

London Borough of Tower Hamlets – Adult and Community Learning

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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:

- Complementary health studies
- Sport, leisure and recreation
- Arts, media and publishing
- Preparation for life and work
- Administration

Description of the provider

1. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets provides adult and community learning (ACL) and apprenticeships for young people. ACL provision is managed by the Tower Hamlets Lifelong Learning Service (the service). Apprenticeships are managed by the Hamlets Youth Training Service. Both services contract with the LSC London East. ACL provision includes personal community and developmental learning (PCDL) family literacy, language and numeracy learning (FLNN), family learning impact funding (FLIF), wider family learning, neighbourhood learning for deprived communities (NLDC), and a range of accredited further education programmes.
2. Most lifelong learning provision is provided by an in-house team of part-time and sessional tutors. In 2007/08, the service provided approximately 9,000 enrolments. Provision is delivered in a range of venues across the borough including two learning centres, libraries and community venues, schools and other community sites. The service subcontracts some provision to a social enterprise organisation, the Bromley by Bow Centre.
3. Tower Hamlets is the third most deprived borough in the country. Although it has more jobs than economically active residents, only 54% of the working age population are in work. Fifty-seven per cent of the local population are from minority ethnic groups and 78 different community languages are spoken.

Summary of grades awarded

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

Sector subject areas

Complementary health studies	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Sport, leisure and recreation	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Arts, media and publishing	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Administration	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Adult and community learning
Work-based learning

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

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievement and standards are good. Retention rates on community programmes are high. Overall success rates on further education (FE) accredited courses are improving well and most are at or above national averages. However, level one FE success rates are low. Work-based learning success rates are satisfactory. Learners develop good skills. Standards of work and attendance are satisfactory.
5. The quality of provision and teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better teaching sessions, tutors make effective use of a wide range of teaching methods and activities to encourage and motivate learners. They challenge learners well and have high expectations of them. In the weaker teaching sessions, insufficient use is made of initial assessment to plan individual learning and progress is insufficiently monitored and recorded. Tutors are appropriately qualified and accommodation and learning resources are good.
6. Provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is satisfactory. Learners have good access to a broad range of programmes from entry to level 3. However, the promotion of courses is not always carried out well and progression routes are not clear in some curriculum areas. Curriculum enrichment activities are good.
7. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Personal tutors provide effective support and a broad range of such services are available to learners. Overall, information, advice and guidance are appropriate for most learners' needs. However, some learners experience difficulties in obtaining detailed information to help them make decisions about their future. Careers advice is insufficient. Initial assessment is effective at identifying additional needs and learners are supported well.
8. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior managers and council officers have a clear strategic vision for the service. This is linked well to other key strategies, for example, the council's employment and library strategies. Achievement and standards have improved and are good. Strong local partnerships are working well to widen participation. The standard of accommodation and resources is good. Management information has recently been much improved and is starting to support the decision-making process. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Recent actions to monitor and improve teaching and learning are not yet fully implemented. Curriculum management is

satisfactory. Staff development is insufficiently evaluated to meet the whole organisations needs. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

9. The service demonstrates satisfactory capacity to improve. It has clear strategic direction and is financially sound. Achievement and standards are now good. Success rates are improving and overall are now comparable to national averages. Senior managers acknowledge that the service has been slow to implement changes from the previous inspection, but the pace of change has increased. At the previous inspection, leadership and management and equality of opportunity were judged to be satisfactory and remain so. Quality assurance was judged to be inadequate and is now satisfactory. ESOL remains satisfactory. Visual and arts, media and publishing has declined from good to satisfactory. The self-assessment process is satisfactory and the report is largely accurate, particularly for areas for improvement. However, grades at inspection for sector subject areas were lower than those in the self-assessment report.
10. The service has made satisfactory progress to meet the key challenges identified at the previous inspection. Good improvements have taken place in quality assurance procedures. Management information data is now reliable and accurate and it is being used well by managers. Curriculum management is satisfactory. The service's skills for life policy is ensuring the numeracy, literacy and language needs of learners are being met more fully. Initial assessment is carried out well. However, systems to monitor learners' progress are not consistently applied in all sector subject areas. Individual learning plans do not have sufficient specific, time-bound targets agreed with learners.

Key strengths

- Clear strategic direction
- Good partnership arrangements
- High retention rates
- Good development of learners' skills
- Very good accommodation and resources
- Good use of enrichment activities to improve learning

Key areas for improvement

- Low level one further education success rates
- Balance between group and individual tuition
- Insufficient advice and guidance for community learners
- Application of the recognition and recording of performance and achievement to meet individual learner goals
- Insufficient progression opportunities
- Insufficient evaluation of staff development activity

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Good: Grade 2

Adult and community learning
Work-based learning

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

11. Achievement and standards are good. Retention rates on non-accredited courses have improved over recent years and are high at 94% in 2007/08. Success rates on accredited further education (FE) long and short courses over five weeks are generally improving faster than the national average rate as recorded for FE colleges. Overall FE success rates are satisfactory. Levels 2, 3 and short courses are now either at or slightly above national averages. However, level 1 is significantly below national average. Work-based learning apprenticeship success rates have fluctuated over recent years and are now satisfactory. In 2006/07, just over half of those learners enrolled on courses achieved a full qualification. In 2007/08, success rates rose to 71%. Timely success for these learners is satisfactory.
12. Overall, learners' develop good vocational skills, particularly in complementary therapies, visual arts, ESOL and work-based learning. Learners improve their personal skills and self confidence while on programme. The standard of learners' work is generally satisfactory. Attendance is improving and is satisfactory.
13. Arrangements for recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) have been further developed. However, the provider has identified that application of this process is not consistent among staff and that it does not focus sufficiently on individual targets.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Adult and community learning
Work-based working

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

14. The quality of provision and teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better teaching sessions, tutors plan learning sessions particularly effectively to make good use of a wide range of teaching methods to motivate learners. Accommodation and learning resources are good. Practical and theory rooms are well equipped with specialist teaching resources. Tutors are appropriately qualified and many bring current knowledge of latest industry trends, for example, in dance and complementary therapies. Many classrooms are well equipped although information and learning technology (ILT) is not used sufficiently in many areas to improve teaching and learning. In one learning centre information computer technology is insufficiently reliable to meet the

needs of some planned learning sessions. Some learning materials are poorly reproduced.

15. Assessment practice is satisfactory. On accredited learning programmes, formal assessment is carried out effectively against course requirements. For learners on non-accredited programmes, assessment against whole group goals is generally satisfactory. However, initial assessment is insufficiently used to determine learners' levels at the start of the course. Assessment for these learners is often informal. This has been identified by the service as a key area for further development in the latest quality improvement plan.
16. Tutors manage the learning environment well and adapt learning sessions to meet learners' needs. However, tutors focus on whole class teaching and do not provide sufficient individual coaching. In the weaker classes, tutors do not identify individual learners' prior knowledge or abilities. Learning is generally led by the tutor with insufficient question and answer sessions with learners. The provider's own observation of the teaching and learning process has recently been revised to give more emphasis to the learning process and individual tutor improvement plans. However, these actions are not yet fully implemented by all observers. Inspectors identified that some learning sessions are given grades that are too high and do not identify clear actions for tutors to improve.
17. The range of provision is satisfactory to meet learners' needs. Curriculum enrichment is very good in many curriculum areas. For example, art learners enter competitions, visit galleries and advanced learners put on performances for other learners. Staff have developed good links with parent liaison officers in schools, and provide good support to ensure learners remain on their course. Skills for life programmes have insufficient emphasis on developing learners' employability skills.
18. Service managers have a good understanding of local community needs and appropriate courses are arranged to where appropriate. Curriculum development takes full account of the service's priorities. However, in some sector subject areas few courses are available to meet demand. An increasing amount of provision is offered as short courses and at the weekend. Promotion of courses is not always carried out well and many potential learners are not made aware of relevant learning opportunities. The number of learners enrolled has fallen significantly over the past three years, particularly for FE learners where numbers have halved. Tutors are developing initiatives to engage with hard to reach groups, such as Somalis and eastern Europeans, through partnership work with a broad range of statutory and community agencies. It is too early to judge the effectiveness this work. In some curriculum areas, learners do not have suitable progression routes and either remain on courses for too long or join courses at too high a level. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well on dedicated courses and within mainstream provision.
19. Support for learners is satisfactory. Learners' additional needs are identified and supported effectively for those on accredited and preparation for life and work courses. The service provides appropriate and basic adaptive technologies for learners with special learning needs. Personal tutors offer effective support. A

broad range of support services are available to learners. The range of information access points is good. However, for some community learners' with particular or unclear needs, advice and guidance services are not sufficiently developed. This has been identified by the provider as an area for future development.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Adult and community learning

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Work-based learning

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

20. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior managers and council officers have a clear strategic vision for the service to meet the needs of learners and the local community. Council members are committed to the aims of the service and provide good support. The service's development plan is aligned to national and local priorities. It supports other key strategies, including the council's employment strategy and the community plan. The borough's adult learning strategy was written by service managers in conjunction with other key partners. No formal governance arrangements are in place. Learners are very satisfied with the quality of provision and support. The self-assessment report rightly highlights this as a key strength of the service. Development of learners' skills is good in many sector subject areas. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates in FE provision are satisfactory and have improved significantly since 2005/06.

21. Strong local partnerships are widening participation of learners in the local community. The service provides courses from a broad range of venues across the borough. It has four well resourced venues, which are a major contributor to the delivery of lifelong learning and other community services. These are all situated in busy locations and were developed through collaboration between the council, Tower Hamlets College and other partners. The neighbourhood learning for deprived communities' team is fully committed to developing provision in a co-ordinated way through partnership working. They and other curriculum managers have a good awareness of the needs of the local community, and the way it is changing, and are developing close links with voluntary and statutory agencies, such as the local Primary Care Trust. Skills for life provision offered by the service fully supports that offered by the local college and other voluntary sector organisations.

22. Curriculum management is satisfactory overall. The curriculum has been reviewed successfully in several sector subject areas, for example, preparation for life and work, languages and ICT. Poorly performing courses have been closed. Management of accommodation and learning resources is good. Specialist accommodation includes a professional training kitchen and dance and fitness studios. Communication between managers and tutors, most of whom are part-time, is good. However, part-time staff do not generally have the opportunity for

performance review meetings with their manager to discuss progress and support needs. Staff training takes place for a broad range of relevant subjects. However, the impact of these activities is not evaluated centrally. Inspectors found much poor practice in the use of RARPA and individual target-setting for learners.

23. The use of management information data was identified as a key weakness at the previous inspection. Recently, a new management information system was introduced. It provides accurate information on a broad range of performance indicators, covering learners' achievement and other relevant factors. Managers have received training in the use of this information but the data is not yet used effectively by all of them. The service is financially sound, despite a trend of declining enrolments. However, many classes have few learners and the promotion of courses is not always carried out effectively.
24. Quality assurance was inadequate at the previous inspection. The service acknowledges that the integration of quality improvement measures has been slow, but comprehensive procedures are now in place and quality assurance is satisfactory. Course performance is monitored thoroughly at regular quality improvement group and management team meetings. The service provides good support to subcontractors and the quality of this provision is evaluated well.
25. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The process is well established and involves full-time staff appropriately, although not all part-time tutors are involved sufficiently. The report is comprehensive and evaluative, and broadly accurate at identifying key strengths and more so for identifying areas for improvement. However, three of the curriculum grades given by the inspection team were lower than those in the report. Procedures for the observation of teaching and learning have improved, but the quality of teaching and learning shows little improvement since the previous inspection. The service has insufficient focus on supporting individual tutors in areas identified as requiring improvement. Curriculum managers analyse well strengths and areas for improvement. The service has no learner involvement strategy and no formal processes for learner representatives to meet with staff. However, learner feedback is collated through comprehensive questionnaires. This information is used by managers to implement actions in response to issues raised by learners.
26. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The service has adopted the council's core values and policies for equality and diversity, and this is compliant with equalities legislation. The service does not have its own specific policy or action plan to promote equality of opportunity. Staff awareness of equality and diversity is high and the service is welcoming and friendly to all learners. The ethnic profile of staff is close to that of the local community and the service's learners, except for having a lower proportion of staff of Bangladeshi origin. Staff training takes place to promote awareness of equality and diversity issues. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and attend dedicated courses and mainstream provision. However, the two main centres are not fully accessible to wheelchair users. Two thirds of learners are women. Appropriately, women-only courses are run where a supportive learning environment is provided to attract women who are reluctant to join a general course. The service has also put on programmes designed for men, such as a 'dads and lads' course.

27. Procedures for safeguarding learners are satisfactory. The service meets current government requirements for learners under 18 years of age and vulnerable adults. Service policies on safeguarding are comprehensive. Criminal Records Bureau checks are carried out for all relevant staff and volunteers. The service has a designated child protection officer. Appropriate staff are trained in safer recruitment practices and further training is planned to raise the profile of safeguarding procedures. Venues used by the service are audited for health and safety and relevant health and safety policies are in place with clear guidelines for tutors and learners.

What learners like:

- Quality of accommodation and equipment
- Approachable and supportive staff
- Gaining qualifications
- Learning new skills and improving confidence
- Making friends
- Community spirit and feeling very safe

What learners think could improve:

- Information, advice and guidance
- Access to computers
- More homework
- Crèche hours at some centres
- Remuneration for work-based learners

Sector subject areas

Complementary health studies

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

28. The service offers a range of complementary therapy courses from two hour introductory workshops to level 3 professional qualifications. Most provision is non-accredited. At the time of the inspection 773 learners were enrolled on courses including anatomy and physiology, aromatherapy, reflexology and Reiki. Courses are held daily, in the evening and at two venues at the weekend. One curriculum development manager and two co-ordinators manage the provision. At the time of the inspection there were nine tutors.

Strengths

- Good achievement
- Good development of skills
- Very good accommodation and learning resources

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient individual tuition
- Insufficient information, advice and guidance

Achievement and standards

29. Achievement and standards are good. Retention of learners on non-accredited courses is high at 96% in 2007/08. Success rates are high for learners on accredited courses. In 2005/06, success rates were 84% and this improved to 93% in 2007/08.

30. Learners develop good vocational and personal skills and quickly adopt safe working practices. The standard of learners' work is good. Many learners are able to demonstrate confidence in working with clients. Some learners are already qualified, experienced practitioners in related professions. They combine the new skills developed to enhance the range of therapies they offer clients. Some learners use the qualifications gained for progression at work. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

31. Quality of provision and teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best learning sessions, tutors are well prepared and use a wide range of teaching methods. Learners are encouraged to use interactive whiteboards and internet research. However, overall teaching is no better than satisfactory. Learners receive too much whole class teaching. In many sessions learners are insufficiently challenged. Tutors do not plan well to identify learners' prior knowledge and attainment or meet their individual needs. The services internal records of teaching and learning observations do not clearly show how some tutors are awarded high grades.
32. Accommodation and resources for complementary therapies are very good. Two venues have dedicated therapy rooms with a wide range of modern couches and therapy chairs. Teaching resources include anatomical models, educational videos and interactive white boards. Learners on accredited awards receive an appropriate text book and a wide range of current text books are available for loan. Learning is enriched with visits to museums and exhibitions.
33. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Tutors use an appropriate range of assessment methods to measure learning. Assessment of learners' practical skills in class is good. Accredited courses have clear criteria for assessment and confirm learners' competence with external examinations. However, for many learners on non-accredited programmes, assessment is informal and not appropriately recorded. The use of RARPA is not yet fully implemented to record learners' starting point. The self-assessment report identifies the need to consistently measure learning for learners on non-accredited courses.
34. Identification of additional learning needs for learners enrolling on to accredited courses is insufficiently developed to include support for all aspects of basic skills. The focus of self disclosure and diagnostic testing is on literacy skills. The criteria for successful completion of the qualification include assignments, progressive learning diaries with case studies and reflective evaluation of practice working with voluntary clients. Assignments and timed, external examinations are statutory requirements. Resources to support learners' literacy needs are satisfactory. Additional individual literacy support is available from course tutors and some learners have additional time to complete examinations.
35. The range of courses to meet learners' needs is good. Therapy courses are designed so that learners can progress from non-accredited beginner level through to level 3. Some learners have progressed from introductory courses to become qualified practitioners. Learners improve personal lifestyles and confirm their choice of career.
36. Learner support is satisfactory. Tutors support learners well. Learners wishing to enrol onto level 2 and 3 accredited programmes are interviewed to evaluate prior learning and to identify the most appropriate level of course to meet their abilities and needs. However, many learners receive insufficient information, advice and

guidance. Staff do not have an adequate understanding of the information of courses offered, start dates and enrolment procedures. Many learners experience difficulties in enrolling at community venues. In some instances, learners failed to reach learning sessions because of inappropriate information. Tutors offer learners some advice and guidance, but this is not generally sufficient to meet the needs of all learners. The provider has identified this as a key area for improvement.

Leadership and management

37. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Communication between management and tutors is effective. Resources are managed well. Staff and managers are receptive to learners' needs. For example, a pilot scheme to lend therapy couches to learners on accredited courses was successfully implemented so that they could practise their skills at home for the duration of their course.
38. Strategies to improve teaching and learning were recently introduced but it is too early to judge their effectiveness. Many action plans following observations have either poorly detailed or no improvement targets. Monitoring of recommendations and actions to be taken is insufficient. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate. However, the provider judged teaching and learning to be outstanding.
39. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The diversity of learners matches the local community. Learners show each other respect. Their cultural needs are accommodated appropriately during practical learning sessions. However, equality of opportunity is not promoted sufficiently in learning sessions.

Sport, leisure and recreation

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

40. The service offers a range of fitness programmes. These include, circuit training, swimming, weight training, pilates, legs bums and tums, yoga and tai chi. In 2008/09, a total of 1121 learners enrolled on fitness programmes. Courses are offered during the day, evening and weekends and generally run for 10 or 11 weeks. A certificate in fitness instructing at level 2 is available. The provision is offered across the borough at various centres, including schools, libraries and the learning centre at Shadwell.

41. Approximately 30% of learners are male and 6% have a disability or learning difficulty. Some 50% are from black and minority ethnic groups and 9% are over 65 years of age. One curriculum manager and two curriculum co-ordinators are responsible for the provision with fifteen tutors teaching between one and six hours a week.

Strengths

- High retention
- Good enrichment activities contributing to learner achievement
- Very good accommodation and resources for practical learning sessions

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning and support to meet individual learner needs
- Insufficient target-setting and monitoring of progress

Achievement and standards

42. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Retention is high at 94% in 2007/08. Development of learners' skills is satisfactory. While on programme, learners' self-esteem and self-confidence improved well. Development of learners' skills improvement and maintenance of their health and fitness is satisfactory. Learners improve their mobility, flexibility and ability to perform everyday tasks. Several weight- and power-lifting learners have achieved titles at competitions. The overall standard of learners' work is satisfactory. However, while exercise performance and posture is satisfactory, poor examples of techniques are displayed in some sessions.

43. Attendance in 2007/08 is satisfactory at 82%. However, attendance at observed sessions during the week of inspection was low at 69%.

Quality of provision

44. The quality of provision and teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better learning sessions, tutors identify learners' abilities and coach them well to work on different activities. Learners are challenged and encouraged to develop new skills. Teaching methods are varied and good use is made of peer evaluation. However, weaker sessions use a limited range of teaching and learning methods. Many learners are not sufficiently challenged and others perform exercises that are too advanced. Insufficient assessment of learners' skills is carried out during sessions. Learners do not receive sufficient individual coaching during performance of exercises to improve technique. Some poor performance is not corrected.
45. Accommodation and learning resources are very good. Sessions take place in purpose-built spacious rooms with wooden or sprung floors. A mirrored studio is used for some pilates sessions and the weight lifting gym is well equipped. A good range of equipment is used by learners including cardio vascular machines, mats, blocks, balls and belts. Tutors have developed a good resource bank to develop their knowledge and ideas to improve learners' experience.
46. Tutors do not carry out sufficient planning to support and meet individual learners' needs or improve their performance. Some learners do not receive sufficient alternatives to allow them to work at the most appropriate level. Insufficient guidance is given to learners about which exercise would best suit their needs. Assessment comprises observation only.
47. Insufficient individual target-setting and monitoring of progress takes place. Learners do not always clearly identify their personal learning goals. When these are recorded they are often not realistic, measurable or time related. Learners' starting points for measures related to their learning goals, such as flexibility, are insufficiently tested. The review of progress towards targets is insufficient and learners do not receive enough useful recorded feedback about their progress.
48. The range of provision is satisfactory. Enrichment activities are good and contribute well towards learner achievement. Learners from weight- and power-lifting sessions benefit from additional training and are involved in the organisation of competitions. Tai Chi learners meet and perform at parks during holiday periods. Other learners attend demonstrations. Weekend, daytime and evening courses are spread sufficiently throughout the borough. Adequate progression opportunities are available. An accredited fitness instructor programme was run last year in response to community demand.
49. Learner support is satisfactory. Learners receive appropriate pastoral support from tutors. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Some learners are able to try out classes before enrolment. A crèche is used by learners who would otherwise have difficulty participating in group fitness sessions. Learners are given sufficient information on suitable exercise sessions during holiday periods.

Leadership and management

50. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Tutors receive regular communication from the curriculum manager. Staff have good working relationships and tutors feel valued by the service. Tutors attend a good range of external continuing professional development activities and they share much good practice at regular small team meetings. Curriculum planning is satisfactory and the development of good partnerships informs future planning.
51. The use of data to aid planning is satisfactory, although some in-year data is not always timely. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Observations of teaching and learning are carried out regularly although records of observations do not fully reflect the grade given. Tutor and learner feedback is used adequately for self-assessment. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate but did not identify the teaching and learning areas for improvement identified at inspection.
52. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Plans are in place to target learners from under represented groups with specific courses. For example, weight- and power-lifting courses will be used to recruit males. A father and son weight-lifting programme was run recently and an exercise for health programme for Bangladeshi women is starting shortly.

Arts, media and publishing

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

53. At the time of inspection 84 courses were running in art, fashion and textiles, photography music and dance. Seven courses are accredited, four at level 2 and three at level 3 in dance, fashion and textiles, and photography. Courses are available in the morning, afternoon, evening and at weekends. Courses run for three 10-week terms. At the time of inspection 1,952 learners were on courses. Male learners account for 25% of learners and 60% are new learners. The provision is managed by two curriculum managers, one for creative and performing art and photography and the other for craft. The department employs 39 part-time tutors.

Strengths

- Good standard of learners work in visual art
- High retention
- Good curriculum enrichment activities
- Good accommodation and equipment

Areas for improvement

- Poor attendance and punctuality in performing art
- Insufficient advice and guidance for community learners
- Insufficient progression routes for learners

Achievement and standards

54. Achievement and standards are good. Retention is high and in 2007/08 was 95%. Success rates for accredited provision are satisfactory at 65% in 2007/08. Learners in visual art produce a high standard of work. This is displayed in portfolios, sketchbooks and at the centres. Learners quickly acquire a good understanding of basic art concepts such as tone, perspective, proportion and balance. They are highly motivated and gain confidence in their new skills and use a variety of materials. Learners are able to articulate well about what they have learnt and the progress they have made. They enjoy taking part in class discussions and peer critiques.

55. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The provider has identified that attendance has been low and has taken appropriate action. In 2007/08, attendance was 69%. Up to March 2008/09, attendance is 74%. However in performing arts attendance and punctuality are poor. Where learners work in

groups or pairs, the low numbers and erratic attendance slows progression and impacts on group dynamics.

Quality of provision

56. Quality of provision and teaching and learning are satisfactory. Many tutors are professionals in their specific fields and bring up-to-date knowledge to enhance the learning process. In the better teaching sessions tutors use challenging programmes to engage and motivate learners. Sessions are particularly well planned and individual coaching is particularly effective. In weaker sessions, learners are left for too long on tasks without appropriate checking of progress. Some tutors do not provide learners with accurate information and handouts are poorly reproduced. Dance learners who arrive late are allowed to go straight into activities without following appropriate warm-up exercises.
57. Accommodation and equipment are good. Most dance studios and pottery rooms are purpose built and well equipped. Studios are large and well lit. Sewing rooms are equipped with appropriate cutting tables and up-to-date machinery. Visual art learners have access to a wide range of free materials that allows them to experiment in many different media. Most teaching rooms are well equipped with ILT and the sewing room has a computer aided design machine. However, neither are well used by tutors or learners.
58. Targets are not used appropriately to help learners progress. Individual learning plans are in place for whole class goals. Many tutors have devised their own learning plans and use these successfully. However, some plans are not sufficiently comprehensive and do not identify the range of learning outcomes. Overall, assessment practice is satisfactory and takes place formally and informally.
59. The service's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is satisfactory. Curriculum enrichment is good. In dance, learners are invited to dance exhibitions and are encouraged to try out their new skills in social dancing events. Visits are organised to Sadlers Wells, art exhibitions and fashion shows. Learners communicate on face book to share information, ideas and videos of their work. Some learners take part in public performances and the art department exhibits in public places.
60. The provision has insufficient progression routes. Many learners re-enrol on the same course term after term because higher level courses are not available. For example, in one ballet class, beginners cannot progress because there is no intermediate session and they do not have the skills to join the advanced class. In one art class, the range of learner ability is mixed and no other level is available to them. However, some of these courses have waiting lists and other courses run with small numbers. Links with other providers are insufficiently promoted.
61. Support for learners is satisfactory. Tutors support learners effectively. The support offered to many learners encourages re-enrolment. However, community learners receive insufficient advice and guidance. Learners experience difficulties

in accessing pre-course information. Some learners have been enrolled on to inappropriate classes. The prospectus gives insufficient detail to inform learners of what is required on the course. Some course titles are misleading and learners are unaware of the extra costs they may incur. While tutors offer learners some careers advice, in general this is not sufficient to meet the needs of those considering employment.

Leadership and management

62. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Tutors are well supported and an effective mentoring system is in place for new tutors. Regular staff meetings take place. The internal observation of teaching and learning process is generally satisfactory. Some records are insufficiently comprehensive or evaluative enough to support grades awarded. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate and clearly recognises areas for improvement. This is supported by a clear quality improvement plan. Retention and attainment were identified as a weakness at the previous inspection report and these are now strengths. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

Preparation for life and work

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

63. Currently, 298 learners have enrolled on ESOL courses and 163 learners on family literacy and numeracy courses. Accreditation is provided on ESOL courses and internal achievement certificates are provided on family learning courses. An additional 157 learners are enrolled on subcontracted provision. Classes are offered at 18 community venues including schools, children's centres, learning and community centres. Programmes are available across the borough in areas of high deprivation. Courses are part-time day and learners are aged over nineteen. Some 61% of the provision is ESOL. Most learners are Bangladeshi and 18% are male. Programmes are managed by a full-time skills for life manager, ESOL co-ordinator and a part-time family learning co-ordinator who is also responsible for sessional tutor support.

Strengths

- Good development of skills for ESOL learners
- Good learner support
- Effective actions to extend and improve the curriculum

Areas for improvement

- Narrow range of learning activities in learning sessions
- Insufficient target-setting to meet individual learner needs

Achievement and standards

64. Achievement and standards are good. ESOL learners develop good speaking and listening skills. Learners enjoy their learning sessions and gain confidence in speaking to the whole group as well as in pairs and small groups. ESOL learners are enthusiastic about their own learning and many are highly motivated to develop their skills and knowledge.

65. Learners develop social skills and gain an increased awareness of the environment outside their locality. Learners develop new language, life and social skills through a carefully planned programme of excursions such as buying tickets for the underground, visiting local museums and fruit picking.

66. In 2007/08, 72% of ESOL learners took speaking and listening external tests. This was a significant achievement for many learners, being the first formal qualification they had gained. Success rates are satisfactory at 76%. On short

family learning courses attendance is generally good and satisfactory on longer ESOL courses. Attendance in observed sessions is satisfactory at 76%.

Quality of provision

67. Quality of provision is satisfactory as are teaching and learning. In better learning sessions, learners work on imaginative, practical activities. They work enthusiastically in pairs and groups to practise new language skills in relevant contexts. Tutors use open questioning techniques and constructive feedback effectively. Learners have good opportunities to develop essential reading, writing and numeracy skills. In one learning session, learners read pie charts of the five main food groups as they developed their language to discuss healthy eating issues with their families. Tutors make good use of real-life photographs, tape recorders and other ILT to further enhance the learning experience.
68. Tutors do not plan sufficiently to meet individual learning needs. Learners work as a whole group on a narrow range of activities. Tutors rely on worksheets which are often uninspiring. They do not always give learners clear instructions. Some learners find the tasks easy, but others struggle to follow instructions, and to remember new phrases and colloquial expressions. Learners often have insufficient opportunity to develop their independent learning skills.
69. The initial and diagnostic assessment process is thorough and effectively identifies learners' skills gaps. However, not all tutors use this information when planning learning sessions. Learners are set group targets towards accreditation aims or non-specific targets related to learning session topics. However, these do not tackle sufficiently individual learners' needs. Discussions in reviews focus on progress towards group goals rather than personal targets.
70. The range of programmes to meet learners' needs and interests is satisfactory. Courses are offered at a broad range of venues throughout the area. Family learning short courses are well designed to attract adults into learning situations, often for the first time since leaving school. However, only small numbers of men access the provision and tutors do not focus on the development of skills for work.
71. Learner support is good. Tutors work closely with staff to build learners' confidence in attending classes. Tutors effectively support learners informally with praise and constructive feedback as well as homework. Schools learning mentors follow up attendance issues effectively. The service enriches the curriculum with relevant visits and trips. The newly formed community development team engage new partners and works closely with extended schools co-ordinators to promote the benefits of family literacy and numeracy.

Leadership and management

72. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Actions to extend and improve the curriculum are effective. Bids for resources to provide a comprehensive range of

information technologies in community venues and introduce a work-related ESOL programme have been successful. The service has recently introduced a new management structure and enhanced the staffing resources to improve the quality of provision and extend the curriculum. Quality assurance measures are more thorough. Tutors are observed each term and a mentoring system is in place to support tutors in further developing their skills. The family learning and ESOL teams join in monthly meetings to share good practice and develop the curriculum. ESOL learners now benefit from the introduction of external accreditation opportunities and tutors plan to extend this opportunity to the family learning provision for the 2009/10 academic year. The service uses good partnership links to develop a coherent curriculum across the borough. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of some of these measures.

73. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Issues are systematically covered at induction. Tutors introduce every child matters themes in learning session topics effectively but do not always plan to improve learners' awareness of wider relevant issues.

Administration

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

74. At the time of inspection 38 learners were on apprenticeships in administration. All learners are on work placement in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets' council offices and attend off-the-job training one day a week. Learners complete a two-week induction period before starting their work placement.

Strengths

- Good development of learners' skills
- Good individual support for learners

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning of learning to meet individual learner needs

Achievement and standards

75. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners develop good vocational and interpersonal skills. During a residential activity learners from different cultures worked together to develop team and interpersonal skills. Learners use these transferable skills well in the workplace. They develop good administration skills. Many learners work on specific projects and are an asset to their teams. Learners' skills are valued by their workplace supervisors.

76. Framework success rates are now satisfactory at 71% in 2007/08. In the previous year just over half the learners enrolled achieved the full framework qualifications. All 28 learners who started the programme in November 2008 are still in learning.

Quality of provision

77. Quality of provision is satisfactory. Training, teaching and learning are satisfactory. On-the-job training is effective and most learners are integrated quickly into the work place. A few learners have demanding projects to complete in relation to work and/or training. Learners develop appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills related to their workplace activities during off-the-job training sessions. However, learning is planned insufficiently to meet individual learner needs. All learners are on a 15-month programme and have the same amount of time allocated for the achievement of each component of their

framework, regardless of their prior experience or qualifications. Learners with GCSE maths at grade C or above are not challenged sufficiently as they are completing key skill application of number at level 1. Learners who have been on programme for four months have not yet chosen their national vocational qualifications (NVQ) option units. Key skills and technical certificates are not cross referenced sufficiently to the NVQ. In off-the-job learning sessions, individual learning activities are limited and learners are insufficiently challenged.

78. Learning resources are satisfactory. All learners have access to a satisfactory range of paper based resources to develop their knowledge and skills. Assessment practice is satisfactory. Learners are assessed in the workplace every four to six weeks. The written recording of assessment planning and feedback is not always sufficiently detailed. Some learners have paper-free portfolios but not all learners have direct access to their e-portfolios. Progress reviews are satisfactory. Workplace supervisors are involved well but action planning often focuses on learners' activities at work and not on the progress they make towards all aspects of their framework.
79. The programme appropriately meets learners' needs and interests. Some learners attend additional off-the-job training courses organised by their workplace supervisor. However, sufficient places are not always available to enable learners to attend all recommended training courses and insufficient opportunities exist for learners to attend courses to improve their minute taking skills. The programme attracts large numbers of applications. Unsuccessful candidates are referred to other providers or Connexions.
80. Support for learners is good. Learners receive good individual support from their mentor, assessor and workplace supervisor. Wherever possible, learners are allocated a mentor of the same gender and cultural background. Where appropriate, learners are provided with additional pastoral support and signposted to external agencies. Some learners at risk of leaving the programme early are supported well to enable them to remain on programme and complete their qualifications. Where appropriate, mentors work closely with learners' key workers and help find them suitable residential accommodation.

Leadership and management

81. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Communication is effective. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities which are understood by learners and workplace supervisors. Arrangements for staff development are satisfactory and staff attend appropriate training courses and take part in regular supervision meetings. Regular team meetings take place. The service has changed the recruitment and selection of learners to improve the previous years' high number of early leavers. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.
82. Plans are in place to expand the service to include advanced apprenticeships in administration, apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships in customer service, information technology, health and social care and construction.

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+		National Rate	Diff
		Starts – Transfers	ACL Provider Rate		
1 long	06/07	185	53	72	-19
	07/08	161	65	N/A	
2 long	06/07	63	71	69	2
	07/08	109	78	N/A	
3 long	06/07	81	77	71	6
	07/08	83	73	NA	
Short**	06/07	257	72	82	-11
	07/08	255	83	N/A	

** Courses over 5 weeks long

Success rates on work-based learning apprenticeship programmes managed by the provider 2005 to 2008

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider/college NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider/college framework rate**	National framework rate**
Apprentices	05/06	overall	34	79	56	65	49
		timely	34	79	36	65	31
	06/07	overall	25	72	64	52	59
		timely	26	65	46	50	43
	07/08	Overall	17	94	68	71	64
		timely	16	75	51	63	48

* Learners who leave later than originally planned are counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners are then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

** College/provider and national qualification success rates are calculated using LSC published data derived from the Individual Learning Record (ILR)