

# Aim Skills Development

Monitoring visit report

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**Name of lead inspector:** Jai Sharda, Her Majesty's Inspector

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**Type of provider:** Independent learning provider

**Address:** 170 Harold Road  
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## Monitoring visit: main findings

### Context and focus of visit

From March 2019, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of adult learning provision which began to be funded from August 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the Further education and skills inspection handbook, especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly funded to deliver adult learning provision' and 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

Aim Skills Development (ASD) delivers vocational qualifications in early years and care, customer service and food safety at level 2 and 3. It also offers a qualification at level 2 for door supervisors in the private security industry. In addition, ASD offers courses from entry level to level 2 in functional skills and in English for speakers of other languages. ASD provided training for around 80 learners in 2018/19; at the time of the monitoring visit, there were 19 learners on courses. ASD started to deliver its newly funded adult learning in September 2017. It provides training as a subcontractor to three further education and skills providers. This provision was not within the scope of this monitoring visit.

### Themes

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in designing and delivering relevant adult learning provision that has a clearly defined purpose?**      **Reasonable progress**

ASD's leaders are passionate about their mission to serve the disadvantaged communities of East London by offering opportunities for residents to improve their life chances. They achieve this mission by offering training, employment and work placements for unemployed adults and supporting employers to upskill their staff.

Tutors have expertise in delivering English to speakers of other languages, early years care, adult social care, the security industry and retail and commercial work. They deploy their skills and experience to provide high-quality training that learners, employers and stakeholders value.

Leaders have carefully designed a curriculum that targets funding towards the most disadvantaged groups. They provide high-quality courses for unemployed adults referred by Jobcentre staff that results in a high proportion achieving a qualification and gaining a job after they complete their studies. As a result, Jobcentre managers continue to refer jobseekers to ASD. Leaders also work closely with employers to provide a bespoke curriculum designed to upskill their staff.

Leaders have established effective procedures for tracking and monitoring the progress and achievement of different groups of learners. They meet with tutors to review progress and to identify any learners who fall behind. Leaders ensure that tutors respond swiftly to help learners who need extra time or support to complete their studies. As a result, qualification achievement rates are high, with few performance differences between learners from different backgrounds.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the company's key strengths and areas for improvement, including in the quality of teaching and learning. They demonstrate this through their careful and frequent monitoring of the detailed, quality improvement plan. Most improvement targets are achieved within planned timescales.

Managers are unable to use the available data on learners' destinations to evaluate fully the effectiveness of the curriculum they deliver. This is because the data does not tell managers whether unemployed learners went on to jobs that were temporary or permanent, part time or full time. The data also does not identify whether learners who were already employed at the start of their training gained a promotion or enhanced responsibilities.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made to ensure that learners benefit from high-quality adult education that prepares them well for their intended job role, career aim and/or personal goals?**      **Reasonable progress**

Learners receive a thorough assessment of their learning needs before beginning their studies. Tutors use this information effectively to plan and deliver learning activities so that learners progress well and achieve.

Tutors support learners well to improve their independent living skills, including their use of mathematics and written and spoken English well. For example, learners' enhanced oral English skills enable many to participate in community activities and to reduce their social isolation. Many become confident to attend medical and welfare appointments unchaperoned.

Learners receive careers information, advice and guidance that ensures they are on a suitable programme at an appropriate level. Many learners are inspired to improve their life chances through participating in further study and training.

Tutors are well qualified and experienced in teaching adults. They use their sector knowledge in care, security work and in retail and customer care to help learners understand the types of jobs and careers available in these fields.

Tutors track carefully learners' progress and achievement. They swiftly identify learners struggling to complete their work and help them to catch up with their peers.

Tutors assess and set challenging targets for the improvement of learners' English and mathematical skills. However, they do not always fully exploit opportunities to develop learners' limited digital skills to enhance further their employment prospects.

Tutors do not monitor and review the achievement of learners' short-term targets frequently enough. Consequently, a few learners become disengaged from learning for a significant time before tutors implement actions to help them back on track.

**How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress**

ASD's two designated safeguarding leads have received suitable training to help them discharge their responsibilities effectively to ensure that learners are kept safe. They implement the company's policies and procedures effectively and ensure that these are regularly updated to reflect changes in safeguarding practices.

Managers ensure that new staff and volunteers are safe to work with their learners. They provide mandatory safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training and as a result, staff know how to make a referral to the designated safeguarding leads if they have any concerns about learners.

Learners know how and to whom they should report any safeguarding concerns. Those working in adult social care have a good grasp of safeguarding and know how to keep themselves and their vulnerable elderly clients safe. Learners on the door supervisors course learn how to ensure their own safety when on duty and how to ensure that visitors attending public events and social functions stay safe.

Most learners have a reasonably secure understanding of British values and of the risks posed by extremist ideologies to these values. This is because tutors promote sensitively discussions about these topics during lessons. They also encourage learners to participate in lively debates about topical subjects such as Brexit, to illustrate the values of democracy, tolerance and free speech.

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