

INSPECTION REPORT

Sutton LEA

24 March 2006



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
- **learnirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep**).

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

Pre-inspection analysis

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

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

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

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

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

Overall effectiveness

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grading

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

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

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Sutton LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. Sutton College of Learning for Adults (SCOLA, or the college) provides adult and community learning in the London borough of Sutton. The college is a service provided through Sutton Council (the council), and was founded in 1972 when the local authority unified adult education provision. It receives funding for accredited courses directly from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and for non-accredited courses indirectly from the local LSC through the council. SCOLA holds classes at nine main centres, seven subcentres and 63 additional community venues.

2. The senior management team consists of the principal, the senior planning and policy officer, three curriculum directors and one director of administration and support services. The principal is accountable to the college's governors and ultimately the council's representatives.

3. The population of Sutton was recorded as 179,768 in the 2001 census. In 2005, 68 per cent of school leavers in the borough achieved five or more general certificates of secondary education (GCSEs) at grade C or above, compared with the national average of 57.1 per cent. According to the 2001 census, 10.8 per cent of the population of Sutton come from a minority ethnic background, compared with the national average of 9.1 per cent. The unemployment rate in February 2006 was 2.2 per cent, compared with the national average of 2.6 per cent.

4. In 2004-05, 12,529 learners enrolled for courses. Of these, 19.5 per cent were from minority ethnic backgrounds, 73 per cent were women, 40 per cent had a declared disability and 1.6 per cent required discrete learning difficulties and disabilities provision. Most learners were aged between 20 and 59, although there were significant proportions of learners aged under 19 and over 60.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Grade 3

5. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** More specifically, SCOLA's leadership and management are good, as are its arrangements for quality improvement and equality of opportunity. Provision is good in leisure, travel and tourism, and outstanding in retail and commercial enterprise. It is satisfactory in information and communications technology (ICT), in arts, media and publishing, in languages, literature and culture and in preparation for life and work.

6. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** Self-assessment is well established at SCOLA. Areas of learning participate well and take responsibility for the self-assessment process. The reports are thoroughly moderated. In some areas of learning the resulting report does not include rich judgements and is insufficiently critical, but generally the process leads to good quality improvement planning.

7. The provider has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements.

SCOLA has a well-established and well-used teaching and learning observation system. This is generally raising standards in teaching and learning in most areas of learning. Good strategies are implemented well. Good quality assurance policies and procedures are used well. In some areas, management information is insufficiently used to monitor performance.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR SUTTON LEA:

- improve assessment of individual learning
- improve course reviews
- improve the use of data
- improve success rates
- make better use of information learning technology (ILT)
- further develop the understanding at curriculum management level of quality assurance

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at inspection

Leadership and management		2
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		2
Quality improvement		2

Information and communications technology			3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
ICT for users		3	
Adult and community learning	559	3	

Retail and commercial enterprise			1
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Beauty therapy		1	
Adult and community learning	700	1	

Leisure, travel and tourism			2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade	
Sport, leisure and recreation		2	
Adult and community learning	1,513	2	

Arts, media and publishing		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Dance Adult and community learning	992	3
Crafts Adult and community learning	1,261	3

Languages, literature and culture		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other languages, literature and culture Adult and community learning	1,200	3

Preparation for life and work		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
ESOL Adult and community learning	788	3
Literacy and numeracy Adult and community learning	684	3
Independent living and leisure skills Adult and community learning	340	2

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

8. Six areas of learning offered by SCOLA were in scope for inspection. The inspection took place over five consecutive days. Areas of learning that were not in scope were health, public services and care, science and mathematics, agriculture, horticulture and animal care, engineering and manufacturing technologies, construction planning and the built environment, history, philosophy and theology, education and training, business administration and law, including family learning and community development.

Number of inspectors	15
Number of inspection days	5
Number of learners interviewed	409
Number of staff interviewed	286
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	49
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	6

KEY FINDINGS

Achievements and standards

9. Achievement rates overall are good at over 80 per cent for the past three years. **Achievement rates on accredited courses in beauty therapy are very good, at 93 per cent in 2003-04 and 81 per cent in 2004-05. Success rates have been high on accredited independent living and leisure courses for the past three years.** Achievement rates are satisfactory in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and in languages, literature and culture. **However, achievement rates are poor on accredited arts, media and publishing courses.** Attendance is good on most courses but is poor on some arts, media and publishing courses and some literacy and numeracy classes. **Retention rates are high on accredited courses such as beauty therapy and ICT and also on literacy and numeracy courses.**

10. **Skills attainment is good in ESOL**, where learners develop good speaking and listening skills. **The standards of work are outstanding on beauty therapy courses, where learners develop a high level of professional skills. Learners on non-accredited arts, media and publishing courses also produce work of a high standard.** Painting learners produce bold and varied pieces, and dance and music learners develop good skills. **Learners in sports and leisure courses gain excellent health benefits, including better mobility and relief of ailments. Skills development is good in literacy and numeracy classes.** Standards of work and skills attainment are satisfactory in the remaining areas of learning.

The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Information and communications technology	1	5	4	0	10
Retail and commercial enterprise	1	6	3	0	10
Leisure, travel and tourism	2	10	6	3	21
Arts, media and publishing	3	11	14	0	28
Languages, literature and culture	0	11	7	3	21
Preparation for life and work	2	12	19	4	37
Total	9	55	53	10	127

11. Much of the teaching and learning is satisfactory or better. Fifty per cent of classes observed were good or better, 42 per cent were satisfactory and 8 per cent were inadequate. **The best teaching overall is in beauty therapy and ICT** where much teaching is professionally and creatively delivered. **Arts, media and publishing had some outstanding teaching as did classes in preparation for life and work and sports and leisure.**

12. SCOLA meets the needs of local people well by responding to requests for classes and by providing teaching and learning to those who are not included in mainstream education. It also works with a range of community groups providing expertise and advice and responds to and plans for new areas of service delivery. It provides a good choice, flexibility and an extensive curriculum. Skills for life, the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language, is an integral part of the college's plans and

delivery.

13. Additional support is satisfactory. In many areas, additional support is available and good individual support is provided. **Additional support is very good in independent living and leisure courses. Over half of the learners receive individual support in their classes. However, initial assessment is not used well to guide planning for individual learning needs.**

14. An initial advice and guidance centre provided for learners is used well in some areas of learning but used insufficiently in others. For example, learners in ESOL value the support they receive but for learners in other areas, such as arts, media and publishing, pre-course information is insufficient.

15. **The planning of individual learning is unsatisfactory in preparation for life and work, languages, literature and culture and ICT.** Initial assessment is not used sufficiently to guide learning and individual learning plans are not used well to review learners' progress.

16. **Learning resources, while available, are not sufficiently used in some areas of learning.** This is particularly true in ICT, literacy and numeracy and in languages, literature and culture.

Leadership and management

17. **The college strategically plans and reflect the council's corporate priorities well.**

Leaders and managers determine clear objectives in line with the local economic and social needs of Sutton. They prioritise the quality of provision and promote social inclusion purposefully. **Leaders and managers provide good direction and support in implementing new arrangements to improve quality.**

18. Governance is good. Governors use a wide range of experience and expertise to benefit the college and are committed to the staff and learners. They provide good advice and guidance and form good working relations with senior management. They participate well in evaluating the contributions they can make to quality improvement.

19. Management deploy resources to benefit learners well. A series of prudent decisions have meant accommodation has been refurbished well and finished to good standards, creating good learning environments at two main centres. Resources are available for tutors to use in the classroom. Staff are suitably qualified and experienced, class sizes are satisfactory and a wide range of courses is available.

20. **SCOLA successfully widens participation.** For many years it has provided educational services, support and advice and guidance to a range of voluntary and public sector organisations. It works closely with a range of partners to reach learners with barriers to learning. SCOLA is trusted by the community that it serves, and its partners believe that the college is reliable and provides a great deal of support and expertise in the community. SCOLA has developed a number of successful projects with partners and responds well to new initiatives. It is active in planning for the future but maintains a commitment to traditional adult and community learning.

21. **SCOLA's response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 is good.** Its new refurbished facilities are well planned, well finished and spacious and provide

comfortable access for people with restricted mobility. The college offers good support for people with sensory impairments.

22. The self-assessment process is generally effective and consultative. Inspectors are broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process. However, sometimes the language used in the self-assessment report is passive. Some areas of the report are insufficiently critical and do not provide sharp key judgements even when they have identified similar issues to those found on inspection. Quality improvement plans are detailed and the college takes action to resolve issues and improve the quality of the service. **Action to improve the quality of provision is effective.** Internal verification systems are clear and well structured.

23. A system for observing teaching and learning has been implemented well and generally all departments take responsibility for the process. Detailed reports are produced that are raising standards across most areas of learning, but particularly in ICT and beauty therapy. **The observation system is ineffective in sports and leisure** and is not leading to improvement in arts, media and publishing.

24. **Insufficient use is made of individual learning plans to guide learners' progress and achievement.** A system for recognising and recording progress and achievement is established in all areas of learning. **However, insufficient recording of progress and achievement takes place,** and inconsistencies in recording exist in most areas of learning.

25. Much data is available on topics such as the recruitment and performance of different groups of learners. Although data is used satisfactorily at senior management level, **at curriculum management level it is not used sufficiently well in many departments** to plan future provision or to analyse retention and achievement rates.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- strong strategic direction aligned to council priorities
- good leadership and management of change
- effective quality improvement to raise standards
- good widening participation and inclusion
- good response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Weaknesses

- insufficient recording of progress and achievement
- insufficient use of data

Information and communications technology

ICT for users

Strengths

- high retention rates

- good teaching and learning
- constructive lesson observations that raise standards

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of individual learning plans
- inadequate resources in some community venues
- insufficiently rigorous self-assessment

Retail and commercial enterprise

Beauty therapy

Strengths

- very good retention and achievement rates on accredited courses
- outstanding quality of work and development of professional skills
- very good standards of teaching and learning
- excellent range of accredited courses to meet the needs of the community
- good leadership and management

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses identified

Leisure, travel and tourism

Sport, leisure and recreation

Strengths

- excellent health benefits for learners
- much challenging and stimulating teaching
- diverse range of programmes that meet learners' needs well
- good curriculum management
- very effective partnership development to widen participation

Weaknesses

- ineffective observation of teaching and learning

Arts, media and publishing

Strengths

- high standards of work on non-accredited courses
- some outstanding teaching which challenges and raises learners' aspirations
- wide range of courses in art, crafts and dance

SUTTON LEA

- good specialist accommodation and resources

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates on accredited courses
- insufficient strategic direction and monitoring of provision

Languages, literature and culture

Other languages, literature and culture

Strengths

- good development of personal and social skills
- wide range of provision in modern foreign languages
- good support for tutors

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment to guide individual learning
- insufficiently rigorous quality improvement plan

Preparation for life and work

ESOL

Strengths

- very good attainment of speaking and listening skills
- effective widening of participation
- good accommodation

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of learning resources
- inadequate planning and implementation of individual learning

Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- high retention rates
- good development of skills
- effective widening of participation
- good accommodation

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of learning resources
- inadequate planning and implementation of individual learning

Independent living and leisure skills

Strengths

- high retention rates
- high success rates
- good range of programmes and strategies to widen participation
- very good support for learners
- good accommodation to meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
- well-managed provision

Weaknesses

- insufficient assessment of individual learning needs
- insufficient understanding of progress and achievement by learners
- insufficient course reviews

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT SUTTON LEA:

- gaining the confidence to write and spell
- the professional expertise of the tutors
- 'I always look forward to coming to the class'
- the very good tutors who make it fun
- that the learners help each other
- the many interesting subjects to choose from
- 'it's close to home'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK SUTTON LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the windows - they are difficult to open in some rooms that are overheated
- the information on the level of work expected on some courses
- the information on the rights of learners with dyslexia
- the temperature of the hall

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

Strengths

- strong strategic direction aligned to council priorities
- good leadership and management of change
- effective quality improvement to raise standards
- good widening participation and inclusion
- good response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Weaknesses

- insufficient recording of progress and achievement
- insufficient use of data

26. The college has a strong strategic direction which reflects the council's corporate priorities to promote inclusion. The college is part of the council's children, young people and learning services. The council provides an important context for the college within the council's overall lifelong learning plan. It has a strong commitment to the development of an effective adult learning service and its elected members provide well-informed and effective support. Strategic planning is thorough and detailed and college plans are appropriately aligned to council and LSC priorities, but also retain a good focus on traditional adult learning. Strategic priorities are carefully determined and identify realistic objectives, in line with the learning and economic development needs of local communities. They focus on consolidation rather than growth, improving the quality of provision and promoting social inclusion.

27. A wide range of partnership work supports strategic priorities well. SCOLA works collaboratively with a wide range of partner organisations to widen participation and develop a comprehensive and coherent range of learning opportunities across the area. It contributes to post-14 learning partnerships including strategic and task groups, and works closely with local colleges, schools, adult learning providers and community and voluntary groups. Joint work includes purposeful sharing of good practice, teacher training and quality improvement activities. The college also works effectively with other council departments and the recent development of a high-quality new centre has been refurbished very well, jointly funded by the council and the LSC.

28. Leaders and managers effectively implement new quality improvement arrangements. The college enjoys a high profile and excellent reputation in the community. The strong adult learning ethos is well supported by staff and learners. Managers and governors have skilfully pursued the repositioning of the college to meet local and national initiatives. The effective management of a significant cultural change across the college has been consultative and inclusive. It has included a strong focus on developing a performance culture to raise standards, significant improvements in accommodation and integration of a college-wide system to recognise and record progress and achievement on all courses. Employer engagement activities are increasing alongside a stronger emphasis on

accreditation. A good range of appropriate policies and procedures guides development. The college continues to review roles and responsibilities to meet changing circumstances. Communications and working relationships are very good. There are a number of effective committees and working groups, weekly staff bulletins and newsletters. Staff are well informed and supported. There is an appropriate balance of business and development within the yearly planned cycle of meetings across the college. The college is well positioned to respond productively to the effect of changes over the next few years.

29. Governance is good. Governors are enthusiastic and use their wide range of experiences to promote and further the interests of the college and its learners. They monitor the college's performance closely and provide good support and appropriate challenge for college managers. The standards committee has been recently set up to provide a closer appraisal of performance. Governors have recently taken part in a self-assessment exercise to guide their development.

30. The management and deployment of resources is good. The college uses a wide range of generally suitable accommodation including very well-refurbished centres. These provide effective learning environments. There is a sufficient number of suitably qualified and appropriately experienced staff, including support and administrative staff. Financial management of the devolved budget is good. Satisfaction rates are high. Participation and attendance rates are generally good. The college provides good value for money.

31. Staff development is good. Staff speak highly of the training opportunities provided. Staff development is extensive, well conceived and closely related to the college's development plan and improvement strategy. It is promoted to all staff and includes training days once a term for administrative and teaching staff on a range of topics. The programme also includes induction, observation of teaching and learning and a well-regarded teacher-training programme which also attracts tutors from other providers. Most teachers are part-time employees and a recent skills audit of staff identifies that 81 per cent of staff have achieved a basic teaching qualification. Attendance at training days is increasing and rose by 20 per cent in 2004-05. Forty-seven per cent of staff attend more than one training day a year. Training is closely evaluated to guide planning and further support for staff.

32. The performance management review system is satisfactory. Key staff have an annual performance review which is a largely developmental process. Insufficient attention is paid to specific target-setting and performance targets are not sufficiently linked to key performance indicators. A new system is being piloted.

33. Overall achievement and retention rates on accredited courses have been over 80 per cent over the past three years. Current targets are insufficiently challenging, particularly those relating to success rates.

34. Leadership and management of the areas of learning are satisfactory overall, and are good in beauty therapy, sport, leisure and recreation and for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Managers are committed to bringing about improvements. Learners develop a good range of skills, including personal, social and cultural aspirations. Teaching and learning are improving and there is good support for learners. Tutors are beginning to respond positively to the ILT strategy, although there is still too little incorporation of ILT in lessons. Different areas of learning do not sufficiently share good

practice. In independent learning and leisure courses, risk assessments of individual learners are not carried out for learners travelling on their own to college.

35. Individual learning plans are insufficiently used to support progress and achievement. The system for recognising and recording progress and achievement is established in all areas of learning and there has been significant investment in supporting staff to integrate individualisation into their teaching. Progress has been made in using digital technology to record achievement, and induction has been improved to provide a stronger focus on the process. However, in most areas of learning, there are inconsistencies in the recording of progress and achievement. This weakness was recognised in the self-assessment report.

36. Curriculum managers make insufficient use of data. The college information system provides a range of mostly reliable data which is increasingly used to set and monitor a range of key performance indicators at programme level. Insufficient use is made of this data to analyse performance and plan improvements.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 2

37. SCOLA has focused purposefully for many years on including Sutton residents in adult and community learning. It skilfully plans and implements programmes for engaging people in the community. Skills for life is central to the college's ethos. Strategy groups have developed a good range of programmes to meet the needs of a variety of learners. Learners are provided with opportunities and participate well in a wide range of education programmes. Learners from minority ethnic groups, learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and learners of a wide age range are represented well. Senior managers are committed to integrating skills for life with teaching and learning. Good opportunities exist for learners to take skills for life accredited qualifications and there are many positive stories from learners who have progressed from, for example, entry level 2 courses to vocational courses at level 1. The college has good partnerships with a range of providers to reach learners who have not participated in mainstream education. The SCOLA website is accessible and represents the provision accurately.

38. The college's response to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 is good. The main centre has been refurbished well and provides comfortable access for people with restricted mobility. Planning and the quality of finishes are good. The environment is safe and welcoming for all learners. Another refurbished centre has excellent facilities including very good signage and attractive and accessible classrooms which are used well. SCOLA provides good specialist equipment for those with sensory impairments. Reasonable adjustment has been applied sensibly to outreach centres in the community. The number of people with a disability using these centres has increased since refurbishment.

39. SCOLA produces and regularly reviews a comprehensive range of policies and procedures. Equality and diversity and disability statements are promoted in well-designed compact handbooks for learners and staff. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities create handbooks in partnership with staff which help them to understand the programmes they are following. SCOLA's equality and diversity committee is well represented by all interested parties. The group has improved awareness of legislation and is committed to promote and encourage diversity in curriculum activities and materials. Minutes of meetings are well recorded and progress is reported well in subsequent meetings. Managers are active in researching and assessing the effect of future equality

and diversity legislation.

40. Strategies for additional learning support are good and implementation overall is satisfactory. Additional support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. The information, advice and guidance service for learners is satisfactory.

41. Policies and procedures for staff recruitment are satisfactory, as are procedures and opportunities for staff development. SCOLA has provided a satisfactory range of equality and diversity training. Staff are involved well in providing ideas to promote equality and diversity at meetings and conferences.

42. SCOLA has adequately implemented a race equality policy. Senior managers measure the recruitment and achievement rates of different cultural groups and annually set targets. However, progression rates are not measured and targets are not sufficiently used by curriculum managers. Good working relationships are promoted with all learners. SCOLA's response to the Children Act 2004 is satisfactory. Policies and procedures exist for protecting children and vulnerable adults onsite, but policies are not promoted in the staff members' or learners' handbooks. Clear arrangements for tackling bullying and harassment exist. All learners are treated with respect and have something to offer SCOLA. Insufficient training takes place for staff to raise awareness in protecting vulnerable adults and children.

Quality improvement

Contributory grade 2

43. The college has effective quality improvement arrangements to raise standards. The quality improvement strategy is committed to continuous review and improvement in the standard of teaching and learning. A quality assurance handbook provides a clear framework which includes an outline of key quality improvement processes such as self-assessment, the role of staff development, measures to support teaching and learning, internal verification and moderation procedures. The college is working hard to develop increasingly consistent application of quality improvement arrangements. It has gained a number of quality standards including a charter mark, the matrix standard for information, advice and guidance and the investors in people award, a national standard for improving an organisation's performance through its people.

44. The observation of teaching and learning is central to the college's quality improvement system. It is a comprehensive and very well-established system which was recently updated and revised. A moderation panel has been introduced to verify grades in the current year. As a result, observations in 2005-06 are more accurate and largely reflect the inspection profile. Action plans are used to support improvement. A total of 277 observations were carried out in 2004-05 and 57 per cent of tutors were observed. In the current year, 270 observations have been carried out. Staff value the support they receive from observers and recognise how observations help to develop teaching and learning. In ICT, observations have been particularly constructive. However, in sports, leisure and recreation there have been some ineffective observations which did not identify weak teaching. Some observations are not conducted by subject specialists.

45. Internal verification systems are clear and well structured. Staff providing accredited courses hold regular meetings and respond promptly to comments in external verifiers' reports.

46. The college collects the views of learners and uses this information to make improvements. For example, it adopted a mini-enrolment form as a result of a learners' suggestion to cut down on paperwork. The college's roadshow activities collect a range of views from learners, and a recent DVD made by governors reflects learners' perceptions of the college. Learners are represented on a number of college committees including the governing body, the learners' support fund panel and the equality and diversity committee. Feedback from learners is collected in course evaluations and guides curriculum planning and staff development.

47. The self-assessment process is well established and generally effective. It is an intrinsic part of the quality improvement cycle and includes key performance indicators and trend analysis for retention, achievement and success rates. It includes the views of learners and staff members of all levels, and includes academic and cross-college services such as self-assessment of learning support, information, advice and guidance and employers' engagement. It does not include external stakeholders. A self-critical moderation process takes place which includes moderation of grades by the standards committee of the governing body, and external moderation takes place too. It is supported by the annual programme of course reviews. However, these course reviews are insufficiently self-critical, and in some areas of learning do not make sufficient use of performance indicators and targets to critically evaluate provision. The self-assessment report is detailed but does not provide a summary of key strengths and weaknesses for each area of learning, nor for leadership and management. The final report is largely accurate but does not identify some key weaknesses found during inspection.

48. Action plans are effective. Overall, they accurately identify key areas for improvement and reflect a college striving to achieve high standards. The development plan includes a clear direction for improvement, supported by targets and timescales for development. This provides a good indication of a good focus on continuous improvement and the development of a constructive and rigorous evaluation culture.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Information and communications technology

Grade 3

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>ICT for users</i> Adult and community learning	559	3 3

49. SCOLA provides accredited and non accredited ICT courses. Currently there are 559 learners on ICT courses. Most non-accredited short entry-level courses last for 12 hours. Many accredited courses run all year. This year, 60 per cent of learners are on courses leading to nationally recognised qualifications in computer literacy and information technology (IT) from entry level to level 2. Courses are held during the day and in the evening, at main and outreach venues. In 2004-05, 27 per cent of learners were men, 11 per cent were over 65 years of age, 70 per cent were under 55, 17 per cent were from black or minority ethnic groups, and 6 per cent declared a disability. Ten part-time staff are responsible to one head of department.

ICT for users

Strengths

- high retention rates
- good teaching and learning
- constructive lesson observations that raise standards

Weaknesses

- ineffective use of individual learning plans
- inadequate resources in some community venues
- insufficiently rigorous self-assessment

Achievement and standards

50. Retention rates on all courses are high. For example, retention rates for the past three years are above 80 per cent on accredited courses and at 97 per cent on non-accredited courses.

51. Learners make satisfactory progress in classes at a rate appropriate to their needs and abilities. Learners on courses for those with no previous experience of computers successfully improve their confidence in using ICT, for example gaining confidence in searching on the internet and using online services. On the more advanced courses, learners develop their ICT skills further and are well motivated. Attendance at the classes is good and many learners clearly enjoy their learning.

The quality of provision

52. Teaching and learning overall are good. Most learners are very satisfied with their classes and appreciate the confidence that they acquire. Tutors use their experience and subject knowledge well. Most teaching involves useful professional practical work using computers. Many lessons are managed and organised well so that learners can progress at their own pace using a combination of good-quality instructional workbooks with individual support from the tutors when needed. Tutors provide exercises and activities to extend those learners who work faster than others. When there are level 1 and 2 learners in the same class, they each work on appropriate materials at their own speeds. There are trolleys of laptop computers available to use in classrooms. These are used very effectively in one digital photography lesson where learners downloaded their photographs and were able to print them, over a wireless network, on a very high-quality colour laser printer.

53. In weaker lessons, the learners worked for the whole lesson using only workbooks or worksheets and the teaching methods used were not varied enough. Tutors did not always use questioning or work with small groups of learners who needed similar support. Very little use was made of interactive learning or ILT to support learning. Data projectors and screens are available on the main sites but are not often used.

54. SCOLA provides a satisfactory range of courses. Progression routes exist from entry level to level 2 and tutors discuss progression options during the courses. The college runs courses in community venues which effectively brings IT to learners not traditionally involved in learning, including a Euro-Asian group and families participating in a community regeneration project.

55. Helpful college and course information explains course requirements well. Learners are given an informative induction to their courses. However, on accredited courses, some learners do not want to study all the units needed for the full qualification. Some learners are unclear how or where to progress when they finished their course.

56. At the start of courses, learners can indicate if they need help with literacy, numeracy and language skills. Such learners can have a full assessment arranged and can be referred for appropriate support. However, this self-referral system does not systematically identify all such needs. Additional support where identified is satisfactory.

57. Individual learning plans are ineffectively used. Learners complete an initial assessment, many of which are used to plan learning but do not include sufficient personal learning goals. Individual learning plans are completed at the start of courses, and used at the end of units or terms to record completion. However, most plans are not reviewed and updated regularly to take account of learners' progress. Tutors' feedback on these plans is minimal. Some learners have a list of skills for their course, which they can check themselves. However, tutors provide insufficient feedback so that learners can understand how well they are progressing. Some learning outcomes identified are not sufficiently clear to be used to measure learning. Learners are not given individual goals for each lesson to challenge them to make better progress.

Leadership and management

58. ICT managers have implemented constructive lesson observations that raise standards.

All tutors are trained and part of a comprehensive observation scheme. All the staff have been skilfully observed, some several times. The observation reports have clear actions to resolve areas for improvement, which are monitored. Staff who need to improve are observed again after receiving support and development, and have all improved subsequently.

59. Communication with part-time tutors is adequate. They have meetings at the start of the year and receive regular e-mails from their manager during the year. Those who work on the same course meet at moderation meetings where teaching and learning matters are discussed, but insufficient opportunities exist to share good practice. Teaching staff possess technical competence and up-to-date expertise suitable for the college courses up to level 2. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory for tutors and learners.

60. Self-assessment is insufficiently rigorous. It does not identify the key issues well and does not include challenging targets. The resulting action plan is not useful. Insufficient use is made of management data to analyse performance and set targets. Managers make no analysis of the success and pass rates for each qualification. There is no analysis of achievement on non-accredited courses. Although learning goals are gathered from many learners, these are not routinely used to measure achievement. In previous years, course reviews, which link to the self-assessment report, were not sufficiently evaluative. The course review this year is better but is too early to judge the effect on the overall self-assessment process.

61. Inadequate resources exist in some important community venues for ICT learners. Satisfactory IT resources exist to support teaching and learning on the main sites. Venues are welcoming, and the IT rooms are bright and have access to industry-standard software. However, the laptop computers and wireless network at one community venue inhibit learning. The connection to the wireless network, and therefore the connection to the printer and the internet, is erratic, and learners' progress is interrupted and jeopardised. Another outreach centre has no printer. The college has known about these problems for some time but has not resolved them.

Retail and commercial enterprise**Grade 1**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Beauty therapy</i> Adult and community learning	700	<i>1</i> 1

62. Currently, 700 learners attend 57 accredited and non-accredited courses in beauty therapy. Courses are offered at flexible start times during the morning, afternoon and evening throughout the week, including some on Saturday. The courses are run at a variety of venues but mainly at the newly refurbished Wallington Centre. Most accredited courses run over three terms. Non-accredited courses run for nine to 12 weeks and are generally for two to three hours in duration. The area is managed by a new part-time curriculum leader, who was appointed in September 2005, supported by a team of 22 part-time tutors. In 2004-05, 608 learners enrolled on 53 courses, representing 5 per cent of SCOLA's total intake. Of these learners, 9 per cent were men, 33 per cent were from minority ethnic groups and 40 per cent declared learning difficulties or disabilities.

Beauty therapy*Strengths*

- very good retention and achievement rates on accredited courses
- outstanding quality of work and development of professional skills
- very good standards of teaching and learning
- excellent range of accredited courses to meet the needs of the community
- good leadership and management

Weaknesses

- no significant weaknesses identified

Achievement and standards

63. Learners develop a high level of professional skills and produce work of outstanding quality. Learners acquire a wide range of skills to complete the many case studies and then present evidence thoroughly. Learners are committed to produce a variety of detailed assignments which involve a lot of time and effort. For example, they produce a business plan, plans of a site, advertising materials and costing. Learners develop a good understanding of research skills using books and the internet. On the new beauty specialist course, learners produce very professional facials, manicures, pedicures and waxing. In the massage courses, learners understand well how to use oils and perform massage moves and routines to a high standard.

64. Retention and achievement rates are very good on accredited courses. In 2003-04 the retention rate was 80 per cent and in 2004-05 it was 78 per cent. In 2003-04 the achievement rate was 93 per cent and in 2004-05 it was 81 per cent. Attendance is historically good, and during the inspection, attendance was 81 per cent.

The quality of provision

65. Teaching and learning standards are very good. Tutors use their professional experience in class very well. Lessons are well planned and include a variety of pertinent activities to meet the needs and abilities of different learners. These include groupwork, pairwork, brainstorming, puzzles, question-and-answer techniques, discussions and small revision tests. One particular tutor has developed an excellent visual aids package with diagrams showing each move in the massage routine and is currently putting together a DVD to share with other staff. Work packs are provided for each course to support learning, some of which are excellent with digitally produced diagrams. Most tutors present themselves in a professional manner, giving learners good role models. Learners have recently been on visits to major exhibitions which gives them an insight into best practice. Learners are motivated and enthusiastic about their classes. Centres are accessible and fit for purpose. In some classes, equipment is provided by the college but most learners provide their own. On accredited courses this is to meet the awarding body's criteria.

66. The range of accredited courses is excellent and meets the needs of the community. New courses have been added this year including beauty specialist and nail technology. The non-accredited courses, which include Indian head massage for beginners and anatomy, physiology and massage, provide a good introduction to the accredited courses. In 2004-05, 32 per cent of learners enrolling progressed from these courses. Courses are run at a variety of different times and days to suit learners' needs and availability. Different types of short courses are offered such as eight to 11-week courses, and intensive courses run over a shorter length of time with longer hours.

67. Learners receive satisfactory guidance and support. The college's website is interactive, allowing learners to collect a variety of information and download it. This includes information sheets and application forms. The prospectus is delivered to the local area in partnership with a local newspaper, and is available at a variety of sites around the borough. Most of the accredited courses have specific entry requirements, with learners being invited for interviews if they do not meet the entry criteria. Learners do not receive enough career advice and guidance to give them more confidence regarding finding employment. Support for learners on courses is satisfactory and learners have access to satisfactory additional support. In some classes, specific individual literacy and numeracy support is good.

Leadership and management

68. A new head of department provides a good understanding of the area of learning and a greater knowledge of what the learners want and need. Strong strategic planning has been introduced. New courses have been added to a growing professional portfolio. The planning and management of accredited provision is very good. Good use is made of data to help plan the programme and of a range of targets to improve the quality of provision. Communication with the staff is regular, by phone, e-mails and meetings, and good support is provided should any member of staff need it. Staff development is provided at regular intervals, although activities are not always well attended. Staff are encouraged to keep their personal development up to date and funding is available for external courses when requested. Health and safety and risk assessments are good.

69. The self-assessment report is good and emphasises quality improvement. Most areas that were identified for improvement have been completed or are currently in the process of change. There have been some problems sourcing data, as this area of learning is divided across three subject areas. The observation of teaching and learning system is good. Individual learning plans and self-assessment reviews are used well in most courses, with interim evaluations taking place each term in accredited courses.

70. Most courses are held at the newly refurbished Wallington Centre, where resources are very good, clean and professional. The purpose-built rooms include specialist equipment, such as a steamer, electric massage beds, wax pots and trolleys. However, some courses are taught at other venues which are adequate but lack basic facilities such as washing facilities, whiteboards, overhead projectors, beds and good standards of cleanliness. Tutors are well qualified. Sixteen out of the 20 tutors have teaching qualifications and most have current industry certificates. Most are still working in the industry, keeping their skills up to date.

71. Staff and learners have good awareness of equality of opportunity, and equal opportunities policies and procedures are in place. However, the college is not sufficiently active in promoting a full understanding of equality of opportunity to learners.

Leisure, travel and tourism**Grade 2**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Sport, leisure and recreation</i>		2
Adult and community learning	1,513	2

72. SCOLA offers 172 sport, leisure and recreation courses, all of which are non-accredited except for a navigation course. Currently, 1,513 learners attend. In 2005-06, 81 per cent of learners are women, 59 per cent are aged 20 to 59, 40 per cent are aged 50 or over and 1 per cent are under 19. Eight per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups and 7 per cent have a disability. The provision predominantly offers a range of exercise sessions. Classes take place at 32 venues, including dedicated adult learning centres, schools and youth centres. Courses are provided during the day, evenings and at weekends. Most courses are between three and 11 weeks long. There are 35 part-time tutors. A curriculum manager is responsible for the programme area co-ordination.

Sport, leisure and recreation*Strengths*

- excellent health benefits for learners
- much challenging and stimulating teaching
- diverse range of programmes that meet learners' needs well
- good curriculum management
- very effective partnership development to widen participation

Weaknesses

- ineffective observation of teaching and learning

Achievement and standards

73. Learners achieve excellent health benefits in classes. In all lessons observed, learners described the health benefits well. These include better mobility, independence and the ability to perform physical tasks they could not previously do well. Benefits also include relief of ailments such as osteoporosis, hip problems and back pain as well as better posture, and ability to deal with stress. In classes for people with physical disabilities, learners experience very good benefits for the first time. Learners use classes as an opportunity to meet other people in a similar situation and to make new friends. In tai chi classes, learners report improved mental alertness, concentration, memory and confidence. A number of learners have progressed to establish their own groups. For example, there is a walking group established outside of class hours.

The quality of provision

74. Much teaching and learning is challenging and stimulating. Sessions are mostly well planned and include a good balance and range of exercises. A wide variety of teaching

methods and resources stimulate learning at a pace which is appropriate for all learners. Learners confidently choose from a range of alternative exercises that meet their individual needs. Adaptations within classes are very good, with tutors responding correctly and professionally to the complex needs of learners. This is particularly evident in mixed-ability classes where experience and fitness levels vary greatly. Tutors empower learners with impairments to be included well. They pay careful attention to correct technique through observation and correction of each learner, encouraging the learners to apply effort and improve their performance. There is some inspirational teaching. For example, in one session a non-swimmer became confident to swim unaided in a few weeks. However, in a few poor sessions there is little observation and correction of poor posture and technique. Initial fitness levels such as resting heart rate or stress levels are not measured at the start of most courses.

75. SCOLA provides a diverse range of classes in both sport and fitness that meet learners' needs well. As well as classes such as tai chi, aerobics, badminton and golf, there are several innovative classes including 'walking for health' and 'look after your heart'. Courses contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community, attracting learners with medical conditions and those from marginalised groups. Taster programmes are delivered throughout the year, often consisting of three consecutive sessions. Learners have progressed from these onto other programmes. Courses are held at a large number of venues in the community, located well for all learners in the borough. Several courses are offered at a variety of levels.

76. Learners are sufficiently supported and guided. They can enrol through a variety of methods. Comprehensive course information sheets are available and learners receive appropriate information from tutors and administration staff. Learners can try sessions before enrolling. In most sessions, learners receive sufficient individual support from tutors, although this is not the case in the unsatisfactory teaching and learning sessions. Tutors are aware of the mechanisms in place to request additional learning support. Arrangements for literacy and numeracy support are adequate.

Leadership and management

77. Clear strategic direction fits in with the health and fitness priorities of the council. Gaps in local public sector provision are identified and programmes promptly developed. Data is used well to support planning and set targets for improvement. Communication between management and tutors is particularly good and staff are supported well. Tutors meet regularly and attend a range of staff development events, which are valued. Effective measures are in place for sharing good practice such as videos of classes that are observed by other tutors. Tutors also obtain financial support for professional updating. The area of learning is critical in its self-assessment and identifies clear actions which are followed up well, leading to quality improvement. The self-assessment accurately identifies the strengths found during inspection, but does not recognise the weakness. Tutors are involved well in the self-assessment process through the collection and analysis of learners' views and discussion at team meetings.

78. Partnership development has been very effective in widening participation. SCOLA has developed a very good range of successful partnerships with health organisations such as local hospitals, cardiac rehabilitation co-ordination, chronic fatigue syndrome support groups, the local drug service and the local primary care trust. There are also good links with community organisations such as a Euro-Asian management committee, a local

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independent living centre users' group, a local association for the blind, and Sure Start. These partnerships have resulted in many new programmes and taster sessions for marginalised individuals. In consultation with the local primary care trust, SCOLA is developing provision to resolve issues within a physical activity and sport strategy for Sutton 2006-2009. Clear targets are set to widen participation. Participation by men was good during inspection week at 21 per cent.

79. Tutors are suitably qualified and experienced. Most venues are adequate and fit for purpose, with sufficient equipment available. In some school venues, the halls used for sessions are dirty and at times too cold.

80. The observation of teaching and learning is ineffective. The observation of teaching and learning programme in 2005-06 did not identify the unsatisfactory teaching and learning sessions found during inspection week. Many observations are carried out by non-subject specialists. Grades given to tutors do not concur with the grades given by inspectors. Often, satisfactory practice is identified as a key strength. Weaknesses identified by inspectors were often not recognised on the observation of teaching and learning reports. Where weaknesses were identified, the importance of these was not reflected in the grade. Observations also did not identify the excellent practice found by inspectors in inspection week.

Arts, media and publishing**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Dance Adult and community learning	992	3
Crafts Adult and community learning	1,261	3

81. Currently 1,261 learners attend art and craft courses and 992 learners attend dance and music courses. The provision for music, dance, art and crafts is offered at eight venues including schools, colleges and specialist providers. In 2004-05 there were 52 courses offered in music, 44 in dance and 226 in art and crafts. Classes offered include piano and other instrumental tuition, big band and choir. In dance the provision includes tap, disco, flamenco, ballroom, Egyptian dancing and some accredited subjects. Art and crafts subjects include drawing and painting, art history, 'The origins of Avant Garde', interior design, photography and ceramics. Most learners are over 20 years old and most courses run for one year. Twenty part-time music tutors and 14 dance tutors are responsible to one head of department. There are 37 tutors in art and crafts with a separate head of department for two-dimensional and three-dimensional studies.

Strengths

- high standards of work on non-accredited courses
- some outstanding teaching which challenges and raises learners' aspirations
- wide range of courses in art, crafts and dance
- good specialist accommodation and resources

Weaknesses

- poor achievement rates on accredited courses
- insufficient strategic direction and monitoring of provision

Achievement and standards

82. Learners produce high standards of work on non-accredited courses. Learners in a non-accredited oil painting course produced bold and varied pieces that demonstrated skills in varied techniques and the use of a range of painting tools. One tutor makes good use of scanners and computers in the classroom to provide a CD for learners containing rich and useful information on popular and more diverse artists. Learners studying tap and flamenco dancing make excellent progress in their classes and other learners of dance are able to implement skills in a variety of social situations. Learners in music attain very good playing skills in ensemble work. Learners in art and crafts celebrate their achievements by displaying work in a major biennial arts and crafts exhibition.

83. Achievement rates on many accredited courses are poor. In 2004-05, only five of the 16 learners on an AS-level photography course passed their course, four out of 16 passed AS-level textiles and four out of 18 passed their graphic design course. In GCSE dance, only 50 per cent of learners acquired grades at C or above. In AS-level dance, 50 per cent

of learners were ungraded. There were similar poor achievement rates for 2003-04. Attendance is satisfactory overall but is poor in some art, crafts and dance classes.

The quality of provision

84. Teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. The best teaching challenges and raises learners' aspirations. Teaching is adventurous on some courses. Some tutors set work tasks that challenge and engage learners. For example, learners who have been coming to classes for many years are given progressively more difficult media and techniques to master. In a watercolour flower and landscape class, learners were introduced to works and techniques by painters such as Kandinsky, Klee and Jasper Johns. The tutor skilfully guided the learners past the more formal introductory pot plants and vases of flowers and successfully encouraged them to experiment with watercolours on materials such as muslin, card, foam and filler. Learners in this class confidently share learning of new skills and techniques well with their fellow learners. In music, professionally experienced tutors use their skills astutely to provide challenging learning goals through individualised critical feedback. Tutors' demonstrations are informative and inspire learners to improve their instrumental skills. Many tutors recognise the differing abilities of their learners and provide challenging activities for all. Learners studying dance respond to the challenge of performing dance techniques to the public at organised events. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory. In lessons, tutors give good verbal feedback that is effective in informing learners of the progress they have made and how they can improve. However, opportunities to explore different cultures through folk dance are not always taken. Individual learning plans are not always used well in music to monitor learners' progress. On some courses, written feedback to learners is insufficient.

85. The range of provision is good. A broad range of courses is offered in dance, arts and crafts, during the day, in the evenings and at the weekend. Courses in music are meeting the needs of learners well, with many progressing from level 1 to level 3. Classes are offered in various outreach centres in addition to the well-equipped main site. There is an extensive range of accredited and non-accredited courses and levels for learners in topics such as interior design, photography, textiles, painting, jewellery making, art history, pottery and sewing crafts, as well as a wide range of different dance classes. SCOLA has effective links with local schools, arranging accredited dance and art classes in subjects that the schools cannot provide. Learners report high levels of satisfaction with the course offer and travel some distances because similar courses are unavailable elsewhere.

86. Advice and guidance are satisfactory. Learners get good individual curriculum support from their tutors on most courses. Tutors support learners well in classes. However, pre-course information is insufficient. Some learners have reported that they did not fully appreciate the amount of work and the expense of studying on some accredited courses. Costs for materials can be high and some learners struggle at times with the cost. Course information sheets outlining the expected costs are sometimes inaccurate.

Leadership and management

87. Classes are generally well organised and managed. Good specialist art and crafts studios and good dance and drama areas are provided at the main college centre, and light and airy rooms are used at other venues for visual arts classes. A specialist jewellery workshop is equipped to a professional standard and learners are able to learn advanced techniques because of it. A course in watercolour plants, flowers and landscapes is located

well in a stately home surrounded by public parkland. Learners are able to collect useful resources for their studies and gain good experience of painting directly in the landscape. However, resources for piano teaching are poor. Some outreach centres do not have sufficient space to safely store learners' work that is awaiting assessment for accredited courses. Tutors are suitably qualified in the arts and some have considerable professional experience. A good department ethos makes courses enjoyable and learners are treated with respect. The self-assessment report is satisfactory, and mainly accurate, but lacks sharp judgement in some key strengths and weaknesses.

88. Insufficient strategic direction and monitoring of provision exists in arts, media and publishing. Many accredited courses have had poor achievement rates for a few years. Strategies are now in place to resolve this but it is too early to judge their effect. Managers make insufficient use of data to support development planning and target-setting in music. Internal verification of assessed work often includes insufficient detail about the accuracy of tutors' marking. Although there is a thorough scheme to observe teaching and learning, its effect on improvement is not sufficient. Information from the observation of teaching and learning is not used to guide planning. The marketing strategy to guide the development of new courses is insufficiently informative.

Languages, literature and culture**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Other languages, literature and culture</i>		3
Adult and community learning	1,200	3

89. SCOLA offers accredited and non-accredited courses in languages, literature and culture at nine venues across the borough. Currently, 1,200 learners attend 91 courses, of which 72 are in modern foreign languages and 19 are in English and communication, including British Sign Language (BSL). Seventy-nine per cent of learners are on accredited programmes, of which 53 per cent are Open College Network (OCN)-accredited modern foreign language courses. Fifty per cent of the language courses are at level 1 and 28 per cent are at level 2. Most courses run for two hours a week over 32 weeks a year. Sixty-three per cent of programmes are scheduled during the evening. Five per cent of classes are offered on Saturday mornings. Sessions take place in 10 centres across the borough. Thirty-six per cent of learners are men, 14 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 2 per cent have disclosed a disability. Eighteen per cent are over 60 years of age. Programmes are managed within both the modern foreign languages and the general studies and humanities departments by two departmental heads. Teaching is shared by 55 part-time tutors.

Other languages, literature and culture*Strengths*

- good development of personal and social skills
- wide range of provision in modern foreign languages
- good support for tutors

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment to guide individual learning
- insufficiently rigorous quality improvement plan

Achievement and standards

90. Learners show good development of personal and social skills. They gain confidence in speaking modern foreign languages, expressing their views and in discussion. Many value the social interaction and are making considerable progress in their studies. Learners are proud to be adult learners and talk about their courses with friends and family. They gain self-esteem through their achievements, sometimes for the first time in their education. BSL learners use their new skills well to communicate with members of the deaf community.

91. Achievement rates on accredited courses are satisfactory. The 2004-05 success rate for higher grades in GCSE English is satisfactory at 52 per cent. Success rates for A2 English, AS-level Spanish and GCSE Spanish are good. The 10 learners who entered for GCSE Spanish achieved eight A* and two A grades. The success rate on the deaf

awareness certificate is also high at 94 per cent. However, the success rates for OCN-accredited modern foreign language courses, which account for 53 per cent of accredited provision, are poor at 41 per cent, although they show an improvement from the previous year's success rate of 19 per cent. In 2004-05 the retention rate for the area of learning was satisfactory at 72 per cent. During the inspection week, attendance was good at 80 per cent.

The quality of provision

92. A wide range of provision is offered which meets the needs and interests of learners well. A broad range of language courses is offered across the borough in nine centres and learners appreciate the accessibility and convenience of these local centres. Courses are offered from levels 1 to 6. A wide range of languages is offered including German, Italian, Russian, Czech, Turkish, Japanese, Arabic and Mandarin Chinese. SCOLA offers courses during the day and the evening and on Saturdays. The curriculum offer is responsive to the needs of the local community. For example, an Irish class was provided after a request from the local community. Classes on Saturdays have proved popular. The centre also provides family learning classes in French and Spanish. Learning is sometimes supplemented by cultural activities such as a trip to Russia, visits to restaurants and foreign films.

93. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The tutors are friendly and responsive. Learners feel safe and unthreatened. In most classes, tutors use a range of teaching and learning strategies to engage learners. In the best classes, the learning is supported by practical activities, games and lively discussion. In an Arabic class, the tutor provided coffee and baklava to support role-play. Learners are astutely made aware of their progress through written and oral feedback. One tutor keeps careful tutorial and review notes which identify strengths, areas for development and actions to be taken for improvement. In modern foreign languages classes, the target language is usually used effectively to develop listening and oral skills. Learners are given the opportunity to develop vocabulary and grammar. However, many tutors plan learning outcomes that are not measurable or achievable. Learning outcomes are not always made clear to the learners at the start of the class or used to check learning. ICT is not used to support individual learning. Lesson planning and delivery does not always reflect differing levels and abilities. In some classes, learners are given different activities to challenge the more able and to support others who need to build their knowledge. Although many rooms have electronic whiteboards, they are not interactively used. Computers are not available in classrooms to support learning. Some rooms at outreach centres offer poor-quality accommodation. Resources and displays do not often promote cultural diversity and equality.

94. Learners receive satisfactory support. Crèche facilities are available at the Sutton centre. Financial support is available to help learners to pay for childcare. Good systems for monitoring attendance are used by tutors, and absences are followed up by telephone. Staff are helpful and informative. A clear system for notifying additional support needs is explained through induction and college leaflets. A few learners have experienced difficulties in having their additional learning needs met in a timely fashion. Additional information, advice and guidance is provided throughout the summer, after the production of the prospectus. The prospectus is clear and informative. Tutors and managers provide a helpful telephone support service for information about the level, content of courses and prior learning. However, some learners interviewed are not aware of these services. They have not received any advice and guidance except through the prospectus. Advice and

guidance about progression routes is not routinely planned in schemes of work. Many learners were not aware of learning opportunities outside SCOLA.

95. Initial assessment to support individual learning is inadequate. Self-assessment is used in most classes. However, it is insufficient to assess skills levels, knowledge, understanding, aptitude and additional support needed to achieve on the course. Some modern foreign languages learners have enrolled on courses that are inappropriate to their level. Diagnostic assessment is not used in the development of individual learning plans. Learning plans reflect course aims and do not show specific and measurable individual goals or the outcomes of initial assessment. Individual learning plans are used, predominantly, as a tool for monitoring achievement of elements of the syllabus. This is particularly the case in OCN-accredited courses.

Leadership and management

96. Tutors receive good support from responsive and accessible managers. Good communication is maintained between managers and tutors by e-mail, telephone, face-to-face meetings, messages in registers and class visits. Induction is supportive. New tutors speak highly of the way they are supported to settle into the department. Staff find the teaching and learning observation scheme supportive and useful. The languages department organises a teacher-training course specifically for language teaching. Staff find the course highly relevant and useful in developing their skills. A co-ordinator of Spanish courses provides good support for Spanish language tutors and organises meetings to share good practice well. The co-ordinator supports other language tutors in introducing accreditation.

97. Curriculum management is satisfactory. Curriculum managers meet regularly and middle managers are clear about roles within the organisation. However, the curriculum offer lacks a clear long-term strategic direction. Staff can clearly identify changes made to their teaching practice as a result of effective feedback on their teaching. Opportunities for attendance at in-house events are widely advertised. Training is also provided through a London network. In-house training and development opportunities are also available. Although 85 per cent of staff have a teaching qualification, 52 per cent of these qualifications are at stage 1. Centres are adequately resourced overall. All learners are treated equally and with respect. Training has been provided for staff in equality of opportunity and cultural diversity.

98. The quality improvement plan is insufficiently rigorous. Areas for improvement in the self-assessment report do not sufficiently reflect weaknesses identified in inspection. Descriptive rather than evaluative language is used. Actions and outcomes in the quality improvement plan are insufficiently specific. Outcomes are not clearly measurable or timely. The quality improvement plan does not reflect the key range of issues identified in the area of learning's own observation of teaching and learning. For example, no significant reference is made to the improvement of teaching and learning to raise standards to good or better.

Preparation for life and work**Grade 3**

Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>ESOL</i> Adult and community learning	788	3 3
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i> Adult and community learning	684	3 3
<i>Independent living and leisure skills</i> Adult and community learning	340	2 2

99. Currently, 340 learners take independent living and leisure courses. Of these 42 per cent are at pre-entry level and 10 per cent are at entry level. Courses run for from 10 to 32 weeks. SCOLA offers 81 courses during the day, in the evenings and at weekends at 16 venues. Accredited courses include an externally-accredited course in developing independence and OCN courses in cookery, computing, personal health and presentation, citizenship, reading and writing and cultural studies at entry level. The range of non-accredited courses includes dance, art, pottery and performing arts classes. Eighteen learners are from minority ethnic groups and all have an identified learning difficulty and/or disability. There are 28 tutors, two of whom are full-time employees. Tutors are responsible to a head of department.

100. SCOLA offers accredited and non-accredited ESOL courses. Currently, 788 learners attend, of whom 215 men and 20 are aged between 16 and 19. Courses are offered at entry levels 1 to 3 and at levels 1 and 2. Sessions are held throughout the day and evening, and there are some Saturday courses. Learners attend one, two or three sessions a week. Most courses are 12 to 32 weeks long. Courses are designated by the skill areas of speaking and listening, reading, and writing. Some courses have a 'skills for work' focus to prepare learners for employment and give them knowledge about the job market. Courses take place on 10 different sites across the borough, including the main college sites, outreach centres and primary schools. The provision has a head of programme, three part-time assistant co-ordinators and one full-time and 24 part-time tutors.

101. Currently, 684 learners attend literacy, numeracy and language courses. Of these, 17 per cent are aged under 20, 72 per cent are between 21 and 59 and the remainder are over 60. Twenty-five per cent of learners are from minority ethnic groups. Ten per cent of learners have disabilities and/or learning difficulties. Courses range from entry level to level 2. The shortest course lasts for one day and the longest for 32 weeks. Most classes meet for between two and four and a half hours weekly. Courses are held in the daytime and evenings in 30 learning centres including community centres, a resource centre and a church hall. During the previous academic year there were 1,071 learners. Programmes are managed by a full-time head of programme and a part-time head of department. There are 31 part-time tutors who teach from two to 10 hours weekly. Some of them also provide individual learning support to learners.

ESOL

Strengths

- very good attainment of speaking and listening skills
- effective widening of participation
- good accommodation

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of learning resources
- inadequate planning and implementation of individual learning

Achievement and standards

102. Learners attain good speaking and listening skills in ESOL classes, and contribute confidently to discussions and other spoken activities. On the skills for work programmes, learners develop skills to help them look for employment, gain employment or perform effectively at work. Learners have good opportunities to gain nationally recognised skills for life qualifications. Learners participate enthusiastically and confidently in speaking and listening activities. Learners say that they use their spoken skills actively outside the classroom, for example in meeting teachers at their children's school, using the telephone or applying for a job. A group of learners in an outreach centre used information from a council environmental publication well to raise their awareness and understanding of environmental issues and to practise speaking and listening skills for their forthcoming test.

103. Achievement rates are satisfactory. Although there is insufficient data on progression, many learners say they progress well and at the higher levels have additional opportunities to take internationally recognised qualifications. Learners take up the opportunity to attend other SCOLA courses like hair and beauty or IT to improve their career prospects.

104. Learners' presentation of work in their folders is satisfactory. In some classes, learners have well-organised files of work. In other classes, however, learners' work is untidily stored with no organisation. Attendance is satisfactory.

The quality of provision

105. SCOLA effectively widens participation to meet learners' needs. It offers a broad range of ESOL courses during the day and evening. Courses take place in variety of places including main college centres, several outreach centres, a refugee network centre, a women's centre and two primary schools. Provision is targeted well at different client groups, such as refugees and asylum seekers, vulnerable women, parents, employment seekers and people at work. SCOLA holds a specific contract to train Polish bus drivers with the language skills to achieve an externally-accredited high level qualification. The college has links with a work preparation project for refugees and asylum seekers. This is an excellent first step into learning for vulnerable adults, many of whom later progress onto other college ESOL or vocational courses.

106. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons, tutors use good strategies and resources in a range of contexts including pairwork, groupwork, discussion, debate, recordings, role-play, simulations and prompt cards. For example, a group of learners

practised the language skills they needed in their job using a town made of plastic boxes. Some good teaching develops learners' skills to help them gain employment. In an ESOL lesson, mothers learnt how to set up an e-mail account and write a simple message so that they would be able to communicate with family in their home country. In some sessions, insufficient attention is paid to practising pronunciation and intonation and to correcting errors. There is no marking scheme when assessing learners' work. Some tutors mark work thoroughly and give constructive feedback, but others do not mark work.

107. Insufficient use is made of resources and learning technology. Some tutors overuse photocopies from textbooks and mechanical exercises on worksheets which have little relevance to learners' lives, aspirations and interests. The teaching of reading skills is poor, and tutors do not have strategies to engage learners in stimulating activities around text. Little use is made of the technology available outside specific ESOL and IT programmes, apart from downloading worksheets from websites. There has been some staff development on the use of ILT in the classroom but this has not yet had an effect on teaching and learning.

108. The planning and implementation of individual learning is inadequate. All learners are initially assessed with an initial and a diagnostic assessment. Assessment is not used effectively in the formation of individual learning plans nor in planning and delivery. Individual targets on individual learning plans are not specific or measurable. Targets are reviewed at the end of every term, 12 weeks after they are set. Learners' progress against targets cannot be effectively monitored or measured. There has been some team training on teaching different learning styles within a group, and some progress has been made, but this is slow to have an effect.

109. Information about learners' aspirations is collected and recorded during initial assessment, but there is no evidence that this information is used effectively in planning and delivery, nor built into individual learning plans. Many learners have clear aspirations for future education, training and employment. Information about learners' interests is not recorded.

Leadership and management

110. Accommodation and resources available for ESOL learners are good. There are spacious, well-furnished and well-equipped rooms at the Sutton Centre, Wallington Town Hall and Worcester Park Library. These buildings have particularly good access for people with restricted mobility and provide a safe and pleasant learning environment. Smart-boards, data projectors, computers and laptops are available. Learners have convenient access to the information, advice and guidance centre as well as a nearby branch of a national advice service. Many classes are held at these well-resourced facilities.

111. There are good opportunities for staff training. SCOLA provides an externally accredited certificate in ESOL, initial teacher training, and a level 4 certificate for subject specialists. Over 50 per cent of tutors have achieved the ESOL certificate.

112. There is an effective system of mentoring for all staff. Mentors support staff with course documents, observation and professional development. The mentoring system facilitates communication through the team. There are some good partnerships with local organisations, including a refugee network and a local women's support centre.

113. The programme of teaching and learning observations is satisfactory. Observations take place throughout the year. All staff are observed in this period, and an agreed action plan is drawn up after the observation. The action plan is monitored by the mentor. A staff development day is held each term where training is put on specifically to resolve issues identified in the observations. However, some of the weaknesses noted in the observations remain.

114. The self-assessment report is descriptive but includes insufficient rich judgements. A course summary is completed at the end of every course but it is more like a checklist and is not sufficiently evaluative. It is not sufficiently objective about the quality of provision and does not make adequate use of information from the teaching and learning observations. Data is not used in target-setting. Clear strengths and weaknesses of the provision are not identified.

Literacy and numeracy

Strengths

- high retention rates
- good development of skills
- effective widening of participation
- good accommodation

Weaknesses

- insufficient use of learning resources
- inadequate planning and implementation of individual learning

Achievement and standards

115. Retention rates on accredited and non-accredited programmes are high. In 2003-04, 89 per cent of learners who joined an accredited literacy or numeracy programme were retained, as were 99 per cent of those on non-accredited programmes. In 2004-05, retention rates remained high at 87 per cent and 99 per cent respectively for accredited and non-accredited courses. So far in 2005-06, 93 per cent of learners on accredited courses and all learners who joined non-accredited courses are still on programme. Attendance is not good in some classes.

116. Learners develop good skills and participate well in the learning sessions. For example, one learner said that two years ago he could not write his name and address, which he now writes well. Another learner said that he could not put pen to paper but now writes confidently. Some learners have concealed their poor literacy and numeracy skills for many years but now obtain help, in supportive learning environments, to improve. Learners gain a great sense of achievement and a feeling of wellbeing. Many of them refer to their improved self-confidence and increased self-esteem. Learners are able to support their children at school more effectively. Additionally, they develop social and group-working skills and often make good friendships with other learners.

The quality of provision

117. The college is successful at engaging those with barriers to learning, such as people with mental health difficulties and those who have not been in learning for many years. Courses are effectively marketed through various promotional initiatives, in addition to which learners encourage their friends to attend classes. As well as the learning centres in Sutton and Wallington, there is very good community provision which learners find particularly convenient, especially if they are unable or unwilling to travel. Learners welcome the small class sizes and the group and individual tuition they receive. They are encouraged by tutors' patient and empathic approaches and are reassured by the safe learning environments provided. They enjoy learning and are treated with respect. Some learners who are worried about making mistakes from past learning experiences are supported well. The college works well in partnership with community, local authority and voluntary organisations.

118. Accommodation is good and supports learning well. The learning centres in Sutton and Wallington are extremely modern and welcoming. The centre at Wallington has recently been refurbished to a very high standard, although the common room facilities are inadequate and there is some noise penetration in three rooms in which inlaid, interconnecting doors have been retained. The centres are light and bright and there are some generously sized teaching rooms. Both centres are conveniently located on main bus routes and adjacent to libraries. Adaptations for wheelchair users and learners with restricted mobility are very good. Some good outreach centres are located in local neighbourhoods.

119. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The good sessions are carefully planned, skilfully implemented and well managed. Tutors mark written work quickly in classes, which gives learners immediate feedback. If the answers are incorrect, tutors clearly explain the errors and give further instruction so that repeated errors can be avoided. Learners are challenged by their learning and fully engaged in the tasks that are set. Tutors understand learners' learning needs and try hard to fulfil them. In a spelling workshop, for example, the tutor was fully aware of learners' spelling abilities and set a range of tasks carefully matched to their abilities. One task required learners to rearrange eight picture cards to show, in correct sequence, an attempted street robbery, before writing a short story about the incident. Laptop computers were available for learners to record their story. Other learners could use the laptop computers to work through a task that required them to match words to their meanings by using the drag-and-drop technique. In some sessions, handouts and worksheets are over-used and learning tasks are insufficiently varied. Occasionally, tutors' explanations are too detailed and they confuse learners. Insufficient attention is given to displaying diagrams or writing in a clear and easily-to-assimilate manner. In some sessions, learning tasks are not closely matched to learners' abilities. In some literacy sessions, insufficient attention is given to the all-round development of learners' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

120. The range of courses and progression opportunities is satisfactory. Accreditation opportunities have been improved and they are now satisfactory. Links have been formed between literacy and ICT provision but insufficient attention is given to the simultaneous development of ICT and literacy competences in computing with literacy classes.

121. Learners' additional learning and support needs are satisfactorily identified and met.

Satisfactory individual support is given to learners when requested. Dyslexia testing is available and used when necessary.

122. Individual learning is inadequately planned and implemented. All learners are screened before entering literacy and numeracy classes but there is inadequate diagnostic assessment to guide teaching and learning in, for example, writing, spelling, reading, listening and numerical functions. Individual learning plans are not used effectively. Learning targets are insufficiently precise and measurable and in-class progress is not measured against predicted outcomes. On many individual learning plans, progress is described but not effectively evaluated and clearly recorded. The self-assessment report refers to the imperfections in the individual learning plans. In some classes, there is too much class teaching and insufficient individual work based on learners' identified needs.

123. Learning resources are insufficiently used to promote learning. Desktop computers and banks of laptop computers are available but they are under-used for developing learners' literacy and numeracy competences. Some learning sessions are not varied enough and there is an over-reliance on photocopied handouts and paper-based learning resources. Learners' learning styles are identified but learning preferences receive too little consideration when learning activities are planned and delivered. Tutors do not make sufficient use of learning technology, such as smart-boards and digital projectors. Learning resources that promote effective in- and out-of-class independent study are under-used.

Leadership and management

124. Satisfactory arrangements are made for termly or half-termly staff meetings and for informal meetings. Satisfactory online discussion facilities enable tutors to communicate and share resources. SCOLA has good involvement in the South London skills for life learning partnership. Good follow-up procedures exist for learners who are absent for three weeks without explanation. Staff have access to a satisfactory range of training opportunities such as specialist qualifications for literacy and numeracy tutors, teacher training and ICT. However, not all staff make full use of the available training and there are too few staff with specialist level 4 literacy and numeracy qualifications. Some teaching assistants are not effectively managed by the tutors with whom they are working. The quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. Arrangements for reviewing the performance of full-time staff and observing teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners complete mid-course and end-of-course evaluations, and satisfactory summaries of the findings are produced by tutors and used as part of the self-assessment process. The self-assessment report is analytical and agrees with many of the inspection findings, but there is no summary of key strengths and weaknesses and some staff are unfamiliar with the contents of the report. Learners' diversity is encouraged and all learners are treated with dignity and respect.

Independent living and leisure skills

Strengths

- high retention rates
- high success rates
- good range of programmes and strategies to widen participation
- very good support for learners

- good accommodation to meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
- well-managed provision

Weaknesses

- insufficient assessment of individual learning needs
- insufficient understanding of progress and achievement by learners
- insufficient course reviews

Achievement and standards

125. Retention rates have been high on accredited and non-accredited courses for the past three years. SCOLA has also maintained high success rates on accredited courses. For example, success rates on long courses were 85 per cent in 2003-04 and 90 per cent in 2004-05. On short courses, success rates were 75 per cent in 2003-04 and 96 per cent in 2004-05. Most of the provision is externally accredited. Progression rates from pre-entry level to entry level courses are satisfactory with 22 per cent of learners progressing in 2004-05. Attendance rates are good at 83 per cent.

126. Learners demonstrate growing confidence in classes in the use of communication and personal skills, particularly when working together. They are able to make positive choices, give personal opinions and develop their own ideas. In practical sessions, learners are learning new skills and demonstrate these in creating good-quality work. For example, in a ceramics class, learners explain and practically demonstrate how to model coils to make an African pot. In a dance class, learners who lack confidence establish good working partnerships and develop timing, position and movement. A high standard of learners' art and craft work is displayed in the Sutton Centre.

The quality of provision

127. SCOLA has a good range of programmes and strategies to widen participation. A wide range of courses is available during the day and evening at venues that provide good accessibility and are within easy travelling distance for learners. These include a course for terminally ill learners at a local hospital and a course at Hallmead Day Centre specifically for learners with support needs that prevent them from accessing a main learning centre. The head of department visits care homes and day centres regularly in the borough to discuss programmes with potential learners. This has resulted in much needed courses running at the resource centres in Cheam and Wallington, specially catering for learners with mental health difficulties, who are unable to access main learning centres. A good range of leisure and life skills courses from pre-entry level to entry level meets the needs of specific groups of learners well.

128. SCOLA provides very good support for learners. An open day once a year provides useful information to potential learners about courses and additional support. The head of department purposefully interviews all potential learners to assess their course choice and support needs. In 2005-06, 52 per cent of learners have individual support in classes. Learners have produced a professional dedicated learners' handbook with photographs, symbols and clear language for learners with learning difficulties. There are good opportunities for learners to become support mentors and provide support in classes alongside tutors. A personal tutor system effectively supports 67 learners on accredited

programmes.

129. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the most successful classes, learners are encouraged to contribute their ideas and thoughts. Learners are fully engaged with the learning process. They reinforce prior learning, share learning outcomes for the class and have consistent opportunities to develop new skills and confirm their understanding. The tutors in these classes engage the learners well, providing the more able and least able with challenging activities and learning expectations. Learners are consistently attentive and are clearly enjoying their learning experience. For example, learners in a communication class effectively share their news with the group before the start of the class. A learner who introduces each contributor chairs this meeting. Discussion is ordered and business-like and all learners participate well, taking ownership of their learning. Learners in a pottery class are able to communicate effectively and demonstrate how they used pinch pots to make the body of a ceramic elephant. In less successful classes, learning is not sufficiently individualised. Learners are unclear as to what is expected of them. Learning outcomes are not defined and there is no evidence produced to measure learning against them. Learners have little opportunity to demonstrate what they know or can do.

130. Learning resources are satisfactorily used in classes. For example, learners have use of specialist resources in pottery, art and dance. In cookery, learners with limited numeracy skills use speaking scales to weigh out ingredients independently. Work is recorded using digital cameras in pottery classes, and audio and video recording are used well to record learning and achievement in communication classes. Learners in a vocational training class effectively share their experience of recent work placements. The tutor shows a DVD of each learner working to reinforce the job tasks which they then analyse. Photographs used of each learner working are mounted on the walls and are used well as reference resources. In less successful teaching, too much reliance is placed on handouts. Too many secondary source resources are used and not enough use is made of available ILT resources.

131. Individual learning needs are not sufficiently assessed. Initial assessment is not evaluative enough of learners' individual requirements. Information from initial assessment is not used sufficiently on individual learning plans or to plan learning. Lesson plans do not contain individual targets. However, in good or outstanding lessons, individual learning needs are met skilfully, and activities are challenging for learners of all abilities. Tutors know their learners well. They individually monitor and support their learners' personal requirements throughout the programme.

132. Learners have insufficient understanding of their progress and achievement. Work in learners' folders is often not marked and learners receive little feedback of how well they are doing on their course. On non-accredited courses, there is no summary of achievement of the skills and knowledge learnt during the programme for learners to carry forwards to their next learning programme.

Leadership and management

133. SCOLA has good accommodation for learners. This includes good specialist facilities at 16 centres enabling easy access for learners. Adaptation to buildings at these centres has enabled a good range of access facilities to be installed. These include automatic doors, toilets for disabled people and changing facilities at the main Sutton Centre. Sensitively refurbished classrooms at Wallington include good pictorial signage and lifts.

Learners have access to very good specialist teaching rooms such as a pottery studio, a dance studio and large accessible kitchens. Rooms are modern and allow learners with restricted mobility good access.

134. The department is managed well. Staff are supported well by the head of department and they work well together as a team. Team meetings are held regularly and minutes and actions arising are communicated well. Comprehensive teaching support materials have been developed by the department. These materials include an informative staff handbook, guidance for teaching and learning and good practice guidance for teaching learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Learners are treated with respect and dignity by their peers and by staff. Work on pre-entry level and entry level courses is rigorously internally moderated before external moderation. Of the 28 staff working with learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, 62 per cent have clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau. All new staff recruited are checked with the Criminal Records Bureau and checks for existing staff are under way.

135. A well co-ordinated teaching and learning observation programme is conducted, with all new staff receiving a mentored observation and all staff having a formal graded observation within one or two years. The college's observation grades compare well with those of the inspection. Inadequate teaching is consistently followed up with clear actions for improvement and follow-up observations. A good range of staff training is provided and taken up by tutors, including further education teaching qualifications.

136. Course reviews are not judgemental and do not guide future planning. Reviews are not used effectively as evidence to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the department in the self-assessment process. Information from key quality assurance processes such as learners' feedback and teaching and learning observations is not sufficiently recorded in the self-assessment document. Measures for improvement in the development plan do not sufficiently focus on the effect they will have on learners and learning.

