also a significant commitment to continuing professional development.

123. The observation of teaching and learning is not thorough enough and most observations are carried out by staff from other learning areas. The grades given for lesson observations are much higher than those given by inspectors. Feedback is not evaluative enough and action points are rarely specific enough to promote improvements.

Family learning   **Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Adult and community learning		*3*
Adult and community learning	193	3

124. Bexley LEA offers FLLN and wider family learning (WFL) programmes. This provision is part of lifelong learning. Courses are offered during the day and in the evening mostly in infant, junior and primary schools, but also in community centres and a library. Family learning workshops are also offered as part of family learning week. The FLLN provision includes intensive family literacy and numeracy and 'keeping up with the children' courses. Accreditation is offered to adults following intensive family literacy and numeracy courses at entry level 3 and at level 1 and 2. The WFL programme includes a summer programme of taster workshops, parenting courses, crafts and multi-sensory computer courses for learners with spelling, reading or writing difficulties.

125. At the time of the inspection, four intensive FLLN courses, nine 'keeping up with the children' courses and 12 WFL courses were offered. Courses range from nine to 72 hours in length. Learners are recruited through schools and by word of mouth. There are 126 learners on FLLN courses and 67 on WFL programmes. In 2004-05, 157 learners enrolled on WFL courses, and 399 learners took part in activities during family learning week. In 2004-05, 394 learners enrolled on FLLN courses, of whom 3 per cent were male learners and 19 per cent were from minority ethnic groups. The WFL provision is managed by a part-time family learning co-ordinator. Twelve part-time tutors teach on the programmes. The FLLN provision is managed by a part-time senior tutor who is supported by a part-time outreach worker. Eight part-time tutors teach on the FLLN programmes.

Adult and community learning   *Grade 3*

Strengths

- good achievement on intensive literacy, language and numeracy (FLLN) programmes
- good development of parenting and personal skills
- good initiatives to increase participation among disadvantaged communities

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of individual learning plans
- insufficient planning and consideration for the needs of adult learners
- insufficient programme planning

Achievement and standards

126. In 2004-05 the achievement rate of external accreditation was good on intensive FLLN programmes. Seventy per cent of the learners were entered for the national tests in literacy or numeracy at level 1 or 2, or the certificate at entry level 3. All those who were entered, achieved the qualification. The standard of learners' work on 'keeping up with the children' courses is good. The retention rate is satisfactory. In 2004-05, the retention rate

was 70 per cent.

127. Learners develop good parenting and personal skills. They discover the enjoyment in learning and the importance of play in the education of young children. Parents and carers gain confidence in talking to tutors and in supporting their children's development. They also increase their understanding of how children learn, and of the teaching approaches and the specialist language used by tutors and children to talk about literacy and numeracy in school. Parents are able to apply their acquired skills at home and are better able to support their children's learning. For example, parents with babies and toddlers learn how to use books and games creatively to support the early development of language. Parents on parenting programmes develop techniques and the confidence to communicate with their teenage children in non-confrontational ways. They also gain greater awareness of the difficulties that young people face. Many learners gain confidence and social benefits by working with other adults and children in family learning programmes.

The quality of provision

128. Recent initiatives to target priority groups in disadvantaged communities have been successful in increasing participation. Learners are able to attend courses in community centres which are within walking distance of their homes and which provide crèche facilities. Parents who have had negative experiences of education are joining classes for the first time since leaving school. Many learners gain the confidence and the motivation to take part in other learning opportunities. A family learning outreach worker is developing productive links with learning mentors in schools in the north of the borough to promote family learning. A programme of taster workshops is successfully stimulating parental interest and two 'keeping up with the children' courses have been developed.

129. Most teaching is at least satisfactory, but teaching in some WFL lessons is inadequate. The teaching on 'keeping up with the children' courses is good. On these courses, tutors plan the lessons well, building on learners' prior knowledge and skills and encouraging their participation in the lessons. Learning materials and handouts are well presented. Tutors provide very clear explanations of learning methods in schools, and the national curriculum. There is a lot of co-operative working in classes and support from the tutor and other learners.

130. Resources are generally satisfactory. Most of the locations are suitable for lessons for adults. Risk assessments are carried out by the provider when using new premises. There are good computer facilities at one community centre, but ICT is not used sufficiently in lessons. A good range of arts and crafts resources is provided for WFL. Learners appreciate learning how simple everyday items can be used to support learning, and use similar items at home. Tutors attend regular staff development sessions. Most tutors are appropriately qualified, or are registered to gain specialist qualifications.

131. Support and guidance are satisfactory. Tutors are supportive of learners and sensitive to their needs. Relationships between learners and tutors are good. Information, advice and guidance are offered on all courses, by specialist guidance workers. Tutors have good links with the guidance workers and refer learners to them for information and advice. Crèche facilities are restricted, but the crèches that are provided are of a satisfactory quality and much valued by learners.

132. Individual learning plans are not used effectively. Many are not completed or

updated to show learners' progress, and they are not used as working documents by learners and tutors. On most family learning programmes, learners complete an initial self-assessment of their skills and preferred learning styles. However, this information is not used as a basis for individual learning plans. The wording in the plans is standardised and relates to the course content and the achievement of course objectives. The plans do not reflect the personal learning goals and needs of individual learners adequately, and are not sufficiently detailed or specific enough to enable learners to monitor and evaluate their progress.

133. Insufficient attention is given to meeting the needs of adults in some of the WFL provision. On these courses, the focus is primarily on supporting the child with their learning, and learners and tutors are unclear about the expected learning outcomes for adults. Parents and carers are not supported with learning models to use with their children at home, and there are few links to home literacy and numeracy activities. For example, the multi-sensory computer classes that form part of the family learning provision do not follow a family learning curriculum, and are not designed to enable adults and children to adopt joint learning activities. Some adult learners accompany their children, but do not participate in the lessons.

Leadership and management

134. The daily management of WFL and FLLN programmes is satisfactory. Communications between the family learning co-ordinators and tutors are good, and tutors understand the roles and responsibilities of members of the team. The staff are well supported and are offered regular opportunities for staff development. Paperwork has been standardised and is used in a consistent fashion. However, the strategic direction for the development of family learning programmes is weak. There is no clear strategy or action plan for family learning in order to help managers decide on priorities for development. Insufficient planning takes place to ensure that family learning is targeted consistently on the areas of greatest need. There is not enough forward planning to ensure that new developments can be sustained, and that accessible progression opportunities are developed for learners.

135. Equality of opportunity is promoted by widening participation in learning, and targeting under-represented groups and disadvantaged parents. Staff and learners have a satisfactory understanding of equal opportunities. The family learning provision is included in the college cycle of course reviews and self-assessments. Course evaluation is used effectively and changes are made to courses. Family learning tutors are regularly observed. However, the observation reports are not analytical enough and do not identify clear action points. AEC's FLLN co-ordinator and the LEA's WFL co-ordinator prepare the self-assessment report. Tutors are fully involved in the process. The most recent update to the self-assessment report identified some of the strengths and weaknesses found by inspectors.