

Bromley Adult and Community Learning

Local authority

Inspection dates		10–13 March 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Requires improvement-3
	Previous inspection:	Good-2
Outcomes for learners		Requires improvement-3
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement-3

Summary of key findings for learners

This provider requires improvement because:

- the proportion of learners on accredited courses who successfully achieve their qualification is too low
- the relationships and lines of accountability between the senior management team, governing body and elected members lack clarity, which results in uncertainty in decision-making, financial control, quality assurance and strategic planning
- the breadth of the curriculum is too narrow, providing insufficient opportunities for those learners wishing to take functional skills English and/or mathematics, the more disadvantaged members of the community and those seeking to develop their employability skills
- teachers do not always set sufficiently detailed, individual or stretching targets for students, and often fail to engage learners in the process of negotiating these targets
- tutors do not consistently check learners' understanding, or provide learners with clear explanations well matched to their individual needs of how they can improve
- staff do not have access to a sufficiently broad range of professional development opportunities.

This provider has the following strengths:

- learners achieve well in accounting and finance
- most learners on community learning programmes make good progress; they appreciate the personal, social, health and educational benefits of the courses, develop a broad range of skills and successfully complete their courses
- a high proportion of learners on accredited and job-search courses successfully progress to further or higher study or to employment
- teaching, learning and assessment are good and, as a result, learners make good progress on most courses
- teachers and learners work together constructively to create a positive atmosphere conducive to learning; they have access to good learning resources.

Full report

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Review and redefine the interrelationships between the senior management team, governors and elected members to ensure clearer lines of accountability, prompt decision making, and better strategic and financial endorsement and management.
- Plan the curriculum to ensure it better addresses the needs of those learners wishing to develop their English and/or mathematics skills, the more disadvantaged members of the community and those seeking to develop their employability skills.
- Provide suitable training and briefing to all staff on how to negotiate and set suitable individual targets with learners, how to check learners' understanding and how to provide clear improvement strategies to learners to enable them to make the best progress.
- Focus closely on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics; support and develop staff in these areas to raise the quality of provision, thereby improving outcomes for learners.
- Strengthen the quality and consistency of information, advice and guidance that staff provide to learners on progression opportunities to further study or to employment.
- Review quality assurance and improvement procedures to ensure suitable rigour of judgements and greater clarity of action plans.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Requires improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bromley Adult and Community Learning (BAEC) provides education and training for approximately 5,500 adult learners each year. Most provision is classroom-based short or part-time courses. Around three quarters of learners undertake non-accredited community learning courses and the remainder study accredited courses across a broad range of different subject areas. Of those learners on accredited courses, the majority are studying at entry level and level 1, with a minority studying at level 2, and a very small proportion at level 3. BAEC provides very little provision for learners aged 16 to 18 or for workplace learners. ▪ In the most recent academic year, the proportion of learners who successfully completed accredited qualifications increased significantly, but was too low and significantly lower than that of similar providers nationally. While most learners complete their courses, too few successfully achieve their qualifications. Current in-year data for short courses indicate rates are continuing to improve, but are still below rates nationally. The key areas where learners achieve well, and significantly above national rates, are accounting and finance. There is no significant variation in the performance of different groups of learners, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or for those learners with additional learning support needs. ▪ The proportion of learners on non-accredited community learning programmes who successfully complete their courses is high. Learners enjoy their courses and make good progress under the careful guidance of skilled and experienced staff. Attendance and punctuality at lessons are generally good. ▪ Learners particularly appreciate the broad and varied range of benefits they gain from their courses, for example the personal and social aspects of meeting and working with other learners, the improved health and well-being from courses such as yoga and pilates and the increased knowledge, technical and craft skills on courses such as languages, art, cookery and dressmaking. ▪ BAEC has too little provision for those learners who wish to develop their employability skills. While the amount of provision in this area is declining significantly, the provision aimed at these 	

learners is of a high quality and is generally located in areas of the borough where need for this type of provision is greatest. Staff deliver these employability sessions well. They provide valuable opportunities for learners to grow their self-confidence, improve their communication skills and to acquire the practical skills, such as information technology, job search and curriculum vitae writing, that they need to maximise their chances of successfully progressing to employment. Around one fifth of those learners who complete courses in employability successfully progress to employment.

- BAEC also runs a valuable work club at the Kentwood centre in Penge where unemployed adults are able to seek basic advice and guidance, develop valuable job-search skills and explore the range of further training that might be available to them to help improve their chances of gaining employment.
- On completion of their study, a high proportion of learners, in areas such as childcare, arts, languages and family learning, successfully progress to further or higher study. Many learners on community learning courses have the opportunity to re-enrol and extend their skills, or to enrol on a course exploring a different area of interest.
- The range of courses available for those learners who wish to improve their skills or gain qualifications in English and/or mathematics is too narrow, and the quality of this provision is not good enough. BAEC provides a suitable range of courses for learners with moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the borough; these courses help learners develop their independent living skills well.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and, as a result, many learners make good progress. Teachers and learners work together constructively to create a positive atmosphere that is conducive to learning. This helps provide learners with the confidence and opportunity to contribute freely to discussion, formulate and express their own views and support their peers.
- Teachers confidently manage learners' different starting points and levels of experience; they broaden and expand the technical skills, creativity and knowledge, both of beginners and of more accomplished learners, by planning challenging and interesting lessons and extracurricular activities. For example, in ESOL lessons, learners research topics independently, make formal presentations confidently and work constructively in groups. This approach helps them develop good conversational skills, extends their understanding and enables them to make rapid progress.
- Teachers have a good grasp of learners' developing skills and generally set tasks appropriate to their needs. Teachers motivate learners well. They are adept at planning work that enables learners to share their ideas and learn from each other.
- A small minority of teachers are less effective because they lack sufficient subject knowledge and do not use a suitably broad range of strategies to engage and extend the learners' knowledge and skills. These teachers fail to check and assess learners' understanding fully, they do not provide sufficiently clear explanations and they move at too rapid a pace. As a result, learners make slower progress in these lessons and are less confident.
- The quality of target setting by tutors is too variable. In the better examples, teachers identify and set clear and suitably stretching targets. Learners receive constructive feedback, which ensures they are aware of the progress they are making. However, in a few lessons, teachers set whole-class targets which fail to allow learners to plot their individual progress and accommodate their differing needs. Most written feedback from teachers is good and ensures learners are aware of the progress they are making and what they need to do to improve.
- The college's information, advice and guidance strategy informs and empowers all staff, including those at the college reception, to play their part in welcoming and guiding learners. Tutors formally or informally review learners 'next steps' at various points throughout the

course. However, as learners approach the end of their courses they do not always provide those who intend to move to a higher-level course with the detailed information they need.

- Learning support is good. Tutors are responsive to the needs of learners with additional needs and supportive in ensuring equal access to all in learning. For example, teachers readily adapt lessons and materials to support dyslexic learners. Trained volunteers provide good learning support and are usefully deployed in areas of greatest need. Outreach work with community partners, such as mental health services, helps broaden the reach of the college.
- Tutors skilfully weave cultural awareness and diversity into lessons. Tutors often capitalise on the multi-national composition of classes by drawing on learners' personal experiences and cultural perceptions, which adds greatly to the lesson.

Visual arts

Community learning 19+ learning programmes

Good

Teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are good because:

- the majority of learners on non-accredited courses make good progress and produce practical work of a high standard; most learners on accredited programmes such as photography and interior design successfully achieve their qualifications and many progress to higher levels of learning
- teachers plan and deliver high quality learning and are passionate and knowledgeable about their subjects; they use their knowledge as practicing artists to motivate and engage the learners who directly attribute the high quality of their work to the teachers' expertise
- learners studying print and etching make particularly good progress, producing work to a sufficiently high standard to sell through galleries
- teachers of non-accredited courses, such as drawing, painting and stained glass, provide learners with informal and regular feedback to help them to refine their work and learn new practical techniques; learners value the opportunities they have in lessons to share their own ideas and knowledge
- learners studying interior design develop excellent employability skills and work to professional standards through realistic design briefs; they acquire a comprehensive knowledge of their subject and use advanced occupational vocabulary with confidence
- in the more effective drawing and painting lessons, teachers encourage learners to observe their subject matter carefully and challenge them to explore fully the potential of media, for example the use of pastels and charcoal to record fine detail
- learners studying clothes making benefit from their teachers' expert knowledge of tailoring, and they enjoy and respond well to the technical instruction they receive; teachers provide specific mini-workshops, for example on making sleeves and linings, which broaden learners' understanding of a variety of stitching techniques for different types of garments
- staff encourage learners to consider various cultural, religious and gender references in art; for example, in an art appreciation class, teachers skilfully used learners' research and critical analyses to reflect on non-traditional examples of paintings, such as Scandinavian painters, the role and representation of female artists and how different cultures have interpreted impressionistic painting
- learners have good access to high quality specialist workshops, such as glassmaking, traditional printmaking, jewellery and ceramics; this helps enable learners to produce creative, imaginative and refined practical work
- teachers promote safe working practices in studios, they take responsibility for ensuring that learners stay safe and are positive about their studies; teachers contact and subsequently re-engaging learners who have stopped attending.

Teaching, learning and assessment in visual arts are not yet outstanding because:

- in painting and drawing lessons, teachers do not always challenge and correct learners' compositional decisions and use of scale early enough in the creative process; in these circumstances learners do not produce work to a high standard
- teachers do not consistently set, monitor or record individual goals for learners relevant to their ability and starting points to challenge and extend their skills; in addition, teachers do not involve learners enough in setting their own goals and targets
- managers are not effective in capturing destination and progression information and are too reliant on anecdotal evidence.

Foundation English and mathematics**19+ learning programmes**

Requires improvement

Teaching, learning and assessment in Foundation English and mathematics require improvement because:

- the proportion of learners who achieve functional skills or GCSE English and mathematics qualifications is too low
- learners make insufficient progress in lessons as teachers do not regularly check learners' understanding carefully, for example failing to check that learners understand the differences between odd and even numbers before moving on to the next task
- not enough teachers promote the importance or relevance of core English and mathematics skills to learners, so that they understand the links to the skills needed for employability
- teachers do not always use the findings of initial assessment well enough to ensure learners study at the appropriate level; for example, in one lesson, all learners were required to substitute commas with connectives, a task which less able learners found too difficult
- teachers place too little emphasis on the development of spelling in lessons, particularly for learners on entry and level 1 English; as a result, these learners make slow progress with improvements to their spelling skills
- teachers rely too much on handouts to teach and assess learners' progress; as a result, the activities fail to engage learners who become disinterested and make slow progress
- tutors do not provide enough advice and guidance to learners towards the end of their courses; as a result, learners are uncertain what they should do next to help them achieve their longer-term learning goal which, for many, is to gain a GCSE qualification
- the absence of level 2 functional skills courses disadvantages those learners who wish to progress from level 1 to GCSE but have not yet developed the relevant skills.

In Foundation English and mathematics the provider has the following strengths:

- teachers and volunteers provide good support and encouragement in the majority of entry level lessons, which enables learners to work to their potential and make good progress
- teachers promote general language and communication skills well in mathematics lessons which reinforce the development of broader functional skills well; for example, learners studying mathematics were required to pronounce words and use comparative language correctly when ordering objects of different heights
- teachers generally have high expectations of learners, they set suitable homework tasks and encourage learners to practise their skills outside lessons; those learners on GCSE programmes make particularly good use of the intranet to revise and complete homework
- on level 2 courses, teachers provide detailed and valuable feedback to learners on their written work, resulting in learners clearly understanding how they can improve

- teachers provide good additional support for those learners who have specific additional support needs such as dyslexia; as a result, these learners progress in line with their peers
- teachers structure lessons well to provide good opportunities for learners to learn from each other
- initial information, advice and guidance are good, staff support learners to help them identify a suitable course to meet their development needs, abilities and lifestyle.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The relationships and lines of accountability between the senior management team, the governing board and elected members are not clear. This results in lack of clarity and uncertainty in relation to decision making, financial control, quality assurance and strategic planning.
- Leaders have recently shown resilience and determination to plan and deliver an adult programme, despite the background of significant funding reductions and an ongoing review of the service in the borough. Although managers have addressed most of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection, they have not yet successfully improved success rates for English or mathematics. In addition, success rates on other accredited courses are too low.
- The breadth of the curriculum is too narrow. Leaders focus too much on the community learning and leisure courses, and too little on how the service can better meet the local needs of disadvantaged members of the community. For example, there is too little provision for learners wishing to take level 2 functional skills or for the more disadvantaged members of the community such as the long-term unemployed or young people not in employment, education or training.
- Curriculum planning for family learning is good. Parents with care plans attend parenting courses and improve their ability to manage their children. Links to Jobcentre Plus are good and managers provide suitable provision for those learners referred by the service. In addition, BAEC benefits from a representative from Jobcentre Plus who sits on the board of governors.
- Managers provide good support to new tutors who appreciate their thorough induction and the supportive mentoring and lesson observation process. Systems and procedures to support those who require improvement are under developed. Although the majority of teachers have appropriate qualifications, a small minority does not hold a teaching qualification. Continuous professional development opportunities are relatively narrow and limited to attendance at curriculum team meetings and at the service's own courses.
- The self-assessment process is mainly thorough; it involves all staff and provides a clear analysis of the provision. In a few instances, however, self-assessment grades are over generous and the improvement targets are too general.
- Managers use data well to analyse their curriculum areas. They also use the information from lesson observations constructively to identify areas for improvement, to develop staff and to find opportunities to share best practice. The monitoring of this subcontracted work is thorough.
- Staff share a strong ethos of support for learners and continually seek to improve learners' experience. Staff provide good support for those learners who require additional support, for example assistance in managing personal issues. This helps to ensure learners make progress and creates a high level of learner satisfaction.
- Learners and staff benefit from good resources, including an impressive array of specialist equipment in the arts department and suitable access to information technology in lessons. These resources help learners produce work to a high standard and provide them with a suitable environment in which to learn.
- Tutors promote equality and diversity well by encouraging the understanding and celebration of different cultures. Staff receive appropriate training, both in curriculum meetings and through

regular communication within the team, which helps to create the welcoming atmosphere and a culture of mutual respect between staff and learners.

- Safeguarding arrangements are good. Designated officers meet frequently and keep tutors and staff updated through the staff bulletin. A programme of training to help raise staff awareness of the 'Prevent' agenda is in the process of being rolled out to staff.

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

Bromley Adult and Community Learning

Inspection grades are based on a provider's performance: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall	14-16 part-time provision	14-16 full-time provision	16-19 study programmes	Traineeships	19+ learning programmes	Apprenticeships	Employability	Community learning
Overall effectiveness	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
Outcomes for learners	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3

Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Grade
Foundation English and mathematics	3
Visual Arts	2

Provider details

Type of provider	Local authority							
Age range of learners	19+							
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	5,500							
Principal/CEO	Carol Arnfield							
Date of previous inspection	February 2010							
Website address	www.bromleyadulthoodeducation.ac.uk							
Provider information at the time of the inspection								
Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 and above	
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
	2	1153	1	312	-	15	-	-
Number of apprentices by Apprenticeship level and age	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+	16-18	19+		
Number of traineeships	-	-	-	-	-	-		
	16-19		19+		Total			
Number of learners aged 14-16								
	Full-time		Part-time					
Number of community learners	-							
Number of employability learners	3,326							
Funding received from	-							
At the time of inspection the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Skills Funding Agency							
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Magpie Dance ■ Relate Bromley ■ Bromley Mencap ■ Community Options ■ Bromley Bengali Welfare Association ■ Hilda Lane Community Association ■ SABA ■ Jasmine Cultural Association ■ OCCA Tai Chi 							

Contextual information

The London borough of Bromley delivers its adult and community learning provision through Bromley Adult Education College (BAEC). The college operates from three main campuses across the borough in Bromley, Orpington and Penge, as well as providing a small amount of provision via subcontractors and through direct delivery at a range of other venues across the region. Although Bromley is one of the more prosperous areas of Greater London, it has pockets of significant deprivation. The borough's local economy is relatively prosperous, with 80.6% of the population economically active. Unemployment, at 5.3%, is below the average for London. Around 86% of the population are White British and 14% are of Black and other minority ethnic heritage.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector

Peter Nelson HMI

Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and three additional inspectors, assisted by the Head of Service as nominee, carried out the inspection with short notice. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years to help them make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected throughout the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across all of the provision and graded the sector subject areas listed in the report above.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Handbook for the inspection of further education and skills 2012*, Part 2:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-the-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-from-september-2012

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