

Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning

Inspection report

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Type of provider: Local Authority

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Information about the provider

1. Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning (the Service) is part of the borough's Children's Services Department. The Service has 26 staff, with overall responsibility held by the Head of Lifelong Learning and three senior managers. The Service derived funding from a number of sources, predominantly the Central London Learning and Skills Council. Around 90% of provision is sub-contracted to four main partners and approximately 30 smaller, community-based organisations.
2. Most provision falls into the learning for social and personal development category. The major subjects are: art, media and publishing; literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL); sport and leisure; languages; information and communication technology (ICT); health and social care; retail and commercial enterprise; business; and family learning. Employer provision is offered through Train to Gain programmes and a small number of apprenticeships.
3. Wandsworth is an inner London borough with a population of 282,000. Nearly half are aged between 20 and 39 which is above the London average. The proportion of residents of minority ethnic heritage is one third, the largest groups comprising White other (11%), Black Caribbean (4%), Indian (3%) and Black African (3%). In the 2007 English Indices of Deprivation, the borough is ranked 144 out of the 354 local authorities, with pockets of deprivation in areas of Roehampton, Battersea and Tooting.
4. The borough's unemployment rate has increased over the past year and is currently 4.1%, which is below the London average. Wandsworth has around one half of the working age population qualified with degree-level qualifications, which is twice the national average. However, 13% of the working age population has no qualifications, the same as national figures.
5. The following organisations offer learning opportunities on behalf of the Service:
 - South Thames College
 - Putney School of Art and Design
 - Southfields Community College
 - The Library Service.

Type of provision	Number of enrolled learners in 2008/09
Adult learner provision Learning for social and personal development	11,125 part-time learners
Employer provision: Train to Gain Apprenticeships	242 learners 19 apprentices

Summary report

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness of provision **Grade 2**

Capacity to improve **Grade 1**

Aspect	Grade
Outcomes for learners	2
Quality of provision	2
Leadership and management	2
Safeguarding	2
Equality and diversity	2

Learning for social and personal development	
Sport and leisure	2
Art, media and publishing	2
Literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages	2
Family learning	1

Overall effectiveness

- The overall effectiveness of provision is good. Learners' outcomes are good and most complete their courses successfully. A high standard of learners' work is evident in all subject areas. They gain many personal and social benefits, thoroughly enjoy attending sessions and attend frequently. Many learners acquire valuable skills that are useful in their everyday lives. Although most learners are content just to develop their skills, some would like more opportunities to gain recognised qualifications through their studies. Many

learners progress to the next level of course, but this opportunity is not available in all subjects and learners' destinations are not collated systematically.

7. Teaching and learning are good. Tutors maintain interest by varying tasks and ensuring the work is relevant. However, the use of information learning technologies (ILT) to enliven sessions is inconsistent. Learners receive good support in teaching sessions; they highly appreciate childcare support when it is available. Individual achievement targets for learners set by teaching staff are often too vague to be really helpful. The achievements of learners are celebrated very enthusiastically by staff. Equality and diversity are promoted well, although tutors miss opportunities to raise these topics during sessions.
8. Senior managers are highly successful in securing funding to develop adult and community education. The Service has developed a broad range of high quality programmes across the borough that attracts increasing numbers of learners. Outstanding partnership working with the main partners, coupled with strong collaboration with voluntary and community organisations, ensures that much of this work benefits local residents living in deprived areas.
9. Managers and staff have worked hard to continue to improve the service and tackle the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The very clear strategic direction is fully supported by staff. Quality assurance procedures are rigorous. Budgets are controlled rigorously and the provision offers outstanding value for money. Inspectors judge the Service's capacity to make and sustain improvements as outstanding.

Main findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. Learners' retention and success rates have increased over time and are high for programmes leading to personal and social development and for those meeting the needs of employers.
- The overall standard of learners' work is high. Many learners gain in self-confidence, developing literacy, numeracy and other skills to help them in their everyday lives and prepare for employment.
- Learners derive much fun and enjoyment from their sessions and attendance rates are high. Many progress to more advanced programmes, although suitable progression routes are not available in all subject areas.
- Learners feel safe in the centres. Safeguarding procedures are good and fully meet government requirements.
- Teaching and learning are good. Rigorous lesson observation procedures lead to improvements in teaching. However, not all teachers appreciate the relevance of using ILT to promote learning and the use of a virtual learning environment is underdeveloped.
- The range of provision is outstanding and fully meets the needs of learners. This is exemplified by the steady rise in participation rates by learners, many of whom live in deprived areas of the borough.

- Partnership working is exemplary. Managers and staff develop strong and productive relationships with a very wide range of providers, leading to many innovative and flexible programmes. Progression to higher level courses is possible in some subjects, but not all, and staff do not collect learners' destination information systematically.
- Care, guidance and support are good. Learners of family learning programmes in particular benefit from arrangements for childcare and subsidised travel. However, individual learning plans often lack specific and measurable individual targets.
- Leadership and management are good. The Service has a very clear strategic direction. Highly motivated staff work tirelessly to ensure sufficient funding is available to attract more learners. Value for money is outstanding.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is good, although its profile in sessions is inconsistent. Many learners are from groups that traditionally do not participate in lifelong learning. Learners' achievements are celebrated vigorously.
- Curriculum management is good. Quality improvement plans set challenging targets that are regularly monitored and reviewed. Quality assurance procedures are effective and the Service is very well positioned to continue to make improvements.

What does Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the assessment and monitoring of learners' progress by ensuring that specific, measurable achievement targets are agreed with all learners.
- Enliven teaching and learning by extending the use of ILT in all subject areas and developing the virtual learning environment for tutors and learners.
- Improve teaching and learning further by ensuring equality and diversity issues are promoted more regularly in all subjects.
- Increase the value and benefit of provision to learners by increasing the opportunities to gain formal accreditation where appropriate.
- Extend the options for learners to progress to higher level programmes where appropriate and improve the collation and analysis of learners' destination data when they complete programmes.

Summary of the views of users as confirmed by inspectors

What learners like:

- the social aspects of learning and making new friends
- the knowledgeable tutors who make sessions interesting and enjoyable
- being able to help their children with homework and gaining a better understanding of how English and mathematics are taught in schools

- courses that keep their brain active and body fit
- gaining self-confidence that helps them to get a job
- learning new words and pronouncing them correctly, so their children are not embarrassed any more when they speak English
- the fantastic community atmosphere
- the personal support they get from all the staff.

What learners would like to see improved:

- the frequency of courses, because sometimes learners have to wait before the next course starts and sessions stop during holidays
- the amount of car parking at centres
- the fear of having courses cancelled due to funding cuts
- the number of courses that lead to qualifications
- the expensive fees.

Main inspection report

Capacity to make and sustain improvement

Grade 1

10. Learners' achievements and attendance are high and have continued to improve over the past four years. Overall effectiveness and the quality of provision have improved since the previous inspection, with inspectors judging curriculum to be good in three subject areas and outstanding for family learning. However, the setting of specific individual targets for learners, identified as an area for improvement at the last inspection, is still an issue in some subject areas.
11. The self-assessment report is accurate and evaluative and was produced in collaboration with partners. The use of management information is good and informs planning and quality assurance very effectively. Senior managers have outstanding vision and this vision is communicated well to staff who are very clear about the Service's priorities and fully committed to them. Senior officers of the council and councillors provide good support to the Service and recognise its key role as a contributor to improve community cohesion and social inclusion. Finances are sound and the Service has plans to improve further its standard of accommodation. Teaching and learning have improved and staff and partners work extremely hard and successfully to provide programmes that meet local needs. The Service has outstanding capacity to improve further.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 2

12. Inspectors agreed with the judgement in the self-assessment report that learners' outcomes are good. The large majority of learners complete their courses successfully. Overall retention and success rates for all programmes have increased over the past four years and in 2008/09 were 91.4% and 88.5% respectively. They have also increased and are good for Train to Gain programmes, with 84% of learners successfully completing their programme within the appropriate timeframe in 2008/09. Learners' attendance at lessons is also high and in 2008/09 was 93% across the Service.
13. The overall standard of learners' work is high. Learners of visual and performing arts produce creative work of a high standard that often forms part of public exhibitions. Learners develop good skills from leisure and sport courses and derive health benefits from their participation. Many learners report improvements in their self-confidence and self-esteem which helps them in their everyday lives and improves their employment prospects. Family learning programmes better prepare learners to support their own children's school work.
14. Learners progress to more advanced programmes in most subject areas where appropriate, but not all. The Service does not have procedures to monitor and evaluate the progression of learners systematically or use this analysis as a measure of the effectiveness of courses.

15. Most learners derive much fun and enjoyment from their participation in learning sessions. They feel safe and benefit from the safe working practices promoted by staff. Staff celebrate the success of learners very well, through award evenings and events at prestigious venues. For example, the Wandsworth adult gospel choir performs an annual concert at the Royal Festival Hall which is a joyous and inspiring experience for over four hundred learners of mixed ages and their family and friends in the audience. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from provision focusing on providing employment prospects. A recent jobs and career fair observed by inspectors was very successful and well-attended by training providers and learners.

The quality of provision

Grade 2

16. Teaching, learning, and assessment are good. Most teaching is good or better and very little is unsatisfactory. Managers have developed rigorous and accurate systems for observing teaching and learning that provide teachers with helpful advice for further improvements.
17. Effective teaching sessions incorporate a broad range of relevant tasks to keep learners interested and involved. Literacy learners develop employability skills and practise writing to employers or compiling curricula vitae. Many tutors of visual and performing arts are practising artists and use challenging techniques to inspire learners. Learners on family learning programmes participate enthusiastically with creative work and develop reading, writing and numeracy skills that enable them to help their children with school work. Sport and leisure sessions bring social and health benefits to learners as well as developing new skills.
18. Too many tutors do not use ILT to enliven sessions; some have not received recent training and do not feel confident to use the technology. Also, suitable equipment is not readily available in all venues. The Service has plans to develop a virtual learning environment, but currently access to learning materials by this means for learners and tutors is restricted.
19. Tutors assess the work of learners well and provide constructive feedback for further improvement. However, the effective use of individual learning plans is inconsistent. Too many plans lack measurable and specific individual targets and fail to involve learners fully in evaluating their progress. This was an issue highlighted by inspectors at the previous inspection.
20. The Service provides an outstanding range of provision to meet the needs and interests of learners. Most courses continue to be based in partners' accessible locations. The Service also provides programmes in community venues. A broad range of subjects are available that has led to a steady increase in the number of learners participating. Excellent introductory events and taster courses are organised to encourage learners to engage in programmes.

21. A recently acquired learning bus is further raising the already high profile of the Service throughout Wandsworth, and is being used particularly in areas of deprivation. Strong partnerships with voluntary and community organisations have led to innovative curriculum development, such as the work with STORM, an organisation that supports single mothers many of whom have suffered from domestic violence and abuse.
22. Learners are prepared well for employment or further study and some learners of visual arts progress to higher education. Most of the provision does not lead to formal accreditation and many learners, particularly younger ones, would prefer and benefit from gaining a qualification. Managers are planning to increase the proportion of programmes leading to accreditation where appropriate and extend opportunities for progression.
23. Partnership working is outstanding. The Service has well-established and successful links with its main contractors that deliver good-quality programmes. Managers and staff work tirelessly to develop strong and productive relationships with a very wide range of adult education providers, the voluntary sector and community groups across Wandsworth. A key strategic focus for the Service is to widen the participation of those individuals hardest to engage. Family learning programmes now enrol many more people than previously and activities for older learners have also expanded.
24. Care, guidance and support for learners are good. Tutors and other staff are highly committed to the care of learners. Learning support assistants provide effective support in lessons when available. Child care and crèche facilities, along with paid transport, enable learners to attend family learning sessions. Staff provide helpful and relevant advice and guidance to prospective learners on the most suitable courses available. However, this guidance is not always reinforced throughout the programme to fully prepare learners for their next stage of learning.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

25. Leadership and management are good. Senior managers set challenging targets for themselves and the Service as a whole and communicate this strategic direction very effectively to staff, partners and the communities they serve. Enthusiasm and energy characterise this leadership which is highly successful in planning and developing programmes to meet the broad range of needs across the borough. Significantly more programmes and training are now available than at the last inspection. A culture of mutual support has developed and senior managers are confident to delegate responsibilities appropriately to their teams. Staff morale is high.
26. Councillors with cabinet responsibility for lifelong learning are fully supportive of the Service and carry out their duties of scrutiny and governance well. They meet regularly with managers and are fully informed of developments and

progress. Adult learning programmes are fully aligned to relevant government policies and initiatives and to Wandsworth Council's strategic priorities. The Service's key role as a contributor to community cohesion and social inclusion is fully recognised.

27. Curriculum management is good. Management information is used effectively to inform curriculum planning and to help monitor the quality of provision. Curriculum groups and a lifelong learning development group are very effective in bringing providers together, improving communication and in aiding the development of new targeted work to meet local needs.
28. Arrangements for safeguarding are good and fully meet government requirements for the protection of children and vulnerable learners. The detailed safeguarding policy is reviewed regularly and all staff have been trained in how to recognise the signs of abuse, harassment and bullying. Criminal Records Bureau checks are carried out on all staff and a single central record is kept up to date. Service level agreements with partners ensure that partner organisations also comply with safeguarding requirements. Learners report that they feel safe in the premises where their learning and activities take place.
29. The promotion of equality and diversity is good. The Service has continued to strengthen the many positive features that were identified in the previous inspection. Comprehensive policies cover race, gender, disability and sexual identity. Accessibility for individuals with restricted mobility is good. Equality and diversity impact measures contain realistic targets for the improvement of achievement rates for different minority ethnic groups. Where under-performance is identified, improvement actions are agreed and gaps in achievement are narrowed. Comprehensive staff training on equality and diversity matters has resulted in equality and diversity issues being promoted well across the Service, but the active promotion of equality and diversity in teaching sessions is not consistent for all subject areas.
30. Learners from all backgrounds make significant gains in confidence and employability skills as a result of their programmes, including adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Service reaches a full cross section of the residents of the borough and a high proportion of learners are first time users of the Service or belong to groups traditionally difficult to engage. Participation by learners from minority ethnic backgrounds is high, but the proportion of men using the Service programmes, although improved, is still around 25%.
31. The Service's response to learners' opinions is good and rapidly developing. Learner surveys and end-of-course evaluations are sought, analysed and acted upon. However, managers recognise that learners' views are not yet used to inform course reviews and self-assessment fully.
32. Self-assessment and course review processes are good. Well established quality assurance and curriculum review procedures are evaluative and accurate.

Helpful training and guidance has been given to voluntary and community partners to ensure that their reviews are evaluative and make appropriate judgements about key strengths and weaknesses. Quality improvement plans contain challenging, quantitative targets that are monitored regularly. Well constructed service level agreements are in place for all sub-contracted work carried out on behalf of the Service which are monitored closely. The Service has maintained its focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Staff training is effective, although there is no overall training plan to ensure all aspects of training and development are met in a coherent way.

33. The Head of Service has been highly successful in raising funds for curriculum developments and the Service now reaches many more learners than previously. Accommodation improvements have been prioritised and the recently completed refurbishment of the Putney School of Art and Design now provides very good facilities. Overall, resources and accommodation in the Service's four main partners are good and, in the wide range of community venues, they are more varied but fit for purpose. Budgets are monitored rigorously and every effort is taken to ensure programmes are run cost-effectively without detracting from the quality of provision. The Service provides outstanding value for money.

Subject areas

Learning for social and personal development

Other social and community learning provision considered as part of the main findings but not separately graded: languages, ICT, health and social care, retail and commercial enterprise and business.

Sport and leisure

Grade 2

Context

34. Sport and leisure programmes include archery, badminton, climbing, fitness and exercise, Pilates and yoga. None of the courses lead to formal accreditation. Programmes are held at five main centres and community venues spread around the borough. In 2008/09, there were 855 learners and, at the time of the inspection, 619 learners were participating in over 90 courses. Of these, 84% of learners are women, 29% of learners are aged over 60, 45% are from minority ethnic groups and 2% declare themselves as having a disability.

Key findings

- Outcomes for learners are good. In 2008/09, learners' retention rates were high at 93.2% and success rates, based on learner outcomes and course completion, were 88.6%. Many learners progress from beginner to more advanced level programmes where this is possible, such as rock climbing and badminton. Other programmes are run as mixed ability groups and provide only limited opportunities for progression.
- Learners enjoy their lessons and appreciate the health benefits they gain. They feel that they now know more about the benefits of regular exercise, such as improved relaxation and better balance. Some learners feel more confident and better able to cope with problems at work and home. They speak highly of the social outcomes from meeting others on a regular basis.
- Learners feel safe. They are reminded during practical sessions to take rests and to rehydrate themselves regularly. Tutors take care not to overstretch the learners and ensure that all possible health and safety measures are met. Effective procedures are in place to safeguard learners.
- Teaching and learning are good. Tutors have an encouraging manner and set varied tasks for learners. They compile detailed work schemes and lesson plans. Clear explanations of exercises are given and demonstrations of skills are carried out well. During an outstanding Pilates' session, the tutor maintained the interest of a large advanced group while supporting a newly-enrolled learner who had just progressed from a beginners' course and was experiencing difficulties keeping up with the strenuous pace.
- The standard of accommodation is high. South Thames College's purpose-built studios and sports halls are well maintained and learners are supplied with

good quality equipment, such as yoga and Pilates mats. Southfields Community College's good facilities include a rock climbing wall, large sports hall and swimming pool. However, the activity areas in some venues are not always fit for purpose, being too small or with poor ventilation.

- Insufficient initial assessment of learners' skills and levels of fitness takes place on some programmes. Also, too many tutors fail to set meaningful individual targets for learners or monitor their progress regularly.
- The range of provision across the borough is good. Centre managers collaborate over the timings of sessions to avoid duplication of provision. Tutors lead Pilates and yoga sessions at local primary care hospitals where the activities are used as therapy for patients.
- Partnerships are good. Managers from South Thames College and Southfields Community College meet regularly and have widened the participation of target groups, for example by working with the Hestia Age Activity centre and the local hospital.
- Curriculum leadership and management are good. The curriculum leadership group is an effective forum for curriculum development. Staff morale is high and a positive atmosphere abounds in the various centres. Judgements in the self-assessment report are broadly accurate. Staff collect and act upon learners' opinions well.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. A higher proportion of learners of minority ethnic heritage participate in programmes than are represented in the local community. Only 21% of learners are men, but strategies are being put into place to increase this proportion. For example, it is planned that use of the new Astroturf pitch at Southfields Community College will raise men's participation rate.

What does Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of learners by carrying out more rigorous initial assessments of their skills; set learners specific individual targets and monitor their progress towards these targets regularly.
- Encourage greater participation by men by introducing courses attractive to them.
- Enable all learners to broaden and develop their skills further by introducing suitable progression routes for all appropriate programmes.

Visual and performing arts and media

Grade 2

Context

35. In 2008/09, 3,620 learners attended around 120 programmes delivered by college partners and other providers throughout the borough. In 2009/10, 3,372 learners have enrolled. Sessions are held during the day, at weekends, and during twilight and evening periods. Courses range from beginners and intermediate to advanced levels. All of the provision is non-accredited. Women comprise 80% of learners and 34% are from minority ethnic groups. The three main providers have curriculum managers, with 82 part-time staff teaching between two hours and eight hours a week.

Key findings

- Learners achieve a very high standard of creative work. They are encouraged to use sketchbooks and log books to measure their progress and to build a portfolio. New learners progress quickly and gain good skills and techniques. Learners' attendance and retention rates are good, at 93% and 94% respectively in 2008/09.
- Learners develop good personal and social skills. They enjoy inspiring visits, where they gain knowledge of historical and cultural designs, and participate in productive group discussions. Learners benefit from group outdoor sketching activities. Learners of dance meet up in the evening to go dancing. Many learners have started small businesses successfully.
- Learners use safe working practices and feel safe in all centres. Health and safety procedures are adhered to closely. In the sewing room, learners must gain permission before using the sewing machines, and painting and print studios ensure toxic substances are dealt with properly.
- There is much good, and better, teaching and learning. Tutors are well qualified and many are practising artists and specialists in their field. Some use challenging techniques to inspire and extend the knowledge of learners. Interesting demonstrations extend learners' knowledge. Peer critiques are used to good effect.
- Many opportunities are missed to use ILT for research and electronic presentations. Too many tutors fail to appreciate the relevance of using ILT for their subject. Some staff have not received the relevant training and ILT equipment is not available in all classrooms.
- The initial and ongoing assessment and recording of learners' progress are inconsistent. Assessment of progress takes place informally and in many sessions it is not recorded. Individual learning plans do not contain quantitative and challenging targets and some tutors are resistant to completing the associated paper work.
- The extensive curriculum offer is outstanding and meets the needs and interests of learners across the borough. Many subjects are taught in mixed ability groups, although some offer beginners, intermediate and advanced

levels. Learners often take several related programmes to enhance their skills. None of the courses offer accreditation, despite the fact that some learners would benefit from this.

- Support and guidance for learners are good. Teachers offer good quality advice and guidance about the most suitable courses for learners to take. Learners receive much information about the materials they will require for their course before they join.
- Curriculum management is good. Managers from the three main centres meet regularly to plan and share good practice. Meetings for subject area staff from different providers enable them to share ideas and have proved very popular with those attending, but the part-time nature of the workforce makes it difficult for some teachers to attend meetings and training events.
- The promotion of equality and diversity within the curriculum is outstanding. For instance, pottery sessions emphasise African and Chinese ware and dance sessions incorporate dances from a broad range of cultures.
- Excellent accommodation is available in all centres. Good up-to-date industrial machinery and large cutting tables are available in sewing rooms. Painting studios are large and well lit with sufficient equipment. Specialist pottery rooms are located at all centres. One dance studio has a sprung floor and mirrors. However, the digital photography room at Putney School of Art and Design is very cramped.

What does Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and learners' attainment by improving the recording of assessment and make sure all individual learning plans contain quantitative and challenging targets.
- Improve teaching and learning further by ensuring art and media teachers attend relevant training events and continuous professional development activities, especially those promoting the use of ILT.
- Provide more opportunities for learners to obtain qualifications, where appropriate, by offering courses leading to formal accreditation.

Literacy, numeracy and ESOL

Grade 2

Context

36. Literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes are provided at pre-entry to intermediate level. Accredited courses account for 40% of the provision. Most provision is delivered by three main partners with some programmes taught directly by Service staff. Courses for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were considered as part of the main findings but not inspected separately. In 2008/09, there were 1,072 learners and currently 323 learners are on ESOL courses and 200 on literacy and numeracy. Over two thirds of learners are women. A curriculum leadership group manages the provision which is taught by 25 part-time tutors.

Key findings

- Learners' outcomes are good. In 2008/09, 88% of learners completed their courses and 81% achieved either a qualification or met all their individual targets. Progression rates to further learning are good for accredited and non-accredited courses. Learners' attendance in 2008/09 was good at 94%, although staff are aware that rates have dropped for some programmes during the current year.
- Learners make good progress towards their learning objectives. They develop higher levels of confidence in their language, literacy and numeracy abilities. Learners enjoy sessions, work hard and are keen to answer questions or seek clarification. Many improve their economic and social well-being and feel more confident to apply for jobs and deal with everyday tasks.
- Learners feel safe and comfortable in sessions. They receive appropriate information on aspects of health and safety, their rights and responsibilities and what to do in the event of bullying or harassment. However, health and safety issues are not raised at the start of sessions when sometimes this would be appropriate. Also, in a session observed by inspectors, tables and chairs designed for children were used inappropriately to seat adults.
- Teaching and learning are good. Better sessions are very well planned and use a very broad range of learning resources. Tutors use stimulating activities to develop learners' skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Learners appreciate the relevant subject content of sessions, for example producing job application letters.
- Less effective sessions do not focus on the individual needs of learners sufficiently. Sessions contain a limited range of activities and resources, relying overly on worksheets. The targets of some learning plans are too general, do not fully involve learners in evaluating their progress, and fail to support the development of independent learning skills. ILT and audio learning materials are not used sufficiently to promote independent learning skills.
- Courses meet the needs and interests of learners well. Local information is used effectively to identify where the need for provision is greatest and programmes are run for learners who are traditionally difficult to engage. Sessions are held

in accessible locations that are familiar to learners. Learners improve their understanding of British life and language and this helps them assimilate into the local community.

- Partnership working is good. Partners are responsive to learners' needs, for instance sessions are held in local libraries at flexible times for learners who cannot attend classes regularly. The strong partnership with South Thames College improves the opportunities for learners to progress to higher level Skills for Life or vocational courses. However, numeracy provision is limited and not available at most centres.
- Learner support, care and guidance are satisfactory. Crèches are available at most centres. Thorough initial assessment ensures that learners are placed on the most appropriate course. Classroom assistants are used effectively in some sessions. Information, advice and guidance are included at the beginning and end of courses, but there are missed opportunities to include on-going advice and guidance within lessons.
- Curriculum management is good. Service managers and partners share good practice well through the curriculum leadership group, but there are too few opportunities for teaching staff to share learning materials and methods of good teaching. Procedures for observing teaching and learning are effective in improving the quality of sessions. The self-assessment process involves all subcontractors appropriately and the self-assessment report is broadly accurate.
- Staff take the views of learners seriously. Appropriate action is taken when receiving suggestions for improvements, for instance the opportunities to practise speaking and listening skills were extended when learners requested this. Procedures to promote safeguarding are satisfactory and staff are trained appropriately.
- Equality and diversity are promoted well and the diverse cultural backgrounds of learners are respected. The Service attracts high numbers of disadvantaged learners and, in the current year, two thirds are from areas of high deprivation. Festivals and traditions are celebrated, but there is insufficient promotion of equality and diversity in sessions outside these times.

What does Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning need to do to improve further?

- Improve the recording and review of learners' progress by ensuring that tutors give greater attention to the specific needs of learners when agreeing individual learning plans and when carrying out reviews.
- Further improve teaching and learning by providing more opportunities for tutors to identify and share good practice so that all learners benefit from well-planned and stimulating sessions.
- Promote the development of learners' independent learning skills by increasing the use of computer-based and audio resources and provide more access to a wider range of learning resources.

Family learning

Grade 1

Context

37. In 2008/09, 2,473 learners enrolled for family learning courses. During the current year, 1,292 learners have attended programmes in South Thames College, Putney School of Art and Design, 36 schools and 27 community organisations across the borough. Courses and taster events cover family language, literacy and numeracy and wider family learning. In 2008/09, 83% of learners were women, 64% were from minority ethnic backgrounds, just below four percent had a declared learning difficulty or disability, nine percent were over 50 years of age and 64% were from designated areas of deprivation.

Key findings

- Learners' outcomes are outstanding. The current in-year retention rate of 98% and success rate of 97% are excellent and show an improving trend from 2008/09 when they were 90% and 88% respectively. Accredited courses comprise 12% of the provision and their overall success rate was satisfactory at 63% in 2008/09. Learners' attendance was good at 91% in 2008/09.
- Learners' achievement of personal and group learning goals is outstanding. Learners gain excellent knowledge of the school curriculum and of current teaching and learning methods used. They develop and apply new language skills to support their children's learning. They make significant gains in self esteem, reporting more confidence when carrying out mundane tasks such as talking to their doctors, speaking to teachers or giving people directions in the street.
- Learners display particularly high levels of enjoyment and learning activities help them to socialise and learn together. They feel secure in centres and safe working practices are promoted throughout sessions. For example, at the beginning of a rock climbing session, staff explained the purpose of health questionnaires and risk assessments very clearly and parental responsibility was emphasised.
- Learners contribute positively to their communities and their families by successfully applying their new skills and knowledge. The celebration of learners' achievement is highly successful and includes awards evenings and events. Some learners progress to further learning, including entry to higher education.
- Teaching and learning are good. Exciting learning activities are planned well and extend learners. Tutors carefully manage individual, pair and group work and learners participate in a lively way in all learning activities. Learning materials are creative and colourful, including useful charts to aid numeracy. Bilingual books cover European and community languages. ILT is used well in some sessions, for example to engage learners through interactive games based on characters from children's books.
- Learners' progress and achievements are recorded too infrequently. For most programmes, comments from teachers and learners are only recorded half way

through the course and at the end. Also, comments on learners' progress towards agreed group and individual learning goals by tutors and learners are insufficiently evaluative.

- The extensive range of courses fully meets the needs of individuals. Excellent events and taster courses engage learners. Courses are customised to meet the needs of learners, and teachers consult learners to ensure that course content, venues and approach are appropriate. Examples of innovative workshops include 'dads' day: build a rocket' and 'grandparents' day: build a robot'.
- Partnership working is excellent and extends the amount and breadth of family learning provision. Outstanding partnership work with statutory, voluntary and community-based organisations includes schools, faith-based and specialist organisations for vulnerable adults. These strong partnerships enable a joint approach to meeting the council's strategic objectives, for example the planning and development of courses with the borough's Teenage Pregnancy Unit.
- All learners have good access to free childcare and some have free travel. Community development workers provide much help to learners whose first language is not English. Advice and guidance are adequate and tutors are trained when they might refer learners to specialist agencies.
- The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Innovative use of external funding extends and enhances family learning in deprived areas of the borough. Examples of very high quality Big Lottery projects include 'Radio Roe' with learners in Wandsworth prison, and digital photography with teenage mums and their children. Programmes in schools for hearing and sight-impaired children enable parents to better support their children's learning.
- The management of safeguarding is good. Partners provide information about their safeguarding arrangements, although they give insufficient focus to safeguarding procedures for vulnerable adults. The monitoring of learners' progression is limited to small samples of learners, with no systems to follow up the future destinations of all learners.
- Curriculum leadership is outstanding. The design and development of programmes are excellent. High levels of commitment and passion are displayed by staff and learners. Managers communicate well with staff and produce informative newsletters that provide essential and useful information. Partners report excellent support from the curriculum leaders. The self-assessment report was largely accurate.

What does Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning need to do to improve further?

- Improve the recording of individual learners' progress and achievement by ensuring that comments by tutors and learners are more evaluative and provided earlier in the programme.
- Ensure that the progression of learners on family learning programmes is monitored to record the learning and employment destinations of all learners.

Information about the inspection

38. Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and four additional inspectors, assisted by the provider's Head of Lifelong Learning, as nominee, carried out the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the Service's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, previous inspection reports and data on learners and their achievement over the period since the previous inspection.
39. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and emails. They looked at questionnaires that learners had recently completed. They also observed learning sessions and assessments. Inspectors collected evidence from programmes in the four subject areas inspected and from other subject areas that the Service offers.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)
Wandsworth Council Lifelong Learning
 FE full- and part-time courses; **Employer responsive:** Train to Gain, apprenticeships. **Social and personal development:** all safeguarded provision

Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	Overall	Employer responsive	Social and personal development
Approximate number of enrolled learners			
Full-time learners	0	0	0
Part-time learners	5,468	169	5,299
Overall effectiveness	2		2
Capacity to improve	1		
A. Outcomes for learners	2		2
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	2		
A1.a) How well do learners attain their learning goals?	2		
A1.b) How well do learners progress?	2		
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	2		
A3. Do learners feel safe?	2		
A4. <i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	2		
A5. <i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	1		
B. Quality of provision	2		2
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	2		
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	1		
B3. How well do partnerships with schools, employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	1		
B4. How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	2		
C. Leadership and management	2		2
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	1		
C2. <i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	2		
C3. How effectively does the provider promote the safeguarding of learners?	2		
C4. How effectively does the provider actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	2		
C5. How effectively does the provider engage with users to support and promote improvement?	2		
C6. How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	2		
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the provider use its available resources to secure value for money?	1		

*where applicable to the type of provision

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