

MONITORING VISIT: MAIN FINDINGS

Name of Provider: London Borough of Ealing
Date of visit: 24 November 2008

Context

This monitoring visit follows the reinspection of the London Borough of Ealing's provision in April 2007. At the reinspection, leadership and management, equality of opportunity and quality improvement were satisfactory. Arts, media and publishing was satisfactory. Other languages, literature and culture was inadequate. Currently, the adult and community learning offer comprises of mostly non-accredited provision. Approximately a third of this is personal and community development learning (PCDL). The borough now offers more family learning and first steps provision, but no longer offers classical and modern foreign language provision.

Achievement and standards

Have overall success rates for accredited and non accredited courses improved?	Reasonable progress
--	---------------------

The borough has made reasonable progress in improving success rates, although learner achievement data prior to 2007/08 is unreliable. At the previous inspection retention rates were satisfactory in family learning, but poor for other languages, literature and culture courses. The rates were low and declining in fine arts and crafts. However, retention rates for arts, media and publishing were improved at reinspection. Provisional data, now reliable, held by the provider for 2007/08 indicates long and short course success rates on accredited courses are at least satisfactory. Achieved learning outcomes for non-accredited provision are at least satisfactory. Retention rates are generally improved.

Quality of provision

What progress has been made in improving programme planning?	Insufficient progress
--	-----------------------

At the previous inspection, aspects of planning for PCDL were ineffective. Insufficient progress has been made in improving PCDL programme planning. A large proportion of PCDL classes were cancelled during 2006/07 and 2007/08. Non-accredited language provision judged inadequate at reinspection was terminated without sufficient evaluation. Generally, the design of PCDL provision was not carefully planned or evaluated. Part of the provision was not provided according to the

borough's adult and community learning needs. The borough's PCDL courses are now more carefully planned and targeted. The borough has changed the nature and location of the provision according to an evaluation of the types of courses people want and where they are more likely to be able to attend. However, it is too early to judge how much impact the changes in programme planning will make.

Leadership and management

What steps have been taken to improve the promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity?	Reasonable Progress
--	---------------------

The borough has made reasonable progress in improving the promotion of equality of opportunity. Observers sufficiently consider the effectiveness of the promotion of equality and diversity when observing learning sessions. The borough's responsiveness to its local community has improved. Collection and analysis of data relating to the participation and achievement of different groups of learners has improved. The borough's equality of opportunity expectations are better promoted to subcontractors, although subcontractors are not set targets. All learners receive a handbook which includes an equal opportunities statement that refers them to the borough's equal opportunities policy. However, managers are still in the process of considering how this policy might be implemented in the context of community-based adult learning, and have been slow to update its equal opportunities action plan. Diversity is included in tutor training, but it is too early to say what impact this will have on teaching and learning. The learners' handbook includes a complaints procedure. The borough adequately responds to complaints.

Has the availability and use of data to support the management of provision improved?	Reasonable progress
---	---------------------

The borough has made reasonable progress in collating and using data. All managers can now access the electronic database, are trained in its use, and have a good understanding of the system's potential. Good reports are produced about learner participation. Managers are starting to use this information skilfully to evaluate how well courses are recruiting. The borough has improved its capacity to collect, collate and evaluate data from its subcontractors. It now employs five full-time equivalent staff to carry out this role. The importance of data gathering is emphasised in tutor induction training. The borough has implemented successful strategies to promote tutor attendance on information training sessions. The timely collection of data has improved. The borough has significantly improved the accuracy of learner achievement information.

What improvements are made to the observation of teaching and learning scheme?	Reasonable progress
--	---------------------

The borough has made reasonable progress in improving the teaching and learning scheme. The observation of teaching and learning scheme continues to be implemented adequately. The number of observations scheduled for the current year represents a significant increase on the number carried out in 2007/08. Managers have established an observation moderation group. The observation scheme is shared and well understood by tutors. Observations are carried out by subject specialists wherever possible. The borough is cooperating well with other providers to identify staff who can carry out specialist observations. The guidance given to tutors as a result of observation is detailed and helpful. It is too early to judge the impact of the new arrangements on the quality of teaching and learning.

Self-assessment and improvement planning

What is the quality of the self-assessment reporting and post inspection action planning?	Reasonable progress
---	---------------------

The self-assessment report (SAR) for 2006/07 contains some useful evaluation about provision overall. However, much of the overall evaluation is too reliant on the previous inspection judgements and contains insufficient self-evaluation, particularly some curriculum area SARs. For example, the satisfactory grade for information and communication technology is not substantiated by the supporting written information. Insufficiently conclusive evaluative information is contained in the health, public services and care, and arts media and publishing SARs to match the grades awarded. The resulting quality improvement plan emphasises some of the more critical areas for improvement well but is not as astute in identifying purposeful areas for improvement in some curriculum areas. The current SAR's content is more carefully considered. The moderation process for the current draft SAR for 2007/08 is more thorough. Managers are selecting carefully which are the most pertinent areas for improvement and have adequately identified issues with curriculum area evaluations.