

OFSTED INSPECTION REPORT ON THE COUNCILS PROVISION OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING

Cabinet Member	Councillor David Simmons and Councillor Henry Higgins
Cabinet Portfolio	Education and Children's Services and Culture, Sport and Leisure
Officer Contact	Tricia Collis – Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services
Papers with report	Ofsted Inspection Report 18 th February, published 25 th March 2011

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform Cabinet of Ofsted's findings, as a result of the Inspection of the Councils provision of adult and community learning, February 14-18 th 2011
Contribution to our plans and strategies	Council Plan, Sustainable Community Strategy, Disabled Peoples Plan , Economic Regeneration Strategy
Financial Cost	Nil
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Education and Children's Services and Residents' & Environmental Services
Ward(s) affected	All

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet note the findings of Ofsted, as a result of the Inspection of the provision of adult and community learning provided by the Council, through contract with the Skills Funding Agency and Young Peoples Funding Agency

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

That Cabinet note the improvements in service management and delivery of high quality learning opportunities across the borough for residents and in particular the strong partnerships the Service has formed to enable effective response to changing national and local priorities.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage.

Supporting Information

1. As a provider of adult and community learning, through Grant Funding from the Skills Funding Agency, the provision offered by the Council through the adult education service is subject to inspection by Ofsted within a 4 year cycle timetable. Judgements are made by the Inspectorate team against the revised Common Inspection Framework for Learning and Skills and grades are awarded against a 4 point scale where:

- Grade 1 Outstanding,
- Grade 2 Good
- Grade 3 Satisfactory
- Grade 4 Inadequate

2. During the Inspection week the Inspectorate team carried out over 30 observations of teaching and learning as well as scrutinising all management and business processes (including strategies, policies, planning, and target setting and monitoring) and a full range of learner services including learners' profiles, retention, achievements and successes. They interrogated data and they inspected all main learning sites, a selection of community provision, interviewed staff, learners, tutors, and a full range of partners.

3. In addition to reporting on *Overall effectiveness of the Service*, its *Capacity to improve further*, and *Outcomes for learners, Quality of provision and Leadership and Management* across the whole of the services curriculum offer, the inspection also focused on specialist provision in 3 areas:

- Arts, media and publishing,
- Classical and modern foreign languages,
- Literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses.

4. The summary of the findings and grades awarded are as follows

Full Service Judgements

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Outcomes for learners	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
<i>Partnerships</i>	<i>Outstanding : Grade 1</i>
Leadership and Management	Good: Grade 2
<i>Safeguarding</i>	<i>Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2</i>
<i>Equality of opportunity</i>	<i>Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3</i>

Curriculum Area Judgements

Arts, Media and Publishing	Good: Grade 2
Classical and modern foreign languages	Good: Grade 2
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	Good: Grade 2

4.1 Ofsted Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. The headline success rate is 82%, although the rate of improvement has been relatively slow over the last three years. In 2009/10, the retention rate for learners was high at 91% and the attendance

rate was 83%. The three-year trend for success rates for minority ethnic groups shows that some groups under perform.

- The overall standard of learners' work is high. Learners enjoy their studies and are proud of their achievements. Learners across all subject areas make good progress, developing their personal and social skills and self-confidence. They receive appropriate literacy, numeracy and language support where the need is identified. Progression rates into further courses are high.
- Learners feel safe attending courses. The centres are welcoming, well lit and have friendly and helpful reception and other staff. Safety when using the internet is reinforced, especially with learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Teaching and learning are good. The majority of sessions are well planned and tutors meet the differing needs of learners in mixed ability classes. However, the use of ILT lacks innovation and the service's virtual learning environment (VLE) is underdeveloped.
- The wide range of provision meets the changing needs of the borough. The growth in accredited provision links well with the added focus on vocational qualifications and is bringing in new types of learners.
- The service has outstanding working arrangements with a large number of partners. This work has a significant positive impact on learners and residents within the borough. Collaboration with a peer development group contributes significantly to the good leadership and management.
- Care, guidance and support are good. A comprehensive study guide is issued to every learner on an accredited course, and is available to other learners, to help them with their study and revision. Additional learning support is available for learners. Information, advice and guidance are planned into different stages of the courses.
- Leadership and management are good. Recruitment targets for learners are met consistently. Managers have maintained a strong learner focus, while adapting the curriculum to meet changing national and local priorities. Good two-way communication exists among managers and staff and morale is high.
- Safeguarding arrangements are good. Comprehensive staff training has raised the awareness of staff of safeguarding issues. Two designated members of staff for safeguarding oversee arrangements very well. Rigorous procedures ensure all staff receive the necessary safeguarding checks. Health and safety have a high priority and appropriate risk assessments are carried out. Learners feel very safe.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Staff have good knowledge of the local community and outstanding partnership work has led to the participation of learners from some groups that are traditionally reluctant to engage in education. Insufficient promotion of equality and diversity issues takes place during teaching sessions.

- Good arrangements for collating and acting upon the views of learners are established. The service responds well to feedback from learners, informing them about the actions arising from it. Learner representatives raise issues that staff take seriously. Meetings are organised for ESOL learners and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and they are planned for other groups. Complaints and comments from learners are dealt with effectively.
- Curriculum management is good. Procedures for evaluating the quality of teaching and learning lead to improvement. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process and judgements are broadly accurate. Action plans set specific and measurable targets that are monitored regularly.
- Effective use is made of resources and the service offers good value for money.

4.2 Recommendations by Ofsted on what does Hillingdon Adult Education Service need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of improvement of overall success rates, and narrow the achievement gap that exists for certain minority ethnic groups, by more targeted support and monitoring of the achievement and performance of individuals, and ensuring all individual learning plans contain specific and measurable learning targets.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by more extensive and innovative use of information and learning technologies, including development of the service's virtual learning environment.
- Enrich the curriculum by ensuring teachers promote diversity and equality issues more extensively in learning sessions.

5. The service has commenced work on the Post Inspection Action Plan to address the recommendations in order for improvements to be in place for the start of the new academic year.

Financial Implications

There are no revenue financial implications, outside the Services planned budget for the academic year 2010-11, in addressing the recommendations from the Inspectorate

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

High quality relevant learning opportunities will be available for all residents , which support both national and local priorities.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

No consultation was required; however learners and partner organisations were fully involved and played a significant role in providing the inspectors with relevant evidence to evaluate the

provision effectively. Learners were asked what they liked about learning with Hillingdon Adult Education and what they felt could be improved.

What learners like:

- making friends and trying different things
- the accessible location of courses
- the highly committed and supportive tutors
- building self-confidence and raising aspirations
- the courteous and helpful reception and other staff
- gaining skills to help get a job
- the friendly, relaxed atmosphere and excellent facilities
- gaining knowledge that helps in daily life and when dealing with children.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the organisation of enrolment
- the clarity of information available before courses start
- the cost of fees
- the availability of parking, particularly at the Brookfield Centre
- the excessive amount of paperwork that has to be completed during lessons.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and is satisfied that there are no additional financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

Legal

Under the Council's Constitution the Cabinet has the appropriate power to note the recommendations proposed at the outset of the report. There are no other legal implications arising out of this report to bring to Cabinet's attention.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Ofsted Inspection Report – London Borough of Hillingdon 18th February 2011,
Published March 2011