

# Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames

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Inspection date

21 November 2008

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Inspection number

329191

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## Background information

### Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

#### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

### Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)), reports from the inspectorates' monitoring visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Arts, media and publishing
- Classical and modern foreign languages
- Preparation for life and work

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## Description of the provider

1. The Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames is located in Surrey and provides adult and community learning through Kingston Adult Education (KAE). The service contracts with London South Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and operates from three main sites across the Borough and uses 29 other community venues to deliver courses. For the current year of 2007/08, KAE had 6,138 learners of whom 1,738 (30%) were enrolled on Further Education (FE) courses and 4,400 (70%) were enrolled on Adult Community Learning (ACL) courses.
2. KAE offers part-time and full time programmes across the Borough to support the educational, cultural, recreational, leisure and vocational interests of the community. Classes are run in the daytime, evenings and at weekends and range from taster sessions to two-year programmes. Some courses provide opportunities for learners to gain qualifications. KAE offers courses in 12 areas of learning of which arts, media and publishing (926 learners), classical and modern foreign languages (636 learners), and preparation for life and work (875 learners) were included in the current inspection. KAE was awarded a Train to Gain contract in July 2008 and is developing other employer led initiatives.
3. KAE is placed within the Culture and Lifelong Learning subdirectorates of the Learning and Children's Services of the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames. Operationally, KAE functions as a stand-alone organisation with a board of governors and is headed by a Principal. The Principal manages the Deputy Principal, the finance and administration manager and shares the management of the curriculum co-ordinators with the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal is responsible for quality and staff development.
4. Minority ethnic groups account for 15.5% of the community. Unemployment is low and there are several pockets of deprivation within the borough.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

## Sector subject areas

Arts, media and publishing	Good: Grade 2
Classical and modern foreign languages	Good: Grade 2
Preparation for life and work	Good: Grade 2

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

5. The overall effectiveness of the provider is good. Leadership and quality improvement are good. Equality of opportunity is good. The quality of provision in art, media and publishing is good. It is also good in classical and modern foreign languages, and preparation for life and work.

### Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

6. KAE has demonstrated that it is in a good position to make improvements. Since its three previous inspections, KAE has improved its provision significantly. Leadership and management are stronger and significant actions have been taken to improve the quality of the provision. Most of the areas of learning are now good. Sport and leisure and philosophy and humanities were self-assessed as satisfactory but were not inspected. Staff are sharing good practice more fully, monitoring learner progress systematically and starting to capture non-accredited achievement effectively in the Recognition and Recording of Progress and Achievement (RARPA) process. Successful arrangements have been put in place to quality assure teaching and learning and learner satisfaction. KAE has made a significant investment in staff development and training. Self-assessment is thorough and realistic. KAE is accurately identifying key areas for improvement, however some actions for improvement in curriculum areas are not yet fully effective. For example, the organisation is developing a reliable system for accurately measuring achievement on non-accredited provision, however it is more effectively implemented in some areas of the curriculum than others. Teaching staff are only observed once every two years on average and in some cases the feedback is insufficient to improve provision, with over 24% of the teaching observed remaining satisfactory.
7. The self-assessment process is good. The latest self-assessment report is thorough and accurate in identifying areas for improvement. KAE's self-assessment grades match those from inspection in all but one aspect. The process is well established and has improved markedly over the last two years. Managers have made good use of data to support judgements and the course review process has developed the evaluation of provision in all the subject areas. Self-assessment is largely inclusive with feedback from learners contributing to the overall outcomes. Staff are aware of their responsibility to implement improvements and understand the part they need to play in changing the provision.

## Key strengths

- Good leadership and strategic direction
- Good promotion of equality and diversity
- Good quality improvement systems
- Good standard of learners' work
- Good teaching and learning
- Wide range of provision to meet local needs
- Good curriculum management

## Key areas for improvement

- Some poor accommodation and use of learning resources
- Incomplete implementation of some quality procedures

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

8. Achievement and standards are good, as identified in the latest self-assessment report. Retention rates are good overall and continue to improve. KAE continue to develop data to recognise achievement and success in the non-accredited provision and this is recognised in the self-assessment report. Where this data is available, the success rates are high. The performance of learners from different ethnic backgrounds and those with learning difficulties or disabilities showed little difference from the average for KAE.
9. Success rates for learners on both entry and Level 1 long courses are satisfactory at 69% in 2006/07. Provisional success rates based on KAE data shows improvement to 75% in 2007/08. Success rates for Level 2 long courses were satisfactory at 71% in 2006/07. Provisional KAE data show significant improvement to 83% in 2007/08. Success rates for short courses were satisfactory at 76% in 2006/07. Provisional KAE data shows significant improvement to 89% in 2007/08.
10. The standard of learners work is good in all areas. Learners develop confidence in speaking skills in the languages provision, gain confidence and self-esteem in arts courses.

### Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

11. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good as identified in the self-assessment report. The profile of grades given by inspectors largely matches those given by KAE in their observations of teaching and learning in 2007/08. Planning of teaching is good with comprehensive assessment procedures in most courses. Tutors meet the needs of a wide range of learners with different needs in many classes. Recognition and recording of progress and achievement is not sufficiently established in some areas. Management of resources is satisfactory although there is some poor accommodation and insufficient use of information and learning technology (ILT) in some areas.
12. The range of programmes is particularly responsive to local needs and the response to social inclusion is good. The programmes on offer is broad, and local partnerships with extended schools, children's centres and community groups have led to benefits for many learners. Some non-traditional learners successfully gain qualifications and in childcare participants have progressed from Levels 1 and 2 onto NVQ Level 3 and foundation degree courses at the college and university in Kingston. A wide range of leisure courses are available in arts at



Levels 1, 2 and 3 for all ages. A good selection of foreign languages are available including some less-taught languages. The flexible provision at three centres in classical and modern foreign languages and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is available in the day and evening, from entry to Level 2.

13. Guidance and support of learners is good. Pre-course information is good and learners are generally guided onto appropriate courses and into further progression. Support for learners by tutors in the learning sessions is good. Information advice and guidance (IAG) is available from trained advisors and reception staff have been trained to deal well with all enquiries. Procedures to identify additional learning needs are well established and support to meet those additional learning needs is good.

## Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

14. The leadership and management of KAE is good. KAE is an integral part of the Cultural Services and Lifelong Learning sub-directorate who support and champion its contribution to the Royal Borough of Kingston community plan. The senior management team provide good leadership and clear strategic direction, balancing government funding priorities with the community agenda. They enjoy good links with their ACL partners, the Local Authority (LA) and the community to offer more progression routes, share good practice and build strategic partnerships which enhance the provision and extend the opportunities of their learners. The principal and deputy principal manage curriculum teams with a light touch, offering staff development opportunities and encouraging them to share good practice. Communication is good and data is used well by managers to monitor performance effectively.
15. Curriculum management is good, a strength acknowledged in the provider's self-assessment. Initial assessment is thorough. New staff are mentored. Most staff have an appropriate teaching qualification and between them, a wide range of experience and expertise in many specialist areas. Course reviews are detailed and accurate. Self-assessment is inclusive and support for tutors is good. Tutors are encouraged to take advantage of a variety of internal and external training opportunities. Managers take successful action to improve the responsiveness of the provision.
16. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. KAE has worked hard to forge some close relationships with a range of hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and marginalised groups of learners in the vicinity, together with a number of closely-knit minority ethnic groups. KAE complies with all the current equalities legislation and has current policies in place to monitor and report on inclusive practices across the provision. Arrangements to recognise and tackle discrimination and inappropriate behaviour are promoted through staff and learner handbooks.

Buildings are generally accessible. KAE monitors learner enrolments and achievements by disability, gender and ethnicity, taking positive action to tackle inequalities of access or performance. Regular audits are conducted to assess the inclusiveness of current marketing, enrolment and tutoring practices. Staff attend a range of training in disability awareness, mental health issues, use of supportive technology, understanding dyslexia and teaching the visually impaired. Students with disabilities are well represented on the Disabled Inclusion Group set up three years ago to promote and monitor the concerns of learners with a range of physical, learning and mental health disabilities. The staff display good awareness of the cultural and linguistic diversity of their learners in classical and modern foreign languages and ensure that all learners are able to contribute and achieve. In literacy and numeracy classes mixed groups of vulnerable adults, supported by tutors, work along side each other in learning centres and treat each other with respect.

17. KAE is meeting current government requirements for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults. It is developing a framework that addresses personal risk assessments and health and safety issues for all learners. The Principal is the designated officer responsible for safeguarding and is currently ensuring that Criminal Records Bureau checks have been completed on all staff.
18. Quality improvement arrangements are well established throughout the organisation with a clear cycle of quality processes implemented across the year to monitor, audit, review and evaluate most aspects of the provision. This is identified in the self-assessment report. The annual development plan is monitored and updated regularly. Targets are set to improve provision and monitored at fortnightly curriculum and quality team meetings. Data is collected, analysed and used to bring about change. Student feedback is collected by an external organisation, collated and fed back to improve the service. The outcomes from peer observations, quality audits and good practice examples from teaching and learning observations are shared to all tutors to help them improve their delivery. However, the implementation of some quality procedures is still incomplete, which is acknowledged in the provider's self-assessment report. The monitoring of impact is a gap in the quality process in some areas, which is acknowledged by the provider. Teaching observations are the main vehicle for staff development and improving teaching and learning across the provision.
19. Resources are insufficient in certain areas with some cramped accommodation in art, a narrow range of learning resources used in preparation for life courses and little use of visual resources and technology in classical and modern foreign languages. Not enough ILT was seen being used in teaching and learning during the inspection, however, many teaching rooms are furnished with the appropriate technology.

## What learners like:

- The accessibility of staff
- The range of programmes
- The progress they make and acquisition of skills
- The patience and dedication of tutors
- Exciting learning sessions
- Teachers explain things very well
- Learners enjoy working in groups
- Classes are local to learners' homes
- Literacy/numeracy sessions have enabled learners to help their children
- Making good progress through different levels of courses
- Gaining IT skills
- Support for dyslexia
- Courses have made a significant difference to learners' lives

## What learners think could improve:

- Examinations and having to take time off work to take exams
- The paperwork to be completed during learning sessions
- No intensive writing course
- Behaviour of some of younger learners at the centre
- Some courses e.g. GCSE should be over a longer period as there is so much to learn in a short period
- Lighting in some classrooms is not good

## Sector subject areas

### Arts, media and publishing

Good: Grade 2

#### Context

20.KAE offers a range of art, craft, music, dance and photography classes. At the time of inspection there were 93 courses running, 30 of which were in art, 11 in ceramics, 27 in craft and design, two in photography, 23 in music, dance and drama. There are six accredited courses at Levels 1 and 2. The courses take place in three main sites. The sessions run morning, afternoon, evening and Saturday mornings. Classes are of two or two and a half hours duration with some FE sessions being four hours weekly. Courses run for 1, 2 and 3 terms. Currently there are 971 learners on courses, 66% of learners are over 45. The male/female ratio for personal and community development learning (PCDL) classes is 23% male. New learners make up 42% of the total. The area is managed by one part-time co-ordinator and has 52 sessional tutors. Photography and ceramics has another fractional co-ordinator who also manages other areas.

#### Strengths

- Good standard of learners' work
- Good teaching and learning
- Good range of courses
- Good curriculum management

#### Areas for improvement

- Some poor accommodation and resources.
- Incomplete recording learners' progress.

#### Achievement and standards

21.The standard of learners work is good as identified in the self-assessment report. In some sessions, learners had portfolios of past and present work showing progression. They work with enthusiasm, developing new skills and gaining confidence in their abilities. Some learners accept commissions, for example, learners in stained glass and pottery classes make products for family and friends. Learners are well motivated and absorbed in their learning and enjoy learning with their peers. Many learners are set homework or choose to complete extra work at home between sessions, ranging from research to practising their craft. Learners enjoy visiting galleries and museums and tutors keep them informed of up and coming exhibitions. New learners make significant progress and are able to complete complex tasks in a short time. They have the confidence to experiment with fabrics and techniques to produce work to a good standard. All

learners have a good appreciation of the standards of work they are producing and the progress they are making. There is a lot of peer support in all classes. Learners assist each other with tasks, share materials and discuss each other's work constructively. The provision has 5% of its courses accredited. The achievement rate for 2007/08 was 88%. Retention is good on non-accredited courses at 89%. During the week of inspection attendance was 85% and registers show a pattern of previous good attendance.

### Quality of provision

22. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good as identified in the self-assessment report. Tutors have extensive specialist knowledge and some are practitioners in their field, teaching on accredited and unaccredited courses. Tutors have high expectations of their learners and learning sessions are challenging. They set goals which stretch the learners and further develop their skills using activities which are well planned, stimulating and challenging and these are employed to good effect. Tutors have a good rapport with the learners and use this well. There are effective demonstrations from knowledgeable tutors who follow this with sensitive individual advice and guidance during learning sessions. Good handouts are given to learners who can refer to these when working at home. Most learners recognise the progress they make and enjoy engaging at a higher level. The tutors in art promote the use of observational study and in the weaving and spinning class the focus was on design and creativity. Most of the learners are encouraged to keep sketch books as a reference tool to explore and develop their ideas. Learners are confident in giving and receiving peer critique.
23. The range of courses in this area is good. These include art, life drawing, pottery, stained glass, drawing, weaving and spinning, passementerie, belly dancing, soft furnishing, embroidery, music, dance and gospel singing. The courses run throughout the day and evening at two of the main centres and one centre runs courses in the evening only. Many of the courses are available for beginners, intermediate and advanced which gives learners the opportunity to progress. Accredited courses are also available in some subjects. In the south of the Borough family learning is used as a vehicle to promote the arts programme.
24. Support for learners is satisfactory. Accredited courses are now available in some subjects and non-accredited courses in many programmes are at Levels 1, 2 and 3 and this provides the opportunities for learners to progress. Tutors provide individual support if necessary. Learners value the support and guidance they have been given.

### Leadership and management

25. Good curriculum management is in place. This was identified in the self-assessment report. Managers are successfully taking actions to improve the responsiveness of the provision. Tutors feel supported and are kept in touch through newsletters and emails. They also appreciate the open door policy

adopted by the management. Staff training is thorough and tutors can request training in various other areas which are funded. Statutory meetings take place three times a year. Departmental meetings are organised by the two area co-ordinators when they feel this is necessary, however, due to the large number of sessional tutors in this area, some working just two hours per week, meetings which are subject specific are difficult to arrange. Sharing of good practice is informal at tutor level.

26. Some poor accommodation and resources are being used by learners. Many learning environments used by the learners are uninspiring and some are unsuited for the activity taking place there. For example in one room, a practical class session, the floor was carpeted and the learners had to take care not to drop substances on it and another one had unsuitable furniture for the work being undertaken. One art room was very cramped not allowing the learners to stand back and view the model, however in this centre this problem has been recognised and a new building has been commissioned. Classrooms lack stimulating displays of learners work. Where work is displayed it is sometimes poorly presented. There is little use of ICT to support learning in the classroom. Learners' progress is incompletely recorded, as partly identified in the self-assessment report. Tutors use different formats for recording learners' progress, sometimes to good effect, however, this is inconsistent. Feedback is informal but does take place. Ongoing assessment is not always recorded and some individual learning plans have a list of tasks to be completed by the entire group. Photography is not used to record learners' progress but is used at the end of the term as a record of a piece of finished learners work, although the processes have been put in place they have not yet been established in the classroom. Observations of teaching and learning judgements are broadly the same as inspection findings. Equal opportunity is satisfactory, learners of all ages and backgrounds take part in the courses. Tutors and learners are fully aware of the policies put in place. The judgements broadly agree with the self-assessment report.

## Classical and modern foreign languages

Good: Grade 2

### Context

27. During 2008/09 KAE offered 57 courses in classical and modern foreign languages. Most were accredited through the National Open College Network (NOCN) Credit Achievement at Level 1, GCSE at Level 2 and AS/A2 at Level 3. Languages include Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. A small range of non-accredited courses are also available for those learners who wish to maintain their advanced language skills. Most courses last for one year. At the time of inspection 43 courses were running with 476 learners. Of the learners, 34% are male and 15% are from ethnic minorities. Classes mainly run in the evening and take place at three centres. The area is managed by a curriculum co-ordinator and courses are taught by 21 part-time tutors.

### Strengths

- Good development of learners' confidence language skills
- Good teaching to meet wide range of learning needs
- Wide and well planned range of provision
- Good curriculum management

### Areas for improvement

- Insufficient use of visual resources and technology to enhance learning

### Achievement and standards

28. Achievements and standards are good. Learners develop good language skills during learning sessions and are able to use the taught language with confidence and accuracy. Many learners are enthusiastic about the progress they make and their ability to communicate more confidently with native speakers when abroad. The standard of their written work is also good. More able learners produce imaginative and accurate pieces of work. Learners on Arabic, Chinese and Russian beginner courses use the different alphabets with a good degree of accuracy when writing. In 2007/08 pass rates and the percentage of high grades in both GCSEs and A Levels were high. Success rates vary, but are satisfactory overall. There was a decline in French Level 1 from 06/07 to 07/08 from 70% to 57%, but on a newly introduced Arabic programme success was good at 75%. On GCSE courses success is good on some programmes, with Spanish at 78%, and satisfactory on others with French at 63.6%. In AS level Spanish there has been a consistent improvement over the last four years and success is now good. Learners who, despite completing their course, choose not to take the exam negatively affect low success rates in some cases. Retention has generally improved over the last two years, but remains satisfactory overall. In GCSE

Spanish retention is very good at 93%. However, in Level 1 French programmes it has slightly declined from last year by about 5% and is now 67%. During inspection attendance was good at 81%.

### Quality of provision

29. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good as identified in the self-assessment report. Tutors use a variety of initial assessments to identify the starting level of learners and any additional needs. All learners complete an individual learning plan at the beginning of the course identifying individual goals and areas they wish to develop. Tutors use this information to plan learning effectively and to address different abilities and needs in learning sessions. Tutors keep consistent records of learners' progress in line with awarding bodies and RARPA requirements. In the best learning sessions tutors skilfully use question and answer techniques to enable less confident learners to contribute and to stretch the more able ones. Well prepared classroom materials also offer varying degrees of challenge for learners of different abilities, however, in some learning sessions there is insufficient use of visual resources and technology to enhance learning. In these sessions tutors heavily rely on the traditional whiteboard and paper-based handouts when introducing new language or practicing vocabulary and grammar and make little use of interactive whiteboards, overhead projectors or flashcards to stimulate learners. Where new technology is used however, this is done very effectively and greatly enhances learning.
30. The range of provision is good as identified in the self-assessment report. KAE offers a well planned and responsive programme of classical and modern foreign languages, including some less-taught languages. Progression opportunities are available up to Level 3 in the most popular subjects and many learners successfully develop their skills as they progress through the levels. In addition a small number of classes take place at the local guildhall and are specifically aimed at employees of the local authority who wish to develop basic language skills. Over the last two years the languages department has been involved in a successful project funded by the European Union that gives many learners the opportunity to travel to other countries, experience its culture and practice the foreign language. Learners find this a valuable and enriching activity that significantly adds to their learning experience.
31. Support for learners is good as identified in the self-assessment report. Learners with learning difficulties are well integrated in learning sessions by sensitive tutors who enable them to work and achieve well at a level appropriate to their ability. The department runs advice open days at the beginning of each academic year. Pre-course advice is also available on the telephone and learners are encouraged to drop in if they need specialist advice. Learners can also try classes before enrolling.



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## Leadership and management

32. Leadership and management is good. As identified in the self-assessment report the management of the curriculum is very effective. Tutors are well informed and have good access to the language co-ordinator and other managers when they have specific queries or need support. Meetings are frequent and staff have regular opportunities to share information on recent developments in the subject area. Tutors have access to, and take advantage of, a variety of internal and external training opportunities. Good practice is shared to good effect at these meetings or informally amongst tutors. A tutor with advanced ILT skills regularly supports other tutors in developing their skills and has produced a good quality video that is shared and used as a teaching resource. There is an effective mentoring system for new tutors who are supported by, and shadow, an experienced colleague when they join KAE. All tutors are suitably qualified and experienced practitioners. Teaching accommodation is generally good. Classrooms are comfortable and adequately equipped and many have interactive whiteboards.
33. Equality and diversity issues are handled appropriately. In the planning and delivery of the curriculum staff display good awareness of the cultural and linguistic diversity of their learners and during learning sessions tutors ensure that all learners are able to contribute and achieve.
34. Quality improvements are satisfactory. Managers have good access to data to analyse trends and plan the curriculum. Learning session observation reports are evaluative and judgements and grading are largely accurate and in line with inspection findings. Some tutors have improved as a result of observation and subsequent training, however, there are no records of action plans and no systematic way of monitoring improvements. The self-assessment report is well written, sufficiently evaluative and identifies most key strengths and areas for improvement. All tutors contribute to the self-assessment via the tutor's end of year review and informally during meetings. Most areas for improvements identified during the previous inspection have been successfully addressed, however good retention and success rates are inaccurately identified as strengths in the self-assessment report and no appropriate actions have been identified in the development plan to address low retention and success in some areas.

## Preparation for life and work

Good: Grade 2

### Context

35. At the time of the inspection, 286 learners were enrolled on ESOL courses and 98 learners on literacy and numeracy courses. Females accounted for 79% of learners. Courses take place during the daytime and evenings. ESOL courses are located in four main centres across the borough and in a number of community venues. Literacy and numeracy course are delivered at three venues. Courses are provided at all levels from Entry 1 to Level 2. Most learners work towards nationally recognised qualifications although some ESOL learners at Entry 1 and 2 work towards individual learning targets. Most ESOL courses are taught for four hours per week and there are also some intensive courses. Citizenship courses are available for learners on ESOL courses. Learners on literacy and numeracy courses can attend workshop sessions at flexible times. Learners who are aiming to achieve a Level 2 qualification or progress on to GCSE English or mathematics can attend additional classes. A full time co-ordinator manages the ESOL courses with two full-time tutors and 13 part-time sessional staff. A full-time co-ordinator manages the literacy courses and a part-time co-ordinator manages numeracy courses.

### Strengths

- High success rates on most literacy and numeracy courses
- Good development of learners' skills
- Good attendance rates in ESOL learning sessions
- Very good planning and monitoring of progress and achievement to meet learners' needs
- Wide range of provision to meet local needs
- Good curriculum management

### Areas for improvement

- Overdependence on the use of a narrow range of learning resources
- Insufficient opportunity for learners to develop communication skills in literacy learning sessions

### Achievement and standards

36. Achievement and standards are good overall as identified in the self-assessment report. Skills development is good. In most ESOL sessions, learners work well individually and in small groups to build their language skills and improve fluency and vocabulary. They gain confidence in asking questions and giving information while working with others on projects. In literacy and numeracy workshops, learners become proficient in working independently using computers to make

good progress in developing literacy, numeracy and study skills. They gain good referencing skills to file their work appropriately, note key learning points and plan future work.

37. The standard of learners' work in most sessions is good and learners have good opportunities to gain external accreditation to validate their progress. Many learners progress to higher level language courses, GCSE English or mathematics, further education, or employment. Others progress to employer-based training or voluntary work. A learner with spelling difficulties learned how to proof read effectively. Another learned how to use emails effectively to promptly report incidents at work. Learners in a Level 2 numeracy learning session reinforced newly learned algebraic concepts through a group card-matching activity. ESOL learners used their language skills to plan and design clear, attractive travel brochures. Success rates on literacy and numeracy courses are good and have improved from 2006/07. Success rates in 2007/08 for the national numeracy certificates were high at 92% on Level 1 courses and 98% on Level 2 courses. Literacy national certificates success rates also improved during the same period to 89% at Level 1 and 87% at Level 2.
38. Achievement for ESOL learners is satisfactory. Overall success rates have improved from 2006/07 from 60% to 69% in 2007/08. Many learners gain accreditation for speaking and listening skills but few achieve full awards which include reading and writing skills. Attendance rates in ESOL classes are good. During the inspection the attendance rate was 86% in observed sessions, and registers showed a consistently high rate of attendance in other sessions. However, in literacy and numeracy sessions, the attendance rate was low at 62%.

### Quality of provision

39. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning is good in many sessions and this agrees with the observation profile in the self-assessment report. Planning and monitoring of progress and achievement is very good. All learners undertake an initial assessment and the outcomes are used to set challenging personal targets for learners which are recorded in individual learning plans. Planning to meet individual needs also takes account of prior learning, learning styles and learners' reasons for needing to improve their language, literacy or numeracy skills. Tutors monitor progress against learners' targets and this information is used by curriculum managers, tutors and learners to assess individual achievement, set further targets and determine when learners are ready to work towards a national qualification. Tutors use homework effectively to extend learning and to assess progress against learners' targets.
40. There is a wide range of provision to meet local needs. The curriculum managers have established good local partnership arrangements with community groups and other parts of the Borough Council. Learners have good access to courses which take place across the borough, including community venues and the workplace. A wide range of flexible attendance patterns including workshops and intensive courses enable learners to fit learning around their personal

circumstances and individual needs. Additional classes are provided to enable learners to prepare for examinations. Literacy and numeracy courses have recently been developed to meet the needs of Borough Council employees including teaching assistants, cleaners and caretakers.

41. Support for learners is satisfactory. Volunteer workers support learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Appropriate specialist equipment is provided for learners such as adjustable chairs and left handed pens. Tutors provide useful information advice and guidance informally. A narrow range of learning resources is used. Tutors rely heavily on the use of text books and paper-based materials, such as worksheets. However, they do not make sufficient use of information and learning technology and other resources such as video, audio, newspapers and magazines. There are insufficient opportunities for learners to develop verbal communication skills in literacy sessions. Most provision is delivered through individualised learning programmes and learners have little opportunity to interact with each other to develop their speaking skills.

#### Leadership and management

42. Curriculum management is good. Strategic direction is clear and local planning is effective in implementing the national strategy for skills for life. Support is good for existing tutors through regular staff meetings and an effective mentoring scheme exists for new tutors. Peer observations have been introduced recently which enable tutors to share good practice. Staff development is effective in improving the quality of provision. For example, in ESOL specific training on developing learners' writing skills was provided in response to low success rates among learners in the writing examination. In 2007/08, following the training, the success rate for the writing element of the ESOL qualification improved significantly. All tutors are appropriately trained to teach literacy, numeracy or ESOL and many tutors are supported to achieve a full teaching qualification.
43. Curriculum managers have successfully improved the quality of provision through the self-assessment process. In literacy and numeracy, a very thorough audit process of the individual learner journey is used to improve the quality of the learning process. Data on learner achievement and feedback from tutors and learners is used effectively. Observation of teaching and learning is rigorous and judgements are accurate. The outcomes of observations enable managers to identify areas for improvement and take action to improve the quality of provision. Significant improvement has been made to the observation process including additional training for observers which was delivered in partnership with other local providers.
44. Promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. Learners are treated with respect in all learning sessions and feel safe and comfortable in all centres.

## Annex

## Learners' achievements

Learners' achievements in FE funded, accredited provision offered by Kingston Adult Education.

Success rates on accredited entry and Level 1 (combined) and Level 2 qualifications, by length, expected end year and age.

19+					
Notional Level	Exp End Year	Starts – Transfers	ACL Provider Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
1 long	06/07	688	68.9	70.5	-1.6
	07/08*	644	75.4	N/A	
2 long	06/07	320	70.9	69	1.9
	07/08*	297	83.0	N/A	
Short**	06/07	732	76.0	82.9	-6.9
	07/08*	297	88.6	N/A	

\* ACL provider data not validated

\*\* Courses over 5 weeks long