

London Borough of Brent

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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:

- Leisure, travel and tourism
- Arts, media and publishing
- Preparation for life and work

Description of the provider

1. Brent adult and community education services (BACES), is Brent Council's ('the Council') direct provider of adult education. In 2007/08 BACES was located within the Council's environment and culture directorate, in October 2008 it was relocated to the Council's children's and families directorate.
2. The senior management team, comprising the head of service, deputy, finance and resources manager, is responsible for the wider management team that leads the service's administration, curriculum, finance and resourcing functions. The deputy head of service and the heads of curriculum are responsible for the strategic management of learning, as well as having cross-service roles. Programme managers are responsible for the operational management of the sector subject areas.
3. West London LSC funds BACES' provision. The service delivers the provision, in partnership with local voluntary and community groups, at four Council owned venues, three secondary schools and around 60 other venues. In 2007/08 3,420 learners were enrolled on accredited courses and 3,660 on adult safeguarded learning courses. About 78% of learners are from a minority ethnic group.
4. The population of Brent is 263,000 and rising. It is now the second most ethnically diverse borough in the country, with 55% of residents belonging to a minority ethnic group. A growing number of refugees and asylum seekers make up an estimated 5% of the borough's population. The borough suffers from chronic deprivation in the priority wards of Stonebridge, Harlesden, South Kilburn, Roundwood and St. Raphael's. These are within the top 10% most deprived in the country. Brent has a borough-wide unemployment rate of 13%, which is 4% above the national rate and higher than the Greater London average.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject areas

Leisure, travel and tourism	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Arts, media and publishing	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Preparation for life and work	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievement and standards, the quality of provision, leadership and management and equality of opportunity are all satisfactory. Provision in leisure, travel and tourism, arts, media and publishing and preparation for life and work are also satisfactory.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

6. BACES has demonstrated that it is in a satisfactory position to make improvements. Since the previous inspection in 2005, BACES has made some improvements in the quality of provision. It has effectively managed disruptions resulting from changes within the Council as well as several significant staff changes over the last year. The deputy head of service has only been in post for three months. All of the sector subject areas are satisfactory overall, although some aspects of provision are particularly good, other aspects require improvement. BACES has recognised this and is implementing better procedures to share good practice. The observation of teaching and learning procedures are thorough and used to good effect to identify staff development needs. Despite this, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Few learning sessions are good or better.
7. The self-assessment process is good. The latest self-assessment report is thorough and accurate in identifying areas for improvement. Most of BACES' self-assessment grades match those of inspectors. The process is well established. Self-assessment is inclusive, with feedback from learners contributing to the overall outcomes. Managers effectively review the quality improvement plans at team meetings.

Key strengths

- Good development of learners' skills
- Good range of provision
- Highly effective partnership working

Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient proportion of good or better teaching
- Insufficiently established procedures for recognising and recording learners' progress and achievement
- Insufficient use of management information to review and improve provision

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

8. Achievement and standards are satisfactory, as identified in the self-assessment report. The development of learners' skills is good. During their time on programme, they become more self-confident and more self-assured. Most learners enjoy their work. They are able to communicate better, work in teams and carry out their job roles more effectively.
9. Overall success rates are satisfactory. On level 1 long courses, success rates in 2006/07 were good at 83%. Provisional data shows that BACES has maintained this success rate at 83% in 2007/08. Success rates on long courses at level 2 in 2006/07 were satisfactory at 67%. Provisional data shows that this success rate dipped slightly to 65% in 2007/08, but remains satisfactory. Success rates for short courses are satisfactory at 79% in 2006/07. Provisional BACES rates show a slight decrease to 75% in 2007/08, however in-year data for 2008/09 indicate that short course success rates are improving.
10. Retention rates are good overall. BACES continues to develop methods of data collection to record learners' achievement and success in non-accredited provision. It has made good progress in some areas. Where these data is available, the success rates are usually high. BACES has yet to implement procedures to ensure that these high success rates are reliable indicators of achievement. The performance of learners from different ethnic backgrounds, age groups and genders and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is broadly similar.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

11. The quality of provision is satisfactory, as identified in the self-assessment report. Teaching and learning are also satisfactory. As acknowledged in the service's own analysis, very few learning sessions are now inadequate, but the proportion of good or better teaching has not improved and remains insufficient. Most tutors take learners' differing needs into account when they plan learning sessions, but they do not always follow their lesson plan. In sport and leisure, and in classes in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), tutors use the results of initial assessment to effectively support lesson planning, however, this is less evident in the other curriculum areas inspected.
12. BACES' procedures for recognising and recording learners' progress and achievement are insufficiently established. Though the service has made some improvements in these procedures, tutors do not consistently comply with the service's requirements across different programme areas. Tutors provide a useful

record of targets and progress reviews on individual learning plans in some curriculum areas, but others are written in a way that is not helpful to learners or tutors.

13. The quality and use of resources to support learning is inconsistent. Learners value the inclusive and respectful environment created by tutors, however in their choice of teaching methods, topics and materials, tutors do not routinely exploit the rich cultural diversity of their learners.
14. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners is good. With an appropriate balance of accredited and non-accredited programmes, the service is responsive to the needs of learners. BACES offers programmes at different times of the day and week and in a wide range of centres and outreach settings. Literacy and numeracy provision is particularly flexible, enabling learners to take tests on-line and progress on to other courses with ease. Through very effective partnership working with a wide range of community groups, a local college and employers, the service engages with many disadvantaged groups. This has led to many successful programmes, such as supporting adults with learning difficulties who work in a café, projects with homeless people, children's centres and a mental health group, as well as provision for a trade union and a large employer.
15. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners benefit from good support by tutors. Publicity materials are clear and helpful. Many learners benefit from the crèche facilities that are located on the same site as their course. Appropriate procedures are in place to identify additional learning needs. Most of the support provided is for language, literacy and study skills and is mainly for those on accredited programmes. An analysis of performance data carried out by the service indicates that those who receive additional support are more successful than those who do not.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

16. Leadership and management are satisfactory, as recognised in the self-assessment report. Partnership working is highly effective. BACES has developed good links in the community since the previous inspection. The childcare tutors work well with Connexions and also with the teenage pregnancy unit in Brent. The ESOL tutors work with a large local further education college and with Brent into Employment, to promote employability training, and also in local schools to deliver courses to parents. BACES delivers health and safety, first aid and drug awareness training to the Brent Homeless User Group. The service also delivers British Sign Language (BSL) training to the local police force and staff from a large department store.

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17. BACES' strategic plans are well developed. Senior managers ensure that plans meet the priorities identified by the local authority and the LSC. BACES has full staff meetings twice a year at which it shares the key performance indicators, targets and overall direction of the service with staff. Regular meetings take place between managers and tutors during which this information is reinforced and reviewed.
18. Curriculum management is satisfactory overall. Curriculum managers have appropriate resources to manage their staff and learners. They meet regularly to discuss strategy and to consider how they can support their teams and colleagues. The service's initial assessment arrangements are satisfactory. However, in some curriculum areas, tutors do not use initial assessment to set targets in learners' individual learning plans. BACES is developing a new mentoring system to support all staff. Course reviews are satisfactory and used to support the self-assessment process, as well as decisions about the curriculum on offer. Tutors receive good support from the senior management team who encourage them to take advantage of a wide variety of internal and external training opportunities. The curriculum managers take successful action to ensure that the range of courses meets learners' needs and that they take place at times and venues that learners can attend.
19. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The self-assessment report judged it to be good. The service has a strategy which aims to engage and promote achievement for learners with few or no previous qualifications. The service complies with all the current equalities legislation and has appropriate policies in place to monitor and report on inclusive practices within the provision. BACES uses data effectively to monitor the proportion of learners from different ethnic groups. At the time of inspection, the proportion of learners from minority ethnic groups broadly reflected the community, with particularly good representation from Black African and Black Caribbean groups. The service has targeted particular groups such as the local Somali and Tamil communities whose specific needs the service seeks to meet. Retention, achievement and success rates are as good as, or better than, the overall BACES rates for learners from different minority ethnic groups and for learners declaring a disability. The age profile of BACES' learners broadly matches that of the community. Publicity materials contain appropriate images to promote equality and diversity, however inspectors saw few examples of the promotion of equality and diversity within the teaching sessions. Tutors did not take full advantage of using these examples to best effect. The observation of teaching and learning checklist does not cover equality and diversity.
20. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. The head of service is the designated safeguarding officer and all staff receive a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. Most staff have had their checks completed and the safeguarding officer maintains a central list.
21. Quality improvement arrangements are well established across the organisation. The observations of teaching and learning are well established. Curriculum managers make classroom visits to provide additional support for tutors, which

complement the more formal graded assessments. The judgements and grades given by observers matched those that inspectors gave. Observers give detailed feedback to tutors, producing an action plan to remedy any areas for improvement. These action plans feed into the staff appraisal system and support continuing professional development activities. Where common issues are identified they form the basis for staff training. Most teaching is now satisfactory, although actions to improve the overall quality of teaching are not yet effective.

22. The management of resources is satisfactory. Accommodation has improved since the previous inspection and most classrooms are fit for purpose. The service has purchased new equipment for the hairdressing and beauty courses, which the previous inspection had identified as an area for improvement. BACES shares the newly opened centre in Neasden with the Council's library service. The centre is particularly well equipped. A similar centre is opening soon in Harlesden. Resources to support teaching and learning are good in some areas, such as the equipment available in music technology and digital media. Many classrooms have interactive whiteboards and tutors are currently receiving training to use them more effectively. BACES has invested a lot of time and effort in the development of a virtual learning environment for tutors and learners. Much of the course paperwork is available on the virtual classroom for tutors. Tutors encourage learners to use this resource to help them with researching assignments and many staff make extensive use of this learning medium. BACES has well developed plans to extend this provision. Most staff are appropriately qualified and experienced, but few Skills for Life tutors have subject specialist qualifications.
23. Managers make insufficient use of management information to review and improve the provision. The service has improved the degree to which managers use data at an operational level to monitor attendance, check on registration and monitor participation levels. However, managers do not have data available for some aspects of the provision, such as punctuality.

What learners like:

- 'Learning new things'
- 'Getting a qualification'
- 'Enjoyable courses'
- 'The very supportive teachers'
- 'The variety of people you meet'
- 'The trips, social events and celebrations'
- 'Very good timing of classes'
- 'Good location of centre, near home'

What learners think could improve:

- 'The online application process - it's frustrating'
- 'The paperwork - there's too much of it'
- 'The number of administrative errors that are made at one centre'
- 'Not getting course information before starting course'
- 'The number of courses that are offered closer to home- there's not enough'
- 'Higher level courses- we'd like more'
- 'The quality and availability of resources: we'd like more crèche places, more computers, a data projector in every classroom, a shop to buy materials from and comfortable chairs'

Sector subject areas

Leisure, travel and tourism

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

24. BACES offers programmes in sport, fitness and travel. Courses are located at main centres and community sites. At the time of inspection, seven learning centres were offering 25 courses. These include yoga, tai chi, Pilates, fitness, badminton travel and tourism. The service delivers its non-accredited courses over 10 weeks and repeats them three times a year during term-time. BACES offers accredited qualifications in travel at levels 1 and 2 over 30 weeks. Provision is available during the day, evenings and weekends. Of the 412 learners who enrolled in 2007/08, 86% were women, 77% from a minority ethnic group and just over 3% declared a disability. In the current year to date, 422 learners enrolled on courses in this curriculum area. Of these, 88% are women, 72% from a minority ethnic group and just over 1% declared a disability. During the week of inspection, 211 learners were on programme. A head of curriculum and programme manager are responsible for the provision. A team of 11 part-time tutors delivers the programmes.

Strengths

- Good development of learners' health and skills
- Particularly effective teaching arrangements to meet learners' needs
- Well supported and managed tutors

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient use of management information
- Insufficient action to raise learners' awareness of equality of opportunity

Achievement and standards

25. The development of learners' health and skills is good. BACES did not identify this as a key strength in its self-assessment. Many learners gain health benefits from attending these courses, for example a learner with serious health problems has reduced the need to visit medical specialists. The provision meets learners' individual needs as well as local and national priorities, such as tackling obesity. Learners achieve a good range of skills in their techniques. Many learners display good standards in their performance and demonstrations. Programmes have enabled learners to become more independent. Overall fitness levels are improved or maintained. Many learners make improvements in mobility, flexibility, posture and balance. A few learners have made significant progress in yoga and intend to carry out instructor training.

26. Retention rates overall are satisfactory. Most learners re-enrol each term for the 10-weeks. These courses usually retain a high proportion of learners. Retention is poor on the very few accredited courses.
27. Attendance is satisfactory on most courses at almost 80%. Learners enjoy taking part in these courses and report high levels of satisfaction. However, at the time of inspection, many learners were late in attending their class, but registers failed to record this adequately.

Quality of provision

28. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching arrangements to meet learners' needs are particularly effective. BACES identified this in its self-assessment report. Planning and preparation in many classes is good. For example, tutors produce detailed lesson plans that reflect individual needs with appropriate modification, adaptations and resources acknowledged. The use of initial assessment for the identification of individual needs is good, such as the health screening that complements other forms of initial assessment. Delivery in most classes is good at meeting the needs of learners. In a few cases, the tutor demonstrated a good approach when dealing with sensitive cases, such as a learner with health problems.
29. Assessment and monitoring of progress is satisfactory. Staff have developed appropriate ways of assessing and measuring learners' progress. Most tutors and learners value the process of monitoring and recording progress, however in a few isolated cases, tutors do not adequately monitor learners' starting point and the progress they make. Some staff are unfamiliar with the process of recording learners' progress, which managers identified in the self-assessment report.
30. Resources are satisfactory. Venues and accommodation have appropriate access for people with restricted mobility. Teaching areas are safe and comfortable. Managers and tutors have carried out adequate risk assessments of these areas. Learning resources are adequate overall.
31. The range of programmes and activities is satisfactory. These include a variety of courses with sufficient progression opportunities for learners. The service offers sessions at a number of community sites across the borough.
32. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners have an adequate understanding of course requirements and can seek further guidance from staff about course content. Staff carry out an appropriate induction that informs learners of their rights and responsibilities. The arrangements for assessing and supporting learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills are satisfactory.

Leadership and management

33. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Tutors are well supported and managed which was recognised in the self-assessment report. Managers make

regular contact with tutors and provide support for them through a range of communication channels. Support for internal and external staff development is good. Recently, management has focused on developing and nurturing an effective teaching team. Very effective line management of tutors is helping to improve learners' experience.

34. Curriculum management is satisfactory. The management team is dedicated and committed to improvement. The provision is coordinated and organised to ensure that learners receive adequate support.
35. Quality improvement is satisfactory. The internal lesson observation system is effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The self-assessment process is effective and inclusive and the report identifies similar findings to those of inspectors.
36. Equality of opportunity overall is satisfactory. Adequate arrangements are in place to ensure the safety of learners. Learning environments are supportive with no evidence of oppressive behaviour, bullying or harassment. Staff have made attempts to recruit more men, who are often under-represented in this curriculum area, onto programmes. However, BACES has taken insufficient action to raise learners' awareness of equality of opportunity. For example, the service has carried out very little staff training and development in equality and diversity. Tutors do not effectively reinforce equality of opportunity during learning sessions.
37. The use of management information to monitor and improve provision is insufficient. Insufficient scrutiny of performance data takes place to identify trends. Target setting is limited. The monitoring of punctuality is inadequate. Internal moderation of non-accredited provision is incomplete. The use of management information to develop, plan and set the curriculum strategy is in its infancy, however some examples of effective use of data is evident in the internal observation process.

Arts, media and publishing

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

38. BACES offers 178 courses in drawing, painting, jewellery, glass, ceramics, dressmaking, photography, digital media, music and dance. Learners can study courses at entry level and from level 1 to 3. Most classes are taught over 10 or 30 weeks during the day or evening. Courses are offered at three main centres and 10 off-site venues. Over half of the classes take place at the Carlton Centre in Kilburn. About 75% of the courses are non-accredited. Of the 687 learners enrolled on programmes, 26% are male, 76% are from a minority ethnic background and 3.4% have a declared disability. Three programme managers are responsible for management of the curriculum area. The service employs 32 sessional tutors.

Strengths

- Good success rates on accredited courses
- High standard of learners' work
- Good resources in music technology and digital media
- Good range of courses
- Good curriculum management

Areas for improvement

- Poor attendance on some courses
- Ineffective monitoring of learners' progress on non-accredited courses
- Insufficient pre-course information

Achievement and standards

39. Achievement and standards are good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Success rates on accredited courses are high, having risen from 52% to 81% over the previous three years.

40. The standard of learners' work is good. Learners demonstrate high level technical skills in craft. They use a wide range of materials and processes in art. Learners produce professional and innovative work in media and music. Some have won external prizes in dance, photography, ceramics and music. Learners progress successfully to further and higher education.

41. Achievement of learning outcomes on non-accredited courses is satisfactory. Though retention and achievement rates are high on these courses, managers only monitor retention on those courses which last longer than 10 weeks. Attendance is poor and the measurement of learners' achievement is insufficiently thorough to support meaningful judgements.

42. Attendance on some courses is poor. Attendance rates for the current year are low. During the inspection, none of the classes observed had full attendance and a significant proportion had attendance of 60% or less.

Quality of provision

43. The quality of provision is satisfactory, as identified in the self-assessment report. Teaching and learning are also satisfactory. Resources in music technology and digital media are good. Hardware and software are of industry standard. The upgraded memory capacity of the new computers permits complex processing and work storage. Learners use good quality digital still and video cameras.

44. Tutors' current professional knowledge and experience in their specialist fields helps and motivates learners. Learners value the practical hints and technical information that they receive. Tutors give positive reinforcement to their learners. They provide good individual coaching and successfully balance the diverse needs of learners with different levels of previous experience. Learners contribute positively in class and support each other, asking questions to clarify their understanding and taking responsibility for their own learning. Learners are actively engaged and committed to their work and proud of what they achieve. Some learners take notes in class and extend their work at home. Others develop language and social skills as well as practical skills. In one class, a learner helped to translate for a colleague who struggles to cope with some of the specialist language used in learning sessions. In the better classes, tutors structure the programmes well to meet learners' needs and they explore related historical, cultural or commercial topics. In some classes, the tutor acts as an active partner in learning. For example, in music classes, the learners work as a team, recording unusual sounds for later use in composing a musical piece. They each have a role and the tutor acts as a member of the team, offering suggestions for all to consider.

45. In the weaker learning sessions, some tutors confuse learning outcomes with creative products. They focus too much on the product to be made, rather than on the knowledge and skills required to research, design and make it. Many tutors employ a limited range of teaching and learning strategies. Some learners are insufficiently challenged. In some classes, poor use is made of group learning and ineffective use of questioning. Some tutors fail to check and reinforce learning at the beginning or end of the class. Poor attendance inhibits learning in some classes.

46. The monitoring of learners' progress on non-accredited courses is ineffective. Some tutors comply with the procedures to recognise and record learners' progress and achievement, but in many cases these procedures are inconsistently applied. The system for monitoring and internal grading of learning outcomes is insufficiently established. Many learners see little value in this process.

47. The range of courses is good. Learners can study a wide range of subjects at many levels across a number of specialist disciplines. The service offers a good balance of accredited and non-accredited courses. The programme of outreach work is good, including local community courses and training delivered on employers' premises. In one case, workers from a local factory are using skills developed during an on-site video course to support the production of their work-based NVQ portfolios. The service offers an extensive range of taster courses at a number of venues to reach new learners.
48. Support for learners is satisfactory. Tutors provide good support in the classroom. Staff liaise well with key workers and specialist support staff provide some good support. Learners receive insufficient pre-course information. A significant number of learners do not receive the course information leaflets before they start their course, even though the leaflets are available. Some tutors also fail to check whether learners have received the information at the start of the course. These learners are often poorly prepared for their course and in some cases, enrol on an inappropriate course.

Leadership and management

49. Curriculum management is good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Staff are well supported. Telephone and email communications are good. Managers research and develop new curriculum opportunities. The monitoring of the curriculum is generally good. Managers contribute well to curriculum developments across the organisation. Access to, and use of, management information is satisfactory, however opportunities for part-time staff to share good practice are few. The system of course review is effective and systems for internal verification of accredited courses are good. However, the system for monitoring assessment of non-accredited courses is insufficiently thorough. The lesson observation system is good and results of internal observations are broadly in line with inspection findings. Some staff do attend training, most recently on the use of new interactive whiteboards and the new intranet site, however attendance at staff development events is generally low. The self-assessment matches the judgements made during inspection.
50. The high proportion of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds broadly reflects the local community. There are examples of curriculum initiatives which celebrate diversity, however tutors fail to fully exploit the many opportunities that exist in this curriculum area to reflect the diversity of learners.

Preparation for life and work

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

51. BACES offers courses in literacy and numeracy at all levels from entry level to level 2. At the time of inspection, 804 learners were enrolled on literacy courses and 377 were on numeracy courses. Over 80% of learners are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Some 1,613 learners were enrolled on ESOL programmes. Learners belong to a range of minority ethnic groups, mainly Asian Other and Black African. Most learners are female. Courses range from pre-entry to level 2. Daytime, twilight and evening classes are provided in the service's main learning centres, community education centres, local schools, local employers, and community organisations.

Strengths

- Good development of speaking and listening skills in ESOL
- Good skills gained in literacy and numeracy to meet learners' needs
- Good range of programmes
- Very good partnership working in literacy and numeracy
- Very flexible provision in literacy and numeracy to enable learners to achieve and progress
- Good curriculum management in ESOL

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient proportion of good or better learning sessions
- Insufficient use of ICT to develop learners' skills in literacy and numeracy
- Limited use by learners of on-line materials to improve their skills in ESOL
- Ineffective assessment and monitoring of learners' progress in literacy and numeracy

Achievement and standards

52. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. The development of speaking and listening skills in ESOL is good. Learners gain confidence in the use of everyday English and develop pronunciation and intonation skills well, particularly at entry level.

53. Literacy and numeracy learners gain good skills to meet their needs. Learners have clear personal, employment, vocational or academic goals and have confidence that they will achieve these goals at BACES. They can demonstrate that their new skills enable them to perform better at work, to gain a place at college or to participate more fully in the community.

54. Good opportunities exist for learners to gain nationally recognised qualifications. The number of learners taking qualifications has increased significantly over the last three years. Pass rates on English Speaking Board qualifications at entry level and level 1 are high, however, pass rates for reading and writing units of ESOL Skills for Life qualifications, particularly at entry level, are low.
55. Attendance is poor in many literacy and numeracy classes and satisfactory in ESOL. Punctuality is good in ESOL. Managers correctly identify this as an area for improvement in the literacy and numeracy self-assessment report.

Quality of provision

56. The overall quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are also satisfactory. In the better literacy and numeracy learning sessions, a variety of activities and teaching methods are used to encourage learners to interact with one another using interesting, relevant materials. Tutors plan learning in ESOL well, with clear and well defined learning objectives. ESOL learning sessions have a good range of learning activities that engage learners' interests. Learners enjoy their learning sessions. In learning sessions, teachers' work on whiteboards is clear and easy to read and understand. Tutors give appropriate emphasis to correct pronunciation and intonation and they carefully reinforce and consolidate correct language.
57. The proportion of good or better sessions is insufficient. In literacy and numeracy, too many learning sessions are teacher-led. Learners often work individually on worksheets. Tutors fail to provide sufficient opportunities for learners to interact, collaborate and learn from one another. Teaching fails to stretch the more able learners. Tutors' strategies for differentiation are insufficiently developed. In weaker ESOL learning sessions, some subjects for written work are unimaginative and do not capture the interest of learners. At entry level, tutors miss opportunities to use real items rather than pictures. Accommodation overall is now satisfactory, an improvement since the previous inspection.
58. Teachers make insufficient use of ICT to develop learners' skills in literacy and numeracy, not fully embracing ICT as part of the learning process. Access for ESOL learners to on-line materials to improve their skills is limited. Computers and associated learning software are not always available in learning sessions. In better learning sessions tutors use good techniques to aid memory and recall and some make good use of interactive whiteboards where available.
59. Assessment and monitoring of learners' progress is satisfactory overall, but ineffective in literacy and numeracy. Diagnostic assessment fails to assess the learners' skills and the recording of skill level is inconsistent. Tutors fail to set measurable targets on individual learning plans in literacy and numeracy. Staff do not carry out progress reviews in a consistent way. In ESOL, individual learning plans have precise and measurable targets, informed by initial and diagnostic assessment. The standard of reviews, however, is often poor. ESOL learners are

confident in the progress they are making through regular homework and feedback from tutors on marked work.

60. Programmes and activities meet the needs and interests of all learners well. The range of programmes is good, as identified in the self-assessment. Initiatives to develop new programmes in partnership with others have been successful. Learners appreciate being able to attend classes in their locality. Classes are available across the borough and take place in BACES' own venues, in schools, in community organisations and in local employers' premises. Men are under-represented in the provision, but this is recognised and appropriate strategies are in place to increase male participation.
61. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory. Tutors provide good individual and personal support in ESOL learning sessions. Literacy and numeracy staff have a good understanding of learners' individual learning needs and provide support and additional equipment for them in the classroom. Learners with mild learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia are effectively integrated in classes. Small group support learning sessions for learners with dyslexia are held at the main community venues.

Leadership and management

62. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Curriculum management is good in ESOL. Actions to make improvements in this area are thorough, but have not yet made an impact on achievement and the overall quality of teaching and learning. Staff monitor attendance and punctuality thoroughly. Good partnerships are in place across the provision, leading to the development of programmes which meet the needs of targeted groups well. Links with local community organisations are good. The service holds classes in a local centre for the homeless, and a group of learners with mental health difficulties attends one of the main centres. Good links exist with some local companies and businesses through the Trade Unions, and some courses take place on employers' premises. BACES' observation of teaching and learning is thorough. BACES' action planning has been effective in resolving some of the areas for improvement found at the previous inspection. Communications between staff teams in ESOL is good. Data is inconsistent. Too few staff have subject specialist qualifications. The self-assessment process is thorough and accurate and the ESOL quality improvement plan monitors progress effectively. The self-assessment report for literacy and numeracy does not acknowledge some areas for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

Annex

Learners' achievements

Learners' achievements in FE funded, accredited provision offered by the London Borough of Brent.

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

19+					
Notional Level	Exp End Year	Starts – Transfers	ACL Provider Rate	National Rate	<i>Diff</i>
1 long	06/07	854	83%	70.5	+12.5
	07/08	935	83%	N/A	
2 long	06/07	406	67%	69	-2
	07/08	297	65%	N/A	
Short**	06/07	2105	79%	82.9	-3.9
	07/08	1484	75%	N/A	

** Includes Short, Very Short and Courses over five weeks long.