

The Mary Ward Centre

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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.

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), 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:

- Health, public services and care
- Visual arts
- ESOL

Description of the provider

1. The Mary Ward Centre (MWC) is a specialist designated institution and a trust situated in the London Borough of Camden. Provision is funded by the London Central LSC. A management committee and board govern MWC. The principal has overall responsibility with two vice principals. Four heads of department, a student services manager and a widening participation co-ordinator oversee the curriculum, learner support and outreach work. They report to the vice principal of curriculum and quality. The second vice principal oversees finance and administration.
2. The provider's main site is in central London. MWC also offers provision in many local community venues. In 2007/08, 5,562 part-time learners attended courses at MWC, of whom 988 attended accredited courses. Approximately 80% of learners are from London boroughs other than Camden. Most provision is non-accredited. The largest proportion of learners attends arts, media and publishing and preparation for life and work courses. Most learners on accredited provision attend short courses. Most learners on long course accredited provision are at level 1. Of the total number of learners, 15% identified themselves as having a learning difficulty or disability, 20% are from a minority ethnic background and most learners are aged between 25 and 60. The inspection covered health, public services and care with 321 learners, visual arts, with 1,010 learners and ESOL with 554 learners.
3. The total population of Camden is approximately 231,900. Significantly more residents hold an NVQ at level 2 and above than for London or nationally. The number of Job Seekers Allowance claimants in Camden in January 2009 was 2.7% compared to 3.3% for London. Most employment is in the service industries. However, much of Camden's economic activity is in the knowledge economy including universities, media and creative industries. The indices of multiple deprivation in 2007 place Camden in the top 20% of the most deprived districts nationally. Approximately 20% of residents come from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Outstanding: Grade 1
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care	Good: Grade 2
Visual arts	Good: Grade 2
ESOL	Good Grade 2

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

4. Overall effectiveness is good. Achievement and standards are good. Most learners achieve their qualifications or learning objectives. They produce a range of good products, develop good skills and progress well compared with their prior attainment. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. Tutors effectively use their skills and resources in teaching sessions to provide a range of stimulating and challenging learning activities. The assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. Initial assessment appropriately identifies learners requiring literacy, numeracy and language support. The provision of additional learning support is good.
5. MWC is outstanding at meeting learners' needs and interests. The curriculum is thoughtfully considered and provides excellent choices for learners with a range of needs. MWC is very responsive to the local community and has established a number of productive partnerships. Enrichment activities across the curriculum are good.
6. Advice, guidance and support are outstanding. MWC's front of house administrative staff provide professional advice and guidance for a range of learners with different needs. MWC integrates its support service exceptionally well with the overall curriculum to provide learners with skilful, individual information and guidance and support. Social and educational inclusion is particularly good.
7. Leadership and management are good overall. Governance, links with other providers and services, and strategic direction are outstanding. Self-assessment, the monitoring of performance and the accuracy and use of information are good. Equality of opportunity is outstanding. The process to record and recognise learners' progress and achievement is satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Outstanding: Grade 1

8. Capacity to improve is outstanding. Success rates overall are high and significantly improved, particularly in 2007/08. Learners generally achieve non-accredited learning outcomes well. The development of the curriculum, especially the community outreach programme, is outstanding in meeting learners' needs and interests. Financial health and resources are good. MWC has invested substantially in developing accommodation, access to and around the centre, communal areas and learning resources. Quality improvement arrangements are very effective. Feedback from learners and staff contributes effectively to quality improvement. The process for observing teaching and learning is good.

9. Access for learners with restricted mobility has significantly improved. Curriculum development, which was satisfactory, is vastly improved. Advice, guidance and support and meeting the needs and interests of learners are both outstanding.
10. The self-assessment process is good. Self-assessment is well established, comprehensive and based on a wide range of evidence. Staff, learners and governors are fully involved in the process. The self-assessment report is critical and broadly accurate. Course reviews effectively contribute to a good overview of the curriculum areas. The curriculum areas and most key grades in the self-assessment report broadly reflect those given on inspection.

Key strengths

- Good achievement and standards
- Good teaching and learning
- Outstanding and innovative curriculum
- Outstanding support for learners
- Outstanding equality of opportunity
- Good leadership and management
- Outstanding capacity to improve

Key areas for improvement

- Monitoring of learners' progress
- Process for observing teaching and learning

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

11. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates overall are high. Most long course success rates are high in 2007/08, a significant improvement on the previous year. Level 3 long course success rates are consistently high. Short course success rates are high in 2007/08. Level 2 success rates are satisfactory. Most learners on non-accredited courses achieve their learning objectives but language learners achieve less well. Most learners from different cultural groups achieve well. The achievement of learners who receive additional support is good. Standards of work are good overall. Learners' art work is celebrated and presented attractively to add to the ethos of the centre's environment. Learners on community projects in local community partnership venues produce good craft products. Men and women achieve equally well. Learners' progression to higher level courses is good. Attendance is satisfactory. MWC's most recent self-assessment report broadly reflects inspection findings.

Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

12. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. This was identified in the self-assessment report. Observations of teaching and learning are sufficiently evaluative and show consistently good or better teaching. Most observers are skilled at picking out salient aspects of teaching and learning. However, a minority of grades are too high and a few observation records graded outstanding have insufficient evidence to support the grade. Tutors are good at planning and managing diverse groups of learners. They are good at motivating learners and providing stimulating learning activities to stretch and challenge learners' perceptions and skills. The identification of learners' literacy needs is adequate and support is good. Learning is enjoyable at MWC and reflects the core mission of the organisation. Learners develop good knowledge and understanding in teaching sessions. Tutors are aware of learners' progress, but recording or monitoring in some curriculum areas is not consistent. The effective use of resources promotes learning. The use of information learning technology is satisfactory. Teaching in the local community, delivered by MWC in partnership with other organisations, successfully attracts and engages learners who need alternative provision.

13. The extent to which MWC meets the needs and interests of learners is outstanding. The curriculum is extensive and innovative. MWC provides a very wide range of flexibly scheduled courses. Some of the courses are highly unique and tailored to the needs of learners and the local area. In particular, the programme for learners aged over 60 is very popular. Learners have good access to an extensive range of reasonably priced personal development and interest

programmes. The training programme for employees and managers in the voluntary sector is very successful. Progression routes are good. Self-assessment identifies the excellent outreach programme delivered in a growing number of good quality venues. Managers use partners' feedback very productively to develop the community outreach programme and bespoke courses.

14. Enrichment programmes are good overall and very good in visual arts. Learners attend a wide range of very relevant external visits, some of which introduce them to new experiences and interests. Many learners participate in events and competitions and the organisation celebrates success well.
15. Advice, guidance and support are outstanding. The centre provides particularly good initial advice and guidance. MWC is particularly well located and staff provide a welcoming learning environment and excellent front of house customer service. Staff are skilful at helping learners settle onto courses and provide them with clear information. Communication between support staff and tutors is very good. The centre provides particularly good additional learning support for all learners and excellent support for learners with mental health difficulties. Very extensive financial support is provided for learners who have difficulty in meeting the cost of courses. Crèche facilities are available. Learners receive excellent support to supplement teaching sessions. Most learners complete their courses. Systems for monitoring absence are thorough.

Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Outstanding: Grade 1

16. Leadership and management are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. MWC has visionary governance and leadership. Governors are fully involved in scrutinising and challenging the work of the centre. They are well informed and passionate about adult education, and take an active role in strategy, including lobbying government. MWC's mission and values are well understood and central to all activities. The management committee has a clear focus and is very effective in improving the curriculum and quality of the provision. A review is currently taking place into the roles and participation in the board and management committees to meet the future needs of the organisation.
17. Strategic planning is outstanding. Managers analyse and use research and data well when forming strategies to meet local, regional and national priorities. They work very effectively with local adult education providers to ensure a complementary and appropriate course offer and direction. Priorities for the next three years clearly set out the direction of MWC and align well with its mission and values.
18. Curriculum management is good. MWC has a clear structure. Communication is very good. Staff development is regular, varied and relevant. MWC has a suitable

appraisal system for permanent staff and tutors which links well to the observation of teaching and learning. Tutors complete very effective reviews of each course. Heads of department have improved access to data, but some are not yet routinely using this effectively.

19. Quality improvement arrangements are good. Managers set successful challenging targets to improve success rates. Significant investment has improved the quality of accommodation, communal areas and teaching and learning resources. Learners have excellent opportunities to give feedback. This is respected and used well. Staff and learners' satisfaction is very high. MWC's "think tank" sessions are used well by many staff to share best practice and solve problems. The self-assessment process is good. Managers and heads of department routinely monitor the effectiveness of quality improvement plans. The complaints process is well managed and has been used well to revise some policies and procedures.
20. MWC provides good value for money. It has very effective financial and risk management processes. These are thoroughly monitored by governors. The fees policy is well researched and reasonable. Management and use of resources, including staff, are good.
21. Partnership working is very good, as stated in the self-assessment report. Senior managers have very effective, collaborative relationships with other providers enabling them to share information and practice to improve quality. MWC has a very active community outreach worker who has significantly increased the number of partners it works with. MWC is very visible in the local community through the vast number of successful projects and community events it participates in and supports.
22. Equality of opportunity is outstanding. Learners have access to a broad range of courses at all levels and in many local venues. The curriculum is highly responsive to the needs of the very diverse communities MWC serves. Staff promote a strong ethos of inclusion and equality and are very effective in eliminating or reducing barriers to learning. Learners achieve high success rates and good progression to further study. Staff have developed a very good understanding of how to support the growing numbers of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. MWC has significantly improved access and signage for learners with disabilities. Provision for older learners is very successful. Promotion of equality and diversity by tutors during learning sessions is good. MWC has suitable policies for equality and diversity that are routinely reviewed by the equality assurance committee. Staff and governors' training on equality and diversity are satisfactory. Managers thoroughly analyse data about participation and success rates by different groups. However, self-assessment judgements do not sufficiently identify the low participation rates by men and minority ethnic learners. Outreach activity and the introduction of some new courses have increased enrolments by minority ethnic learners off-site. New partnership work aims to increase participation by men.

23. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. MWC has a suitable safeguarding policy for children and vulnerable adults and adequate staff training. All staff with responsibility for vulnerable adults and young people have Criminal Records Bureau checks. MWC is making appropriate progress with processing the checks for the remaining small number of staff.
24. The skills for life policy is good, particularly for literacy and language support needs. The number of learners receiving additional learning support has significantly increased. Learners requiring numeracy support are appropriately referred to other organisations for specialist support.
25. MWC has a very well established, supportive process for the observation of teaching and learning. Observers are thorough, and largely accurate, in identifying suitable strengths and areas for development. Tutors benefit from very detailed feedback and discussion that covers a wide range of topics. The self-assessment report accurately identifies that the process needs further development.
26. MWC has carried out considerable work in devising a strategy and providing training for tutors on target-setting. The process for recording and assessment of progress and achievement on non-accredited provision is satisfactory. The self-assessment report identifies variation in the effectiveness of this process across the provision. Tutors are encouraged to devise their own systems for recording progress, some of which are very effective. However, in some courses and records, the learner's starting point, and their individual goals and progress, are not clear. Some recording of progress and feedback is insufficient. Quality assurance and observation processes are identifying some, but not all, of these issues.

What learners like:

- 'The friendly and respectful staff who make you feel part of the family'
- 'Tutors are working professionals in their specialisms – they're passionate and inspirational'
- 'I'm amazed at my capacity to learn'
- 'We're encouraged to support each other'
- 'I never feel I'm being talked down to'
- 'They don't let me go round in loops'
- 'Concessionary classes made it possible for me to study'
- 'Doing this course has opened my eyes and changed my life'
- 'I'm using parts of my brain that I've never used before'
- 'Teachers concentrate on what students need'
- 'The time of the class fits around my job'
- 'Good to work with others and to make new friends'

What learners think could improve:

- 'Providing a common room and library facilities'
- 'Some of the rooms aren't big enough'
- 'Better audio sound for listening learning sessions'
- 'A book instead of photocopies'

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care

Good: Grade 2

Context

27. Currently, 321 learners attend 24 programmes, most which are short courses. The three main accredited programmes comprise counselling at levels 3 and 4, childcare at levels 1 and 2 and the International Therapy Examination Council (ITEC) complementary therapies. Many courses have small numbers of learners. Most learners are on non-accredited courses. A full-time head of department, supported by a full-time departmental administrator and a part-time lecturer responsible for staff development and course co-ordination, manage the department. Approximately 60 part-time tutors work in the department. A full-time community outreach co-ordinator supports the department's involvement in outreach work and community projects. Just over half of all learners are from minority ethnic groups, 18% have a declared disability or learning difficulty and 85% are women.

Strengths

- Very high success rates
- Very high retention and achievement rates on short course non-accredited programmes
- Good progression to higher level courses
- Good teaching and learning
- Outstanding guidance and support
- Very effective partnerships
- Good curriculum management

Areas for improvement

- Incomplete arrangements to monitor external progression
- Insufficient access to learning resources to aid independent research

Achievement and standards

28. Achievement and standards are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Success rates overall are very high in 2007/08. They have risen significantly from 76% in 2005/06 to 93% in 2007/08. Success rates on some individual programmes are outstanding. For example, level 4 success rates in counselling improved from 85% to 100%, and levels 1 and 2 success rates in childcare from 55% to 100% over three years. Success rates on level 3 counselling and holistic massage courses are high. Non-accredited short course retention and achievement rates are very high for 2007/08.

29. The standard of learners' work on most programmes is good. Childcare learners' portfolios are very well organised and contain a wide range of evidence. Overall,

learners make good progress and progression to higher level courses is good. Learners' personal skills, such as confidence, are developed well. Learners successfully attain and apply counselling skills, holistic therapies and skills for life. Learners develop the skills and ability to take additional responsibility in learning tasks and the workplace.

Quality of provision

30. The quality of provision is good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Teaching and learning are good. Learning sessions are interesting, well planned and include a variety of learning activities. Learners are well motivated and enthusiastic about the subject. Good links are made between learners' work and course content. Tutors effectively use their very good subject knowledge and specialist experience to benefit learning. Teaching materials are appropriate, of good quality and are used effectively to extend learning. Tutors effectively integrate theory and practical work in teaching sessions.
31. The quality of assessment is satisfactory. Internal verification arrangements for accredited programmes are thorough. Formal feedback relating to marked work is varied. Some comments are brief and do not fully inform learners of how learning can be developed further.
32. The curriculum area is good at meeting the needs and interests of learners. Learners' progression to higher course levels is good. MWC supports learners' aspirations and promotes progression very well. The curriculum is well designed. Workplace supervisors provide very good opportunities in the workplace to enable childcare learners to achieve their aspirations. The wide range of courses gives learners good options to improve their qualifications, job role, voluntary work or career.
33. Information, advice and guidance are outstanding. Learners attend excellent, well planned introduction days where they receive highly effective advice and guidance. Learners receive good information at the start of the programme about the requirements of the course. A comprehensive learners' handbook gives clear information of the facilities and services available. Support for individual learners is detailed. MWC supports learners very well through its hardship fund. Childcare learners have good access to on-site crèche facilities and MWC provides contributions to childminding fees. Workplace supervisors provide very good support to childcare learners when they are on work placement.

Leadership and management

34. Leadership and management are good. Management of the curriculum is good, as identified in the latest self-assessment. The manager uses data effectively to develop the curriculum and monitor achievement of targets. Tutors attend very effective regular departmental and team meetings. They effectively share and develop good practice. Staff training and development are good. Staff are fully

involved in the self-assessment process, which is an accurate reflection of the provision.

35. The curriculum area has developed very effective partnerships. Managers work closely with local employers, public services and partners to develop beneficial learning programmes. The regular meetings with partners are effective in sharing good practice, identifying new courses and addressing government targets.
36. Equality of opportunity is good in health, public services and care. The head of department works very effectively with the community outreach worker to widen participation with hard to reach groups in the community.
37. Arrangements to follow up and formally monitor the destinations of learners who have completed their programmes are incomplete. The curriculum area is unable to assess the quality and variety of professional occupations and higher education that learners progress to. MWC recognises this in its most recent self-assessment and the head of department is working towards the development and introduction of a better system for collecting information.
38. Learners have insufficient access to learning tools and materials in the centre to aid independent research. Some tutors supply access to a selection of text books in the classroom. All tutors make good use of handouts. However, learning resources to support the development of research skills outside of teaching sessions are limited.

Visual arts

Good Grade 2

Context

39.MWC offers 185 courses in visual arts most of which are non-accredited. Most classes run for 12 weeks either during the day or in the evening. They take place at the main site. MWC also provides some classes for the over 60s and a programme of outreach courses in community venues. Of the 1,010 learners enrolled on programmes, 19% are men, 7.5% are from a minority ethnic background and 17% have a declared disability. A head of department oversees the curriculum and manages a full-time administrator, a half-time lecturer and technician and 33 part-time tutors.

Strengths

- Good achievement
- Good standards of work
- Good teaching and learning
- Particularly innovative range of courses
- Very good range of enrichment activity
- Outstanding support for learners
- Good leadership and management

Areas for improvement

- Insufficiently individualised target-setting
- Size of some specialist accommodation

Achievement and standards

40.Achievement and standards are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Success rates are high on the access and pre-foundation courses in 2007/08 at 88% and 94% respectively. These success rates have been sustained over several years. The overall achievement rate for non-accredited courses is high at 85.5%.

41.Standards of work are good. Learners in practical classes demonstrate high quality skills. They produce experimental work using a wide range of materials and processes. Learners produce a good range of different work. Some learners make good use of sketchbooks for research and development. Learners win competitions and gain external commissions. The quality of portfolios is good. Many learners successfully progress to higher education. Learners show a clear understanding of skills and processes in practical classes and a good focus on visual language in art classes. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

42. The quality of provision and teaching and learning are good as reflected in MWC's most recent self-assessment report. Practical demonstrations are good. Tutors provide good individual support, successfully managing the needs of diverse learners in the same learning session. In the better classes, practical activities link to good arts historical and cultural research. For example, in a painting class the tutor makes clear links between indigenous Australian art, 19th century French art, Mexican sculpture and the work of David Hockney. Learners on professional practice courses undertake useful work experience and joint projects with local arts centres and professional co-operatives. Classes are relaxed and good-humoured but very purposeful. Learners are keen, hard working and focused. They contribute effectively to group activities and many extend their work at home. They learn from each other and, in the best classes, they successfully criticise their own work and that of others. They articulate what they have learned using newly acquired language. In some learning sessions tutors make good use of information learning technology. However, in some learning sessions, tutors do not use an adequate range of teaching and learning strategies to sufficiently challenge some groups of learners.
43. The setting of individualised targets by tutors is insufficient. Tutors are encouraged to produce personalised records of achievement to match the particular learning objectives of their learners. However, in learning sessions, learning objectives are lists of skills or products and are not sufficiently individualised. Some learners on non-accredited programmes are insufficiently clear about the value of the monitoring forms.
44. MWC's programmes and activities outstandingly meet the needs and interests of learners. The range of courses is particularly innovative. Course titling is imaginative. For example, learners can select from visual poetry, thinking and making, colour and print fusion. Access and pre-foundation modular accredited programmes are particularly well planned and implemented. MWC provides extensive widening participation outreach programmes at community venues to access hard to reach learners. Course cancellations are particularly low.
45. MWC provides a very good range of enrichment activities. The display of work from the outreach community projects at local festivals, champions local groups and celebrates diversity. Learners on professional practice courses carry out work experience with local arts organisations. Ex-learners give useful feedback on their higher education experience to learners. Staff and learners have designed and built an attractive roof garden at the centre. The centre also hosts events and exhibitions, such as London jewellery week and the local Queens Square fair. Learners' work is exhibited at the centre, external venues and on-line. Learners undertake museum and studio visits. Glass blowing is taught at a specialist workshop. Learners participate in national competitions and events.
46. Support for learners is outstanding. Tutors know their learners particularly well. The tutorial process is very effective. Learners with additional needs are well

integrated and supported. Tutors receive additional learning support training and have a good scheme for sharing experiences. One learner with a serious medical problem was regularly kept up to date by curriculum staff during an extended absence and subsequently given extra help to rejoin her course. The course leaders and curriculum manager proactively support learners' applications for a wide range of financial support. Learners benefit from open workshops in areas such as essay writing. The central support team supports many learners and works extremely closely and sympathetically with subject specialists. Learners also welcome the prompt, attentive and helpful administrative support.

Leadership and management

47. Leadership and management are good. Curriculum management is good. Senior staff are very accessible to staff and learners and are seen as positive and enabling. Part-time staff are paid to attend meetings and training. Links with external partners are good. Staff development and training opportunities are good. Internal communication is very good. The use of management information is satisfactory. The internal observation scheme is supportive and critical. Course reviews effectively use learners' feedback. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate and used to plan improvements.
48. Equality of opportunity is good. Participation by learners with a declared disability is high. Diverse groups of learners very successfully integrate in classes. Multiculturalism and diversity are very strongly promoted in the outreach programme but less so in the core curriculum. Many previously disaffected learners have successfully progressed from outreach or other single classes to access courses and then to degree courses or into employment. Participation by minority ethnic groups is satisfactory overall. On outreach programmes, over 50% of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds however only 7.5% are on programmes at the main site.
49. Some specialist accommodation is too small. Some rooms are well equipped and appropriate and some spaces have been sufficiently modified. However, some rooms are not large enough for the number of learners. This inhibits learning and restricts the scale of work, display and storage space.

ESOL

Good: Grade 2

Context

50.MWC provides 103 courses in ESOL all of which are non-accredited. However, most courses offer opportunities for learners to gain nationally recognised qualifications. Courses are offered throughout the day, evening and weekends in general English from entry 1 to level 2. In addition, a range of courses focus on separate skills such as writing or pronunciation and intensive English courses at weekends. Of the 554 learners enrolled on programmes in 2008/09, 29% are men and 12% have a declared disability. Over 55 different nationalities make up the diverse learner profile. A head of department manages a full-time administrator, part-time skills for life lecturer and 12 part-time tutors.

Strengths

- Good attainment of speaking and listening skills
- Good achievement of qualifications at level 1 in 2007/08
- Much innovative teaching
- Good range of courses
- Particularly good support for learners with specific needs
- Good leadership and management

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning and monitoring of learners' progress

Achievement and standards

51.Achievement and standards are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Learners attain good speaking and listening skills. They participate enthusiastically in activities such as dialogues, discussions and presentations and make good progress. The number of learners taking ESOL speaking and listening qualifications increased from 58 in 2006/07 to 151 in 2007/08. Pass rates improved from 83% in 2006/07 to 95% in 2007/08.

52.Learners' achievement of qualifications at level 1 in 2007/08 is good. A high proportion, some 87% of learners who took the full certificate in ESOL, achieved a skills for life qualification. Achievement rates on non-accredited courses are satisfactory at 73% in 2007/08. Progression is satisfactory. In 2008/09, 215 learners returned to study ESOL and 67 former ESOL learners progressed to non-ESOL courses in various subjects such as community interpreting and translating, painting, psychology, singing and modern languages. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

53. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. There is much innovative teaching. Tutors use stimulating topics to engage learners' interest and provide an appropriate context for language learning. In one learning session, the tutor uses film and book titles to teach the pronunciation of connected speech. Learners enjoy discussing films they have seen and effectively correct their pronunciation errors. Tutors effectively use learning resources in classes. In one class, real examples of reading texts such as leaflets, a recipe card, a car tax form and a newspaper editorial were used to discuss the purpose and audience for each one. Effective preparation for examinations is included in learning sessions. Tutors give clear instructions and use questions well to check learners' understanding. In a minority of learning sessions, session planning is insufficiently detailed.
54. Tutors insufficiently plan and monitor learners' progress. Initial and diagnostic assessment is good and learners discuss their results with tutors. However, this information is not effectively used to set individual targets for learners or to plan their learning programmes. Course goals are too ambitious and broad for many learners. Tutors recognise that learners will not fully achieve course goals but do not effectively individualise or monitor progress.
55. The department is good at meeting learners' needs and interests. It provides a good range of well considered courses running at various times during the day and evening. Flexible intensive courses are available on Saturdays for workers unable to attend during the week. Mothers with children have priority for courses and their children are accepted in the crèche. There are useful courses for very small groups of learners who are absolute beginners in English. The organisation offers a good choice of enrichment activities. For example, visits to places of interest such as museums and theatres. Tutors take advantage of special offers in order to make trips affordable for learners. They provide additional learning sessions for learners before visits to the theatre to familiarise them with the play, its language and history. The ESOL department works in partnership with the London Borough of Camden to offer courses to borough residents.
56. Guidance and support for learners is outstanding. Staff provide particularly good support for learners with specific needs. Learners not making good progress in classes are invited to attend a meeting for an evaluation of their additional support needs. MWC employs interpreters to assist in these meetings. Learners identified with learning difficulties and disabilities receive very effective additional tutorials. Tutorials have been particularly valuable for learners with dyslexia or mental health issues. Tutors are very caring and supportive for their learners' needs. Information about courses is clear and detailed. Important information is translated into a range of languages. There are twice-weekly advice and guidance sessions which are open to new applicants and existing learners to attend. Tutors also give good advice and guidance in tutorial sessions and learners are referred to learner services for individual professional advice.

Leadership and management

57. Leadership and management is good overall. Courses are well organised. Communication is good. Significant recent improvements have been made in learners' achievements. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. Progress in addressing current areas for development is good, but it is too early to see the impact of these. Tutors are appropriately qualified. Observation of teaching and learning provides broadly accurate judgements on the quality of teaching and learning. Feedback to tutors is both detailed and helpful. Tutors who do not achieve a satisfactory learning session observation grade receive good support to address development points. Additional observations take place to monitor their progress. Promotion of equality and diversity is good. In learning sessions, tutors value their learners' different cultural experiences and use these to good effect in teaching.

Annex

Learners' achievements

Learners' achievements in FE funded, accredited provision offered by ACL providers

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

2006 to 2008, compared with the national rates for GFE colleges.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	19+			
		Starts – Transfers	ACL Provider Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
1 long	06/07*	269	64	72	-8
	07/08*	193	88	N/A**	N/A
2 long	06/07*	80	60	69.5	-9.5
	07/08*	59	73	N/A**	N/A
3 long	06/07*	100	82	71.3	+9.7
	07/08*	100	86	N/A**	N/A
Short***	06/07*	513	75	82.1	-7.1
	07/08*	599	89	N/A**	N/A

* ACL provider data not validated (used where complete, validated and produced using proprietary software)

** LSC national averages unavailable at time of inspection

*** Courses over five weeks long