

# Westminster Adult Education Service

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Inspection date

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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](http://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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)), reports from the inspectorates' monitoring visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Health, public services and care
- Leisure, travel and tourism
- Arts, media and publishing
- Preparation for life and work

## Description of the provider

1. Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES) provides adult and community learning opportunities for adults living and working within Westminster. It is a service of Westminster City Council. Westminster has a wide range of social, cultural and economic diversity, with areas of wealth interspersed with other areas of extreme poverty, some of which are among the 10% most deprived areas in England. The population of the borough is rapidly increasing and it has the second largest proportion of older people in Inner London. Some 78% of the service's learners belong to a minority ethnic group, compared with 48% in the local community. A large number of national and international commercial companies are located in Westminster, along with many small and medium sized enterprises. Adult and community learning is funded by the London Central Learning and Skills Council (LSC).
2. The service's provision is taught in three main centres, at Amberley Road, Ebury Bridge and Frith Street, and up to 70 community venues. It comprises daytime, evening and weekend programmes at a variety of levels from entry level to level 4. Courses are mainly part-time, either through year-long courses or shorter provision. Over half of the curriculum offer is within the Skills for Life subject sector, with a significant number of learners also studying arts, media and publishing. Courses are offered in ten subject sector areas. In 2007/08, the service had 12,938 enrolments with 8,444 learners. Train to Gain provision is growing rapidly, with 2,024 learners in 2008/09.

## Summary of grades awarded

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

## Sector subject areas

Health, public services and care	Good: Grade 2
Leisure, travel and tourism	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Arts, media and publishing	Good: Grade 2
Preparation for life and work	Good: Grade 2

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

Adult and community learning

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

3. The overall effectiveness of provision is good. Provision is good in health, public services and care; art, design and media; and preparation for life and work. It is satisfactory in leisure, travel and tourism. Train to Gain programmes are also good overall.
4. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates for learners on non-accredited programmes are generally high. For short, accredited courses they are improving, but they are still below the national average. Train to Gain success rates are very high. Learners very much enjoy their lessons and their standards of work are high. They gain self-confidence and develop essential skills. However, low attendance and a lack of punctuality disrupt learning.
5. The quality of provision is good as is teaching and learning. Enthusiastic teachers, many with good professional experience, provide strong support for learners and develop good relationships with them. Learning resources are generally good, although some inappropriate accommodation detracts from the learners' experience. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory. Effective diagnostic tests identify the need for additional learning support well and this support is good, leading to improved learner outcomes.
6. Provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is good. The service is responsive to government and local priorities and has developed a wide range of accredited provision that develops employability and life skills for learners well. Social and educational inclusion are good. Enrichment opportunities are good in some curriculum areas, but satisfactory overall.
7. Guidance and support are good. Clear advice and guidance are available to prospective learners. The quality of individual learning plans is inconsistent and in some curriculum areas, vague individual targets make it difficult to monitor the progress of learners accurately.
8. Leadership and management are good. Senior managers provide a clear strategic direction for the service which is supported well by the strong governing body. Very effective collaboration with a broad range of partners widens participation for hard to reach groups. Train to Gain provision is successful. Financial management is sound. Quality assurance procedures are satisfactory, but target-setting to improve areas for improvement is not thorough in some curriculum areas. Equality of opportunity is good.

## Capacity to improve

### Good: Grade 2

9. The capacity to improve is good. The service has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. Success rates for learners improved significantly in 2007/08. Provision for literacy and numeracy is much improved and three of the curriculum areas inspected were judged to be good. The curriculum has been shaped to meet local needs and government priorities. Staff development relating to equality and diversity has taken place. The quality of teaching and learning has improved, along with the use of management information. Senior managers are clear on service priorities and effectively communicate this vision to staff. Finances are sound and well managed. The service has well formed plans to develop the accommodation, but improvements have been delayed and one of the main centres still has restricted access. Quality assurance is satisfactory overall, with aspects which require further development. The self-assessment report is broadly accurate.

## Key strengths

- High and improving success rates on many courses
- High standard of learners' skills and good personal development
- Good teaching and learning
- Responsive curriculum development and broad range of provision
- Good support for learners
- Clear strategic direction from senior managers and strong governance
- Highly effective partnerships
- Successful Train to Gain provision

## Key areas for improvement

- Success rates for short accredited courses
- Effectiveness of monitoring learners' progress
- Learners' attendance and punctuality
- Poor and unsuitable accommodation
- Further improve quality assurance and curriculum target-setting procedures.

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Adult and community learning  
Train to Gain

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

10. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The self-assessment report graded this aspect as good. Standards of learners' work are high. Learners in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), literacy and numeracy programmes develop skills to help them to be more successful in their lives and work. For example, in a literacy lesson held in a primary school, women who had never used computers before acquired useful information technology (IT) skills and they gained confidence which helped them to work with their own children. Good occupational and personal skills are acquired by health, public services and care learners. Fitness and health provision provides good development of learners' health and wellbeing. Learners enjoy their lessons and they receive good support from staff.
11. Success rates for learners on non-accredited programmes are high. They have increased over the last three years in most curriculum areas, with retention rates over 90% for most courses with a large number of learners. Progression rates between college courses are generally satisfactory, and good in arts and media provision.
12. The overall headline success rate for learners taking accredited, further education provision was 68% in 2007/08. This is a 16% improvement on the previous year, but below the 2006/07 national average. Success rates for learners on long level 1 courses are significantly higher than the national average. For the large number of learners taking short accredited courses, success rates increased by 11% between 2006/07 and 2007/08, but they are still below the national average. Success rates for learners on Train to Gain provision are very high and improving, with 100% overall and timely success rates for the large number of Skills for Life learners in the current year.
13. Learners' achievements are analysed by age, minority ethnic group and gender. White learners achieve the highest success rates, but overall there is no significant under-performance by any minority ethnic group. The success rate of males is below females on some courses.
14. Learners' attendance is low in too many curriculum areas and a lack of punctuality also disrupts learning.



## Quality of provision

Good: Grade 2

Adult and community learning  
Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2  
Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

15. The quality of provision is good, as it is for Train to Gain. Teaching and learning are good. A significant majority of the teaching and learning observed during the inspection was good or better and no inadequate lessons were seen. This matches the self-assessment report. Teachers develop good relationships with learners that promote effective learning. Information and learning technology (ILT) is incorporated effectively in many lessons and is used by both learners and teachers. Enthusiastic and experienced teachers in health, public services and care lead lively and challenging lessons. Many teachers in arts and media are experts in their fields with current professional experience that enables them to bring a topical realism to the subject. Teachers of fitness and health programmes provide very effective coaching practice. However, inappropriate accommodation detracts from the learning experience in some cases, for example in counselling and massage.
16. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory. Procedures for ensuring that childcare assignments are of an appropriate standard are thorough. Feedback to learners on their work is generally satisfactory. Most teachers mark learners' work accurately and provide comprehensive comments to help them improve. Train to Gain learners are prepared well for their assessments. However the assessment and monitoring of progress of fitness and health learners are ineffective, as acknowledged in the self-assessment report.
17. The identification of and provision for additional learning needs are good. Initial diagnostic tests identify additional support needs accurately and a broad range of assistive technology is available to help learners. Learners receive good support both within lessons and during individual or drop-in sessions. Effective communication on the progress of learners takes place between tutors providing additional support and vocational teachers. This support improves the success rates of learners receiving it, compared with learners who do not. Most Train to Gain learners with additional learning needs are encouraged to complete literacy and ESOL programmes in preparation for entry on to programmes in their chosen occupational area. However, some subcontracted provision does not provide specialist support.
18. The service provides a wide variety of accredited vocational programmes that meet the needs and interests of learners well. Accredited courses develop learners' employability, language acquisition and personal development. Full cost and Train to Gain programmes meet employers' needs well, successfully addressing the LSC and government priorities for adult education and training. The service works with a broad range of partners in the borough and across

London to meets the needs of a wide cross-section of society. Social and educational inclusion are good. Learners' views and those of community groups and voluntary organisations are sought and acted upon. Courses and advice are provided in a wide range of community venues. Crèche facilities are available at a number of centres, an important factor in allowing wider access to provision for parents and carers. Enrichment activities are satisfactory overall, with very diverse and exciting opportunities provided for arts, media and publishing learners.

19. Guidance and support for learners are good. Learners receive clear information and guidance at enrolment and further advice from specialist staff when required. Health, public service and care learners have regular tutorials which they find useful. Employers and assessors work together well to overcome barriers to success for Train to Gain learners. Individual learning plans are imaginative and appropriate for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, individual targets are not sufficiently specific for many learners, making it difficult to monitor the progress of learners accurately. This is highlighted in the self-assessment report and was an issue at the previous inspection.

## Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Adult and community learning

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Train to Gain

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

20. Leadership and management are good. The head of service and senior managers have a clear vision for developing adult and community education and training. They set challenging targets and communicate these effectively to staff and service partners. WAES is a valued part of Westminster City Council and the strategic direction of the service is fully supported by elected councillors and senior council officers. The service has a strong board of governors who are well informed by managers and supported by effective clerking arrangements. The members of the board come from a wide range of backgrounds and provide the service with good and effective support. They have developed good relationships with senior managers and provide appropriate challenge as critical friends of the service.

21. A key strength of the service is the breadth and depth of its productive partnerships. The service is closely involved with community groups, employers, faith groups and the voluntary sector to develop education and training. The contribution WAES makes to community cohesion is good. The service listens to and responds to the needs of local communities, especially groups that are hard to engage with, including work with lone parents, people with mental ill health, the homeless and those recovering from substance abuse.

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22. Curriculum management is good. Staff appraisals are regular and result in sensible individual targets in line with key service priorities. Staff attend appropriate continuing professional development activities. A broad range of accredited vocational programmes meet learners' needs, with successful Train to Gain provision and full cost recovery programmes that meet employers' needs well. The service recognises that it needs to do more to engage with male learners.
23. Financial management and budgeting controls are good. The service works hard to overcome shortfalls in enrolment following changes to government funding arrangements and is in a sound financial position. Value for money is good. Imaginative plans to rebuild accommodation, agreed by the local LSC and Westminster Council, have been delayed by the recent economic downturn. A new centre in a new school building in Pimlico will open shortly and expand the opportunities for community learning in that area.
24. The management and deployment of resources are good. Staff are well qualified and many part-time teachers in particular have relevant current professional experience. Accommodation is mixed in quality. The main centre at Amberley Road is not accessible to those with restricted mobility. Other accommodation, in community venues and schools, is mainly fit for purpose, if old and worn. Resources for teaching and learning are generally good.
25. Quality assurance is satisfactory. Procedures covering the observation of teaching and learning have improved and they successfully support improvements to the quality of the service. Judgements arising from lesson observations are thorough, although action plans are not always sufficiently monitored. No system for observation of teaching and learning is in place for Train to Gain provision, although the service has well formed plans to implement this soon.
26. Judgements in the service self-assessment report are broadly accurate. Self-assessment reports are written at team level and contribute well to the overall self-assessment of the service. However, curriculum self-assessment reports and action plans to address identified weaknesses are not always thorough. Managers are aware of this and are taking action to bring about improvements in the coming year. While management information is now more accurate and is used well across the service, some Course Team Leaders are still not using data effectively.
27. The promotion of equality of opportunity is good. The service has appropriate equality and diversity policies. Learners and staff demonstrate good understanding of equality and diversity issues and an ethos of respect is evident across the service. Marketing materials are lively and well targeted at the wide variety of communities and diverse minority ethnic groups represented in the local area. A thoughtfully produced booklet to accompany the main prospectus sensitively and clearly sets out programmes for those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties. Partnership working also effectively promotes equality. A good range of activities are in place for relevant learners which meets the Every Child

Matters (ECM) agenda well. Equality and diversity are promoted well in lessons by imaginative curriculum activities. Aspects of cultural stereotyping are explored sensitively by teachers and good use is made of traditions from other cultures when setting work for learners.

28. Staff have good awareness of safeguarding issues following appropriate training. A senior manager is the designated child protection officer. Criminal record bureau checks are carried out for all staff whose primary responsibilities involve contact with young people and vulnerable adults. However, the service has not completed such checks for the rest of the staff and in this respect the procedures for safeguarding learners do not fully meet current government requirements.

## What learners like:

- 'The friendly staff'
- 'The very supportive and excellent teachers'
- 'My NVQ will help me get a better job or promotion'
- 'The brilliant crèche'
- 'Learning things I missed at school'
- 'The way teachers value our opinions'
- 'We feel that we're a family, not just class mates'
- 'I am learning what my child has learnt'
- 'Enjoying other people's company and keeping my body fit'
- 'It's nice to get out of my house and meet other mums'

## What learners think could improve:

- 'The rules for fees seem unclear and unfair'
- 'Sometimes if I phone up because I'm sick the message doesn't get through to my tutor'
- 'The learning centre is too small and drop-in sessions are too crowded'
- 'My friend would like to come but cannot get up the stairs'
- 'More courses in the evening, early morning and at weekends for people who work'
- 'Cancelling classes because the gym is used for exams'

## Sector subject areas

### Health, public services and care

Good: Grade 2

#### Strengths

- Consistently high success rates in childcare courses
- Very high success rates in health and social care Train to Gain provision
- Good development of personal and occupational skills
- Good teaching and learning
- Good support for learners
- Imaginative activities to promote diversity in the curriculum

#### Areas for improvement

- Low success rates in some counselling and anatomy and physiology courses
- Inappropriate accommodation for massage and counselling

#### Context

29. Overall, there are 550 health, public services and care learners. Childcare courses have 292 learners at levels 1 to 3. Some 75 learners are enrolled on level 1 to 3 complementary therapy courses. Counselling courses at levels 1 to 4 have 100 learners. Train to Gain provision in health and social care is subcontracted to four providers and has 97 learners. Programmes run at two main centres and within the local community.

#### Achievement and standards

30. Achievement and standards are good. Childcare learners achieve high success rates which are consistently above the national averages. For example, the introduction to childcare NVQ level 2 and the introduction to pre-school practice courses obtained 100% success rates in 2007/08. Many programmes of holistic therapies achieve above the national averages. Success rates for most courses in counselling have been at or above national averages, although for a number of courses they fell in 2007/08. This issue was identified in the self-assessment and subsequent action to improve the situation has increased success rates by around 10% in 2008/09 for most courses. Success rates for learners of anatomy and physiology courses are below national averages. Train to Gain provision in health and social care has recorded high success rates and learners progress well from level 1 to level 3. Students' attendance rates are good.

31. Learners develop good personal and occupational skills. Childcare learners develop a better understanding of how to meet children's needs. Employers report that Train to Gain learners in health and social care develop a good understanding of current legislation and develop better understanding of the

needs of service users. Learners in counselling develop good skills which they use in occupational settings. Those studying psychology make significant progress in their extended writing and research skills. On massage courses learners are confident and competent in carrying out routines, gaining in confidence, working collaboratively and demonstrating respect for each other.

### Quality of provision

32. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are experienced and enthusiastic and this is reflected in the enthusiasm learners show for their studies. Well planned lessons provide a broad variety of activities that engage learners' interest. Skills for Life topics including literacy and numeracy are taught very effectively alongside vocational topics. Strategies for working with ESOL learners are good. Teachers have high expectations of learners and act as effective role models to help learners to develop good interpersonal and counselling skills. Learners are suitably challenged: for example in a massage lesson learners carried out peer assessments on practical routines using video and observation sheets.
33. Assessment and internal verification are generally satisfactory and particularly good in childcare. Homework is set regularly and marked accurately. Most students receive detailed feedback, but in other cases it is not so detailed, providing less guidance on how learners can improve. Individual learning plans are not always completed with sufficient detail, although the targets set for learners are often useful. This is acknowledged by service staff.
34. The range of provision is satisfactory. Partnerships help to recruit hard-to-reach learners, and courses are run for lone parents and include English with childcare. The expansion of the 'First Steps' courses extends the breadth of provision and provides a good introduction from which many learners progress to the next level. Learners' achievements are celebrated well through displays and awards. The extent of enrichment activities is satisfactory.
35. Guidance and support are good. Learners are supported very well. Initial assessment and diagnostic tests are effective and teachers work closely with learning support staff who keep them informed and provide advice about individual learners. Teachers are soon familiar with the learning needs of individuals and are better able to support them. Learners value the support of their teachers who give freely of their time to provide additional coaching. Initial advice and guidance is satisfactory. It is enhanced by effective on-course support and learners have access to useful workshops to improve their study skills, course work, portfolio building and time management.

### Leadership and management

36. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with good aspects in childcare. Until recently there were insufficient opportunities to share good practice in the health and social care area. The service recognises this and has taken steps to

address this and other identified areas for development, but it is too early to assess their full effectiveness. The self-assessment report in childcare is thorough and accurate. The report for the other areas gives insufficient weight to the impact of success rates. The observation of teaching and learning is accurate, thorough, used to improve individual performance and to inform decisions about professional development.

37. Accommodation is generally adequate. However, one centre has some inappropriate accommodation for massage and counselling; the room used for massage has no sink and it is difficult to make full arrangements for privacy.
38. Equality and diversity are promoted well and enhanced by imaginative curriculum activities. Childcare learners have produced a 'diversity tree' demonstrating different aspects of equality and diversity. Teachers use challenging activities to explore cultural stereotyping. For example, during a psychology lesson, learners explored how perceptions of 'normality' could be wrongly interpreted as mental health issues in different cultural contexts. Childcare learners produced a detailed and wide-ranging list of activities to improve children's knowledge of other cultures. They were then very confident in presenting imaginative examples which could be used in a nursery home corner.



## Leisure, travel & tourism

Satisfactory: Grade 3

### Context

39. Non-accredited programmes in health and fitness are run at six locations, with 15 courses including Pilates, exercise and yoga. A small number of accredited programmes are offered in fitness instructing and travel. Provision is available throughout the daytime and early evening. In 2007/08 there were 942 learners, 84% of whom were women, 58% of minority ethnic heritage and 16% declared a disability. Other leisure, travel and tourism provision outside the scope of this inspection includes hospitality courses in food and wine.

### Strengths

- Good development of learners' health and wellbeing
- Very effective coaching
- Highly inclusive learning that meets the needs of individual learners

### Areas for improvement

- Low attendance
- Ineffective assessment and monitoring of learners' progress
- Slow progress to improve the quality of provision

### Achievement and standards

40. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The development of learners' health and wellbeing is good and many learners gain health benefits from attending these courses. This was identified as a key strength at the previous inspection. Programmes enable learners to become more independent and maintain or enhance their overall fitness levels. Improvements in alignment, movement, posture and balance are made by many learners. For example, a learner with serious health problems has reduced the need to visit the doctor. As well as satisfying individual learners' needs, the provision meets local and national agendas, such as tackling obesity. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory. Most learners improve their technique and skills to an adequate level of performance. Retention rates are satisfactory. Learners' attendance rates are low at less than 70% for a significant number of courses.

### Quality of provision

41. The quality of provision is satisfactory, as is teaching and learning. Coaching is very effective, including particularly good instruction and demonstration. Planning and preparation for sessions are good. Most tutors are well experienced in their subject and some have competed at high levels in competitions.

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42. Teaching in most sessions is highly inclusive. Individual learners receive good attention. For example, a number of learners with health related issues are supported well through a range of exercise modifications. Courses are adapted appropriately and learning is made relevant to meet the differing needs of learners. Most learners are sufficiently challenged and reach their full potential. Resources are satisfactory. Teaching areas are safe and comfortable. Risk assessments of these areas have been undertaken by managers and tutors. Learning resources are adequate overall with a few examples of good quality teaching aids used by tutors.
43. Teachers use appropriate assessment methods to record group and individual learning objectives for some courses, but overall assessment and monitoring of performance is inconsistent and goals set are not specific, measurable or timed effectively. Few learners are able to describe how much progress they have made towards their learning goals and progress towards their targets is often not recorded. This is identified as an area for development in the self-assessment report.
44. Programmes and activities meet the needs and interest of learners satisfactorily. These include some targeted provision and progression opportunities for learners. Sessions are offered appropriately at a number of community centres throughout the borough. However, during evenings and weekends provision is limited for fitness and health provision. Access for learners onto courses at the main Amberley Road centre is restricted for learners with mobility difficulties and there are no changing facilities.
45. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Appropriate information, advice and guidance are made available to learners who are provided with detailed course information at an early stage of their course. Teachers use initial assessment effectively to plan sessions. An appropriate induction at the start of courses informs learners of their entitlements. Learners appreciate the very supportive approach of tutors.

#### Leadership and management

46. Curriculum management is satisfactory. Tutors are involved in decision making through regular meetings with managers. WAES maintains good communication with, and support for, part-time tutors. A dedicated team of managers co-ordinate and develop the provision. Partnership work is satisfactory and recent initiatives are beginning to benefit learners. For example, arrangements are now in place to increase the amount of accredited provision. Progress to improve the quality of provision has been slow, with weaknesses identified at the previous inspection still present. For example, action planning following the observation of teaching and learning lacks rigour and the course review process is insufficiently detailed.

47. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Tutors and learners are aware of procedures to address any issues relating to bullying, harassment and other aspects of equal opportunities, although there has been little staff development in this area.

## Arts, media and publishing

Good: Grade 2

### Context

48. The service offers 284 courses in arts, media and publishing, of which 64% is accredited provision and 36% non-accredited. Courses range from entry to level 3 and include visual arts, jewellery, glass, ceramics, fashion, make up, photography, digital media, graphics, music and dance. Most non-accredited classes are taught over 10 weeks and accredited classes over one or two years. Lessons take place during the day and evening. Over 75% of classes are at the two main centres and the remainder at 16 other venues. Of the 1,956 learners enrolled on programmes, 28% are male, 34% are from a minority ethnic background and 12% have a declared disability.

### Strengths

- High success rates on accredited courses in photography, video, ceramics and glass
- High standard of learners' work
- Good teaching and learning
- Very good range of courses and enrichment
- Good support for learners
- Very responsive and highly effective curriculum leadership and management

### Areas for improvement

- Low success rates on accredited courses in jewellery, fashion, graphic design music and make up
- Low attendance

### Achievement and standards

49. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Success rates are inconsistent for accredited courses. They are high and improving on photography, video, ceramics and glass courses, ranging from 82% to 98% in 2007/08. However, success rates are low on courses in jewellery, fashion, graphics, music and makeup, ranging from 63% to 77% and have generally declined over the past three years. Retention and achievement rates for non-accredited courses are satisfactory. Though success rates are relatively high, most courses are only 10 weeks long and there is no current system for formally validating outcomes. Attendance is low. The overall rate of attendance this year is 77% and many programmes show significantly lower levels.

50. Standards of learners' work are good. Learners develop good quality technical and craft skills, producing a wide range of individual work. They use visual

research and development effectively, demonstrating good written and critical skills in theoretical lessons. Many progress successfully to higher level courses.

### Quality of provision

51. The quality of provision is good, as is teaching and learning. Historical and theoretical studies are well integrated with practical learning. Many tutors are experts in their field with current professional experience and their infectious enthusiasm for their subjects highly motivates learners. They know their learners very well and successfully balance very diverse needs in the same group, by effective questioning and use of a wide range of appropriate teaching and learning strategies. For example, in a jewellery lesson, learners worked in small groups to identify key stages in the design and making process. They were actively encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and made presentations of their findings to the whole group. There is a high level of technician support. However, in some lessons teachers manage group learning poorly, and some teaching is too tutor-centred. There is no formal system for keeping an ongoing record of progress between short courses.
52. Learners are highly engaged and focused. They contribute actively to group discussions. They develop team-working skills and support each other well. Many carry out good quality research and design development. They make good evaluative judgements. Resources are satisfactory. Most studios are well equipped, such as digital photography, fashion, pottery and glass. New interactive whiteboards are located in most teaching areas, though they are not always used effectively. A few rooms are too small, the use of multi-use rooms detracts from learning.
53. Assessment is good. Systems for assessment, verification and moderation are effective. Project briefs have clear assessment guidelines. Learners benefit from self-assessment and peer review and their progress is well monitored and recorded.
54. The range of programmes and activities is good, with a wide variety of subjects, some of which are highly specialist, such as kiln-formed glass and special effects make up. Courses are offered at many levels with good progression both internally and to higher education. The programme of community outreach classes is good. In art, pottery and craft, courses are offered at a wide range of accessible venues for learners who are elderly, those with disabilities, with mental ill health and the homeless. Courses are offered at flexible times.
55. Enrichment for learners is very good. They benefit from educational visits to galleries, museums and workshops. Learners on music courses gain valuable experience by giving Christmas concerts and vocal groups perform at festivals and local libraries. They also carry out work experience at a local radio station. In photography, learners make a positive contribution through exhibiting and publishing work in newspapers and magazines. A local gallery hosts the annual art exhibition, with a funded prize to celebrate achievement. In make up, learners

have good work experience opportunities with the Royal Ballet and with a feature film company. In graphics, there are live projects and competitions. Inter-disciplinary projects also take place, such as music students producing a sound recording for the art exhibition and learners recording work produced in fashion and make up.

56. Support for learners is good. Tutors produce enlarged handouts for learners with visual impairments and frequent, well integrated additional learning support is effective in helping learners to achieve. Special adaptations are provided if required, for example an adjustable workbench for a wheelchair user in pottery. Information advice and guidance are satisfactory. Learners receive pre-course guidance from specialist tutors and good on-course progression guidance.

### Leadership and management

57. Leadership and management are good. Staff are well supported and have frequent contact with line managers. Communication is effective. Curriculum development is proactive and external partnerships are good. Joint curriculum moderation meetings provide opportunities to share good practice. Generally, management information is accurate and accessible, although inaccurate data was used to inform the self-assessment process and to set curriculum targets for 2008/09. The self-assessment report broadly reflects the inspection outcomes.
58. Equality of opportunity is good. Classes contain a diverse range of learners. There are good initiatives that reach into the local community, such as workshops on gospel singing and African dance as part of Black History month. Diversity is celebrated in projects, displays and learning materials. Tutors make good use of processes from other cultures, such as Indian jewellery-making techniques. Some learners produce work that explores cultural diversity. In a graphic design class, a learner of Fijian heritage was producing a piece of work exploring family heritage and cultural identity.

## Preparation for life and work

Good: Grade 2

### Context

59. The provision includes ESOL, literacy, numeracy, family literacy, language and numeracy (FLNN), and wider family learning (WFL) courses. Programmes for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are also offered but these were not inspected. Courses are taught across the borough, at the two main centres and many community locations. They are held during the day and evening, with a few at the weekend and a summer school. Overall there are 6,362 learners, of whom 4,653 study ESOL, 988 take literacy and numeracy, 248 in FLLN, and 473 in WFL. Learners are from many countries and cultures, reflecting the ethnic mix of Westminster. In 2008/2009 to date, 320 courses in ESOL, 87 in literacy and numeracy and 61 in FLLN have run with other courses yet to start.

### Strengths

- Good acquisition of skills relevant to learners' lives and work
- Good teaching and learning
- Extensive and responsive range of provision
- Very effective management actions leading to improvements
- Successful family learning provision

### Areas for improvement

- Low success rates in literacy, numeracy and ESOL
- Inconsistent monitoring and recording of learners' progress

### Achievement and standards

60. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates for family learning courses are high; in 2007/08 they were 88% for FLLN and 96% for WFL. They improved by 16% for ESOL courses in 2007/08, but they are still below the national averages. A similar picture is seen for literacy and numeracy courses. The nature of ESOL provision has changed and just over half of the ESOL courses are now accredited. The overall success rate for non-accredited ESOL, literacy and numeracy programmes is 77%. Success rates are high for literacy and numeracy learners on Train to Gain programmes.

61. The standard of learners' work is good. Learners enjoy their lessons and ESOL learners make good progress, especially in speaking skills. They improve their English for everyday life, for example going to the doctor, shopping and talking with neighbours. Many learners make friends in classes with learners who speak other languages, gaining confidence in speaking and joining in discussions.

62. Some outstanding work was observed in family learning provision. Parents worked on activities with their children and as well as helping their children, they also improved their own knowledge and skills. A learner during a numeracy class

for parents found that the class helped her to understand the cultural differences between the education she had in her country and the way her children are taught in the UK.

63. Several women who had never used computers previously, during a 'literacy with computers' lesson, held in a primary school, acquired useful IT skills and they had gained confidence to help their own children with their work on computers. Learners in a higher level literacy lesson showed very good progress in persuasive writing.

### Quality of provision

64. The quality of provision and of teaching and learning are good. Teachers set interesting and challenging activities that engage learners well. Materials and tasks are relevant to learners' everyday life and work, for example newspapers are used to focus discussion on topical subjects. Teachers check and correct pronunciation, use of tenses and accuracy of structures carefully during ESOL lessons. They explain language concepts clearly. Literacy teachers develop a wide range of useful communication skills. Mathematical skills are applied in useful contexts, for example when designing a children's playground during a family learning lesson. In family learning, parents and children share in exciting activities that improve a wide range of skills for both.
65. Additional learning support is good. Inspectors observed a learning support assistant providing very effective support to an ESOL learner with health problems, translating for him so that he could keep up with the lesson.
66. Learning resources are satisfactory. Interactive boards, cameras, tape recorders and other materials are used to promote active learning. Learners' views are valued and they contribute well to discussions. ILT is used in many lessons for presentations and interactive tasks.
67. Assessment is satisfactory. Teachers check learning frequently by using good questioning techniques. They set homework and give constructive feedback which enables learners to progress. In family learning, outcomes are clear to learners and achievement is supported by evidence.
68. The range of provision is good and meets the interests and needs of learners well. ESOL, literacy and numeracy programmes cover pre-entry to level 2, at many different locations and in the community including childrens' centres, family centres and community organisations. Literacy and numeracy is established in a range of vocational subjects including fashion and business administration. Family learning courses provide for vulnerable adults in the community and cover many aspects of craft, music and play. Train to Gain provision improves employed ESOL learners' speaking and writing skills.
69. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Comprehensive initial and diagnostic assessments are carried out for all learners, but they are not always linked to



target-setting. Targets and reviews on individual learning plans are often too general and do not reflect the individual learning needs identified in assessments. Learners are not always clear about their progress and what they need to do to improve their standard of work. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory. Particularly effective appointments are arranged by higher level learners with a career adviser. Learners have good access to counselling, welfare and dyslexia support.

## Leadership and management

70. Leadership and management are good. Curriculum planning is responsive to the needs of the community. Very effective management actions have been taken to improve the quality of the literacy and numeracy provision, including changes in staffing, extensive staff training and changes to the structure and accreditation of courses. Learner achievement data, however, is not always used effectively to monitor and improve the quality of the provision. The self-assessment reports most strengths and areas for improvement identified by inspectors. The process and procedures for observation of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Equality and diversity are satisfactory. Lessons are inclusive and learners with disabilities feel well supported. In Family Learning there are good initiatives to involve more men.

## 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.

2006/07 to 2007/08, compared with the national rates for GFE colleges.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	19+			Diff
		Starts – Transfers	ACL Provider Rate	National Rate	
1 long	06/07	568	87%	62%	25%
	07/08*	763	72%	N/A	
2 long	06/07	50	66%	76%	-10%
	07/08*	57	42%	N/A	
Short**	06/07	6975	56%	70%	-14%
	07/08*	5539	67%	N/A	

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

\*\* Courses over 5 weeks long

Table 2

Success rates on work-based learning Train to Gain NVQ programmes managed by the provider/college 2006/07 to 2008/09

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	college/provider NVQ rate**
Train to Gain NVQ	2006/07	overall		
		timely		
	2007/08	overall	135	71%
		timely	135	71%
	2008/09 (9 months)	overall	198	94%
		timely	198	94%

Note: 2008/09 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first three months or greater of the LSC contract year

\* 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

\*\* NVQ qualification success rates are calculated using data supplied to Ofsted by the college/provider before inspection

Table 3

Success rates on work-based learning Train to Gain skills for life programmes managed by the provider/college 2006/07 to 2008/09

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	college/provider skills for life rate**
Train to Gain (skills for life)	2006/07	overall		
		timely		
	2007/08	overall	18	95%
		timely	18	95%
	2008/09 (9 months)	overall	316	100%
		timely	316	100%

Note: 2008/09 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first three months or greater of the LSC contract year

\* 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

\*\* Skills for life qualification success rates are calculated using data supplied to Ofsted by the college/provider before inspection

Table 4

### Equality and diversity

2007/08	All Ethnic Groups	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese/ Other	Mixed	Not Known	White	White other
Enrolments	6570	577	850	1743	271	261	730	2138
Completion rate (%)	87%	90%	87%	87%	86%	82%	88%	86%
Achievement rate (%)	78%	80%	71%	78%	76%	79%	85%	79%
Success rate (%)	68%	72%	62%	68%	65%	64%	75%	67%
Withdrawal rate (%)	13%	10%	13%	13%	14%	18%	12%	14%