

Bromley by Bow Centre

Inspection date

12 February 2009

Inspection number

330903

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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

Description of the provider

1. Founded 25 years ago, the Bromley by Bow Centre (BBBC) is a community organisation in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets in East London. In 1998, the centre became one of the first Healthy Living Centres in the UK. BBBC is one of a network of six community hubs in Tower Hamlets that support local people with low levels of occupational skills and qualifications, and who have poor generic skills required for employment. BBBC works in partnership with local colleges and training providers, the council and other community organisations.
2. The LSC in London East has funded adult apprenticeships since 2007 and the Train to Gain programmes since 2008. BBBC has 32 adult apprentices in health, public services and care, 23 of them on childcare and learning development (CCLD) courses and nine on health and social care courses. Of the 39 learners on Train to Gain programmes, 19 are enrolled on CCLD courses, four on health and social care and 16 on business administration and law. BBBC subcontracts the business administration and law provision for nine of its Train to Gain learners.
3. Tower Hamlets is one of the most deprived boroughs in the country with the highest unemployment rate in London at 12.9%. Of those residents of working age, 25% have no qualifications and 49% hold qualifications at level 2 or above. Within Tower Hamlets, 57% of residents are from minority ethnic communities.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision		Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3	
Train to Gain	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3	
Capacity to improve		Satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievement and standards		Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2	
Train to Gain	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3	
Quality of provision		Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3	
Train to Gain	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3	
Leadership and management		Satisfactory: Grade 3
Work-based learning	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3	
Train to Gain	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3	
Equality of opportunity		Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: Grade 3
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Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Work-based learning
Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievement and standards are good for work-based learners and satisfactory for the Train to Gain learners. The quality of provision and leadership and management are satisfactory. Provision in health, public services and care is also satisfactory. Equality of opportunity is good.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. BBBC has demonstrated that it has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Steps taken to improve the provision since its restructuring are starting to have some impact. BBBC has taken effective actions to re-organise its programme teams and has recruited new members of staff. Success rates for adult apprentices in childcare courses are good, particularly within specific timescales. Adult apprentices in health and social care are less successful. Learners on Train to Gain only started their programme six months ago and the majority have not yet completed it, but are making satisfactory progress. While a new improved quality framework has been developed for operations in its own centres, arrangements for monitoring its subcontracted provision are insufficiently thorough. BBBC provides satisfactory support for developing literacy, numeracy and language skills.
6. This is the first self-assessment report produced by BBBC. The self-assessment process includes the views of its staff and trustees. Views from learners and employers are being systematically obtained. Inspectors agreed with most grades in the report. However, the report does not identify many of the areas for improvement found by inspectors.

Key strengths

- High success rates for adult apprentices on childcare programmes
- Good off-the-job training
- Good personal support
- Good and productive links with external partners
- Good response to the diverse needs of the local community

Key areas for improvement

- Inadequate planning of on-the-job training
- Insufficient work placements for health and social care learners
- Inadequate monitoring of subcontracted training
- Limited analysis and use of management information

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Work-based learning
Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

7. Achievements and standards are satisfactory overall. They are good for the adult apprentices who are studying towards childcare, learning and development qualifications (CCLD). Validated data was not available during the inspection but the provider's own data shows that, for 2007/08, adult apprentices on CCLD programmes have both high timely and overall success rates of 92%. This strength is recognised in the self-assessment report. The small number of apprentices on health and social care programmes have a lower success rate of 50%. The Train to Gain learners who have been on programme for six months are making satisfactory progress.
8. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory and the work is stored in well-organised portfolios. CCLD apprentices' portfolios contain some examples of high standards of work. All learners gain good levels of knowledge and confidence. They develop effective oral skills. Learners with English as a second or third language develop the confidence to contribute very well to discussions.
9. The number of learners progressing into employment or further training is satisfactory. BBBC has developed an electronic system to monitor and record the progress of learners but it currently lacks sufficient detail to measure progress effectively.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Work-based learning
Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

10. The quality of provision is satisfactory. All learners receive good off-the-job training. Tutors have appropriate qualifications and experience. Learners attend well-planned sessions each week. Learners' understanding is regularly checked and a varied range of teaching and learning methods is used effectively. Accommodation is satisfactory.
11. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Results from initial assessment activities are generally well documented and used to complete individual learning plans. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Learners know what is expected of them to meet the NVQ assessment criteria. Records of assessment by direct observation

of their work are detailed. Oral feedback following the observations is given promptly but written feedback is often late. Too much emphasis is placed on written evidence when oral questioning or observation has already been carried out.

12. Planning of on-the-job training is inadequate. This was not identified in the self-assessment report. While employers are given general information about training programmes, employers where CCLD learners work are not made aware of the benefits of them gaining experience of working with different age groups. Health and safety checks of placements are not always completed before the start of a placement. There is insufficient sharing of information between BBBC's staff of topics completed off the job to enable placement supervisors to plan on-the-job training, or to plan tasks to reinforce the learning. Employers are not routinely included in any of the learners' progress reviews.

13. Arrangements to meet the needs and interests of learners are satisfactory. Learners benefit from the diverse additional activities provided by BBBC. The provision for literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory and are generally good for learners who require English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). The range of courses and qualifications provides learners with the skills and knowledge to seek employment within the childcare and care sectors. Insufficient placements exist for health and social care learners. While learners on childcare programmes are in a variety of good quality placements, most of their experience is with one age group. This was identified in the self-assessment report.

14. Guidance and support is good. Learners receive good personal support. Effective impartial advice and guidance is provided by well-trained learning ambassadors, some of whom speak the main community languages. Induction arrangements are satisfactory. BBBC's employment advice and guidance service provides good practical help with the completion of application forms and writing curriculum vitae. Learners are well supported in seeking legal advice as well as in accessing welfare and benefits services. It has enabled many learners who have used this support to continue with their studies. Tutors and assessors are easily accessible and provide effective individual coaching support when required.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Work-based learning

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

15. Leadership and management are satisfactory as identified in the self-assessment report. The organisation's vision and strategic planning provides a sound basis for future development. The board of trustees is fully supportive and involved in the planning. Following a restructure of the management, the director of services oversees six programme managers effectively, one of whom manages the work-based learning provision. Staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Arrangements for staff appraisals, training and development are satisfactory.
16. Links with external partners are particularly good and productive. Established links with a wide range of partners has been instrumental in developing BBBC's wide range of provision. These collaborations expand manager's knowledge about employment and training opportunities and assist them in planning future provision.
17. The strategy for the provision of literacy, numeracy and ESOL support is satisfactory. Learners have ready access to help and support, particularly in developing their English language skills alongside the vocational skills in their main programmes.
18. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. Safeguarding arrangements are promoted and discussed with staff during a range of staff meetings.
19. Quality improvement arrangements are satisfactory. A more formal and cohesive system is successfully replacing separate departmental arrangements for monitoring the quality of its provision. A system of observations of teaching and learning is well established. Ongoing support for new tutors is provided through mentoring arrangements by experienced staff. The records of observations are overly complex and too little emphasis is placed on learning activities. BBBC have started to analyse the records to provide comparative data on overall performance and improvement levels year by year. The collection of other management information is satisfactory overall, but the analysis and use of the data is limited. Arrangements for internal verification are satisfactory.
20. The current self-assessment report is the first produced by BBBC. The process includes the views of staff and trustees. While inspectors agreed with most of the grades in the report, it failed to identify most of the areas for improvement found during the inspection.

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21. Monitoring arrangements for the small subcontracted Train to Gain provision is inadequately organised. It was not identified as an area for improvement by the provider. A satisfactory service level agreement is in place. Records of meetings with the subcontractor are insufficiently detailed to be useful. Arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching and assessment activities have not been established.
22. Equality of opportunity is good. A particularly strong focus on equality and diversity underpins all of its activities and BBBC responds very well to the diverse needs of its community. Training is promoted very well to groups of people who might not otherwise take advantage of these opportunities. It offers flexible attendance to ensure that the needs of wider family members are taken into account. Staff employed at the centre reflect the diverse range of its learners very well. Learners are actively involved with the varied cultural events that take place within the centre. BBBC proactively seeks to encourage the wellbeing of its local community and is involved in the production of a range of good quality health packs that are attracting a wider national audience. Data relating to the different groups of learners, including enrolments, retention and success rates, are not sufficiently analysed or used.

What learners like:

- The helpful staff
- Having the facilities to gain a qualification
- Easy access to all the support services
- The teaching
- Learning good childcare practice to use at home

What learners think could improve:

- The provision of crèche facilities
- To make the connections it has with care homes better