

London Borough of Southwark (Southwark Adult Learning Services)

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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

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), 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:

- Arts, media and publishing
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- Literacy and numeracy
- Community learning
- Family learning

Description of the provider

1. The London Borough of Southwark delivers its adult and community learning through Southwark Adult Learning Services (SALS), a business unit of the Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure division in the Department of Environment and Housing. SALS has one main centre, the Thomas Calton Centre in Peckham, and delivers learning, through partnership arrangements, across the borough at a number of off-site venues. Provision is largely funded by the London Central LSC. In addition to its own provision, SALS subcontracts to 17 voluntary sector organisations in the Southwark area. It has a contract for Aylesbury Advice and Guidance funded by New Deal for Communities.
2. Serving a population of 275,000, SALS delivers First Steps, Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) and further education (FE) part-time courses. Also, SALS has a contract for Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities. In 2007/08, of the 3799 enrolments, 2769 learners were aged 19 and over and 673 were child enrolments, in relation to wider family learning and family literacy, language and numeracy. Of the adult learners, 525 were enrolled on FE courses. During the week of the inspection 1327 learners enrolled, most of whom were female.
3. Of the 354 local authority districts nationally, Southwark is ranked 17th most deprived authority, and 6th out of the London Boroughs. The unemployment rate of around 8% is above the inner London average. Of Southwark's population, 37% are of minority ethnic heritage, the largest single minority ethnic group being Black African, constituting just over 16% of the population. Nearly 70% of SALS' enrolments are from black and minority ethnic communities. Southwark school pupils perform below the national average at all key stages and for the GCSE.

Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

Sector subject areas

Arts, media and publishing	Satisfactory: Grade 3
English for speakers of other languages	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Literacy and numeracy	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Community learning	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Family learning	Satisfactory: Grade 3

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

4. The overall effectiveness of provision is satisfactory. Provision is satisfactory in all sector subject areas inspected. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners' achievement of their own personal learning goals, their attainment of skills and their standards of work are at least satisfactory. Overall success rates are satisfactory and significantly improved since the previous inspection, especially for accredited provision. For non-accredited provision they are also satisfactory, but vary considerably both between different sector subject areas and within them.
5. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, however, too much teaching and learning are no better than satisfactory. Better learning sessions are well planned, with a good range of activity, learners are appropriately challenged and tutors have high expectations. Tutors are appropriately qualified and accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The assessment and monitoring of learners' progress is satisfactory overall, but its quality is very mixed across areas of learning.
6. Provision to meet the needs and interests of learners is satisfactory. Good partnership working and a sound knowledge of local community needs are used well to develop the provision, however few courses are accredited and the range of curriculum is relatively small. Few classes run at weekends or in the evening. Learners' opportunities to progress are too limited.
7. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Initial guidance and recruitment, and on-course guidance are satisfactory. Tutors and other staff support learners well and facilities for learners with disabilities are well promoted. Learners' additional support needs are satisfactorily identified and appropriately met.
8. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Successful internal and external partnerships promote SALS' clear vision for social inclusion. Management actions are based on a good understanding of what needs to be done to further improve the provision. The appointment of a new head of service and revised management structures, have clarified roles and responsibilities and increased accountability. They provide a sound platform for managing change and development. Staff development is good. Quality improvement is satisfactory and the thoroughness and accuracy of the self-assessment process is good. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. SALS meets government requirements for safeguarding, but risk assessment for learners' activities is insufficiently thorough.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

9. The capacity to make further improvement is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, the effectiveness of steps taken to promote improvements has been satisfactory. Success rates have significantly improved and poorly performing courses have been discontinued. A comprehensive quality framework has been introduced and is beginning to show impact, although it is not yet fully and consistently implemented. Collaborative work with a wide range of partners is flexible and mutually productive in building capacity. SALS has expanded to offer to a much wider range of venues and environments. Significant funding for the main centre's refurbishment is secured. The recent reorganisation has improved communication and accountability within the service. The thoroughness and accuracy of the self-assessment process is good. The process is inclusive and the report focuses on key aspects for improvement, such as teaching and learning. The use of management information is underdeveloped. Although subcontracts are now clear, comprehensive and regularly monitored, some aspects of their quality assurance are still ineffective.

Key strengths

- Good personal support for learners
- Strong internal and external partnerships to promote social inclusion
- Strong commitment to improve the quality of provision
- Good staff development

Key areas for improvement

- Quality of teaching and learning
- Risk assessment of learners' activities
- Complete implementation of quality assurance systems
- Capturing and effectively using management information

Main findings

Achievement and standards

Satisfactory: Grade 3

10. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners' achievement of their own personal learning goals, the development of their skills, and their standards of work are satisfactory and sometimes good. In arts, media and publishing, standards of work are high in upholstery and fashion. In community learning, the standard of work in learning sessions is good. Learners enjoy their learning sessions and identify benefits to their lifestyle. In literacy, numeracy and family learning sessions, learners gain significantly in confidence and meet their targets for progress. During the inspection learners' attendance was satisfactory.
11. Success rates overall have improved since the previous inspection. For accredited FE provision they improved significantly over the period 2005/06 to 2007/08. The overall success rate of 71.5% in 2007/08 is satisfactory. In 2006/07, success rates significantly exceeded the national rates for GFE colleges for levels 1 and 2 and short courses, at 82.2%, 94.3% and 87.2% respectively. Retention rates are often high, however as the self-assessment report indicates, both retention and pass rates for ICT are low, at 69.2% and 64.3% respectively in 2007/08.
12. Overall success rates for non-accredited provision, which are satisfactory, have improved since the previous inspection. According to SALS data, based upon recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) data, the overall success rate on non-accredited courses was 73.4% in 2007/08. Success rates vary considerably both between different sector subject areas and within them. For example in areas such as arts, media and publishing and preparation for life and work, while pass rates are often high, retention is low.
13. SALS does not keep overall data about the progression of its learners to other courses or to employment, however, learners speak positively about the impact of courses on their opportunities for progression.

Quality of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

14. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning is mixed, with too little that is good. Teaching and learning are good on health and fitness courses and a significant amount of good teaching and learning takes place in arts, media and publishing. Better learning sessions are well planned, with a good range of activity where learners are appropriately challenged and tutors have high expectations. In family learning sessions learners actively participate and are significantly involved in planning their own learning. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

15. As the self-assessment report identifies, insufficient information learning technologies (ILT) is used to support teaching and learning, although inspectors noted some good use in literacy and numeracy. Recent significant expenditure on equipment, the appointment of an ILT champion and a programme of staff training have created the potential for more effective use.
16. Arrangements for the identification of learners' additional needs for literacy, language and numeracy support are satisfactory. At the main centre, tutors work closely with support staff to make the best use of the outcomes of testing to help develop teaching. At the various subcontractor locations the initial assessment of learners' needs is much less secure.
17. Assessment is satisfactory, but its quality is very mixed. In provision for ESOL, learning plans are sound and detailed, in arts, publishing and media they identify specific and measurable short and long term objectives and are well used by tutors, however, they are not consistently used in community learning.
18. Provision to meet learners' needs and interests is satisfactory. SALS is very responsive to meeting local needs. Partnerships with an expanding range of community groups successfully attract many local people into a variety of non-traditional learning, including specialist courses for particular ethnic groups or people with disabilities. SALS encourages its partners to be innovative to broaden the curriculum and range of venues. However, few courses are accredited, the range of curriculum is relatively small and few classes run at weekends or in the evening. Learners' opportunities to progress are too. A relatively small amount of provision is directly related to employability. If necessary, learners are supported to make key first steps towards rejoining the workforce.
19. Learner guidance and support is satisfactory. Learners receive good personal support. A well integrated and experienced team at the main centre provide good initial guidance to prospective learners. They work appropriately with other educational providers and agencies to provide sound information for learners, including guidance on further courses and employment. However, this range of services is not available to learners at all partners' premises to the same degree of consistency. Learners receive a useful handbook which includes information about complaints. Learners are encouraged to complete evaluation forms at the end of their courses, but they express the view that opportunities to provide wider comments about the quality of the service are not available.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade3

20. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Successful internal and external partnerships promote SALS' clear vision for social inclusion. SALS' visibility within the council is much improved since the previous inspection. Broader local learning opportunities use shared interests and resources across council departments.

Service targets are clear, well understood and closely related to key priorities. Staff and subcontractors understand SALS' priorities and values. Relationships with community partners are open, flexible and mutually productive. SALS has successfully expanded its range of subcontracts while significantly improving learners' success rates. Good working relationships have facilitated the LSC's involvement, along with the council, in investing substantially to refurbish the Thomas Calton centre.

21. The appointment of a new head of service and revised management structures, have clarified roles and responsibilities and increased accountability. They provide a sound platform for managing change and development. Staff development is good overall, although much of the training to support new systems and roles has yet to show impact. Arrangements to meet workforce reform requirements and update staff qualifications are effective. Tutors are appropriately qualified. Many subcontractor staff participate in well managed training and development.
22. Resources are satisfactory. Learning materials are appropriate and generally of a good standard. SALS has recently purchased a range of modern computers and digital interactive technology. Most community venues are welcoming and accessible, although a few spaces are inappropriate or too cramped. The intranet and email are now available to staff at the main centre, with plans to develop access from home for staff and learners. Arrangements to purchase equipment for learners with particular needs are satisfactory.
23. SALS is strongly committed to improve the quality of provision. The quality assurance and improvement framework is comprehensive and detailed, and applies to both direct and subcontracted learning. The thoroughness and accuracy of the self-assessment process is good. Procedures focus strongly on the impact on learning. Clear guidance for tutors incorporates a coherent set of documents and methods to record achievement, however systems are new and implementation is incomplete. The effectiveness of systems to plan and monitor learning is variable, particularly within subcontracted provision.
24. The effective collection and use of management information to plan and monitor the quality of provision, is underdeveloped, as SALS acknowledges. The self-assessment report identifies that the use of systems to set targets and record learners' progress and achievement are not sufficiently understood, or used, across all areas of the provision. Some newly promoted tutors have yet to develop skills to use information effectively. SALS has insufficient in-house database expertise. A recent agency reorganisation abruptly removed consultancy support and although strategies to remedy the situation are in place, SALS could not adequately interrogate its learner data during inspection.
25. The management of subcontracts is insufficiently proactive, although it is much improved since the previous inspection. All partners have clear agreements, setting out expectations and requirements. SALS sets clear targets for recruitment and retention. Subcontractors' work is monitored through data returns, meetings, shared training and visits. However, information is not frequently collated and analysed and timely interventions to improve poor performance or in comparing

learners' or programmes' success are limited. Monitoring visits have recently been enhanced to measure and record a wider range of indicators.

26. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. SALS successfully promotes social and educational inclusion. Well illustrated and simply expressed posters reinforce equality and diversity messages throughout the main centre. Equality of opportunity is regularly formally discussed. Staff and learners show good diversity awareness. Learning sessions are well planned to incorporate good attention to learners' different needs and some use learners' contributions well to promote understanding between cultural groups. Very good partnerships support learners with particular needs and groups under-represented in learning. Tutors work effectively to provide customised learning and well planned support. Many locations provide childcare to enable learners to participate. Learners and staff closely reflect Southwark's very diverse ethnic and cultural mix, but are mostly female. A few events are particularly focused for males. Sports activities are limited. Access to most centres is good, although some parts of the main centre are inaccessible for wheelchairs.
27. Equalities policies and procedures are linked to the council's single equality scheme and are appropriate and regularly reviewed. Their impact is regularly monitored. However, they contain few references to discrimination legislation. Analysing the performance of different groups of learners is underdeveloped.
28. SALS meets government requirements in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. It has good links to the local safeguarding partnership. It actively promotes safe recruitment and learning. Responsibilities for safeguarding are clear and policies cover all learners and staff, including those of subcontractors. All directly employed staff are appropriately checked and receive training on safeguarding. Many subcontractor staff attend training. SALS requires its subcontractors to operate fair and safe recruitment procedures and learning practices, which is very clearly recognised. However, SALS has not yet checked compliance in all providers, nor does it formally record discussions about safeguarding issues.
29. Risk assessment for learners' activities is insufficiently thorough. The health and safety policy is comprehensive and clear, but insufficiently adapted to a mixed-age environment. Appropriately trained team leaders regularly assess particular hazards to learners and staff. In practice, the use of risk assessments is inconsistent. In a few learning sessions, tutors do not adequately develop, record or promote strategies to protect learners from potentially hazardous situations. Audit procedures do not adequately monitor risks from activities, but there are plans to modify documentation.

What learners like:

- Very helpful and able tutors
- Helpful administrative staff
- 'This is a very friendly place - it does not matter what course you are on – everyone will talk to you'
- 'The fund of goodwill from other learners'
- Local availability of courses
- 'The reassuring comfort of the Thomas Calton Centre'
- 'The opportunities to develop or regain confidence'
- 'Family learning courses as a way into further courses'
- 'I feel much better in myself-and I enjoy meeting other people'
- In family learning, 'being welcomed in by the school, as someone helping them with my children's work'
- 'A chance to improve my English while learning to help my child with play'

What learners think could improve:

- Availability of a library at the Thomas Calton Centre
- Number of free childcare places at the Thomas Calton Centre
- Amount of ready access to the computer room at the Thomas Calton Centre
- Operating speed of computers
- Supply of wood and the range of woodworking tools
- Timely information about enrolment
- Opportunities to enrol and pay fees 'on-line'
- Amount of classroom furniture suitable for learners with disabilities
- 'Too much paper work and form filling'
- 'We need more time in the class, so longer sessions would be good'
- Signage at some centres

Sector subject areas

Arts, media and publishing

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

30. Courses are in drawing and painting, life drawing, fashion and sewing, woodwork, DIY, ceramics, knitting, crochet, felt making, and upholstery. Most provision is non-accredited. At the time of inspection, 385 learners were enrolled on non-accredited courses and 15 on an accredited fashion course. Classes take place at the Thomas Calton Centre, with some arts provision at community venues throughout the borough. Courses are offered during both the day and two evenings each week. Most courses are taught in two- or three-hour sessions of 10 weeks' duration over three terms. Three team leaders, each with responsibility for a particular range of courses, manage part time specialist tutors and two fractional technicians.

Strengths

- Good development of practical skills
- High standard of finished artefacts in fashion and upholstery
- Good specialist advice offered by tutors

Areas for improvement

- Insufficiently challenging learning goals to promote progression for more advanced learners
- Insufficiently co-ordinated curriculum management

Achievement and standards

31. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Learners develop good practical skills. The standard of skills in upholstery is high and fashion learners acquire new skills in garment making. Learners extend their ideas and acquire new skills by creating their own designs in feltmaking. A range of mark-making and measuring techniques is fully explored in life drawing. In drawing and painting, learners demonstrate skills in paint handling and visual exploration of tone and colour. Learners take pride in their skills development and enjoy learning and making progress. Drawing is not promoted in some craft learning sessions where learners fail to develop their design ideas before starting making.

32. Finished work in fashion and upholstery is of a high standard. In upholstery, learners strip down and restore different styles of chairs to a professional standard, using unusual fabrics and attempting challenging designs. Folders are kept, demonstrating samples and patterns used for garments and upholstery.

33. Learners' success data was incomplete at the time of the inspection. For 2007/08 pass rates are recorded as good for non-accredited provision and retention as satisfactory, at 87%. The overall success rate, in 2007/08, on accredited fashion courses is 83%. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

34. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors offer good specialist advice to learners and readily share their vocational expertise and experience as visual arts and crafts practitioners. Tutors nurture learning by building confidence and encouraging peer discussion and sharing. Question and answer techniques are used effectively to encourage learners to describe materials and techniques, and to explore language used in relative vocational areas.
35. Most learning sessions are well planned and organised, with a range of activities and tasks to engage learners and maintain momentum in learning. Some schemes of work and lesson plans focus only on tasks and activities, and not on what learners will learn. Demonstrations are succinct and useful for all learners. In poorer learning sessions, teaching is insufficiently challenging. Tutors fail to link learning to learning styles or individual learning goals. Some learning sessions are not managed effectively, resulting in lost time and opportunities. Some learners lack clarity about the knowledge they are acquiring through specific tasks.
36. Accommodation and resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory. Studios and workshops are appropriate to the needs of learners. Storage facilities for learners' work and materials are satisfactory. Interactive whiteboards are available for tutors to use in workshops and studios, but they are not used to their full potential. At the main centre access is appropriate for learners with restricted mobility. The RARPA process for non-accredited provision is satisfactory. Most individual learning plans identify both short- and long-term learning goals. However, learning goals for advanced learners are insufficiently challenging to provide progression opportunities. They do not adequately build on learners prior knowledge or experience.
37. Programmes and courses satisfactorily meet learners' needs and interests. An appropriate range of courses are available to suit most learners, in both daytime and evening. All courses provide for a range of learners' abilities.
38. The support and guidance of learners is satisfactory. Tutors provide a good range of handouts to support learning in learning sessions. Team leaders monitor all learner enquiries. Appropriate guidance on health and safety, and potential risks in workshops, is provided.

Leadership and management

39. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior managers successfully promote independence in management decision making to the three team leaders. They have responded to this with enthusiasm and ideas for development.

However, overall curriculum management is insufficiently coordinated, with no clear overview for the development of creative arts provision. Good practice is not shared formally.

40. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. The self-assessment report reflects similar strengths to those found by inspectors in relation to the quality of learners' work and skills development, and it recognises the insufficiently challenging target-setting for more advanced learners. Aspects of quality assurance are not yet fully implemented. Data is used ineffectively for curriculum planning and improvement, or to measure learners' progress. Lesson observations have been undertaken and areas for improvement identified, but the monitoring of follow up action is inconsistent.
41. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Tutors treat learners fairly, learners treat each other with respect and new learners are welcomed. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory. Learners from diverse communities attend courses and they are encouraged to build on this diversity in their learning sessions. For example, in ceramics, learners are researching Black potters for Black History month and African fashion courses are directed towards meeting the needs and interests of the local African community. However, the promotion of learning about arts and crafts in diverse cultures is not actively delivered through the curriculum, particularly in more traditional drawing and painting classes.

English for speakers of other languages

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

42. At the time of inspection approximately 300 learners were enrolled on ESOL courses. Most learners are women. Courses at all entry levels and levels 1 and 2 are provided by SALS in their main centre during the day. Tutors from this centre also teach on the Sure Start programme at four other locations in conjunction with family learning tutors. Two subcontractors currently provide a total of five classes at entry level for parents of children in local schools and children's centres. Learners are from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds.

Strengths

- High entry level success rates in ESOL skills for life qualifications
- Good support for learners in learning sessions

Areas for Improvement

- Insufficient use of ILT to develop learners' skills
- Narrow range of programmes

Achievement and standards

43. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Opportunities for learners to gain nationally recognised qualifications are good and the number of learners taking qualifications has increased. Entry level success rates in ESOL Skills for Life qualifications are high. They have been above national averages for two years, rising from around 40% in 2005/06 to 100% in 2007/08. Retention at level 1 for ESOL Skills for Life qualifications has improved from 33% in 2005/06 to 100% in 2007/08.

44. The development of speaking and listening skills is satisfactory. Learners gain confidence in the use of everyday English and develop pronunciation and intonation skills well, particularly at entry level. Learners' attendance and punctuality was identified as an area for improvement in the self-assessment report and is now satisfactory.

Quality of provision

45. The quality of provision and the quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. In better learning sessions, planning is detailed with a good mix of learner activity. The differences between weaker and more able learners are acknowledged and teaching topics incorporate the cultural diversity of learners. In weaker learning sessions, insufficient preparation leads to, for example, errors in the teaching of spelling and insufficient practice of new vocabulary and phrases.

Tutors place good emphasis on correct pronunciation and intonation in all learning sessions. The quality of audio material used by tutors, a weakness at the previous inspection, is now good. Board work is well presented and easily followed and understood by learners. Paper-based materials are well illustrated and clearly written.

46. Learning sessions provided by partners, for parents with ESOL needs, are very well planned, both for group and individual learning. Tutors promote a friendly and supportive learning atmosphere, classes are well managed and learners are engaged and interested in their learning. Learning session topics are relevant to learners and involve them in thinking through responses and adapting their language according to everyday circumstance. Opportunities to include learners' own experiences and diverse cultural backgrounds are actively sought.
47. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. Learning rooms in the main centre are pleasant and airy and display good examples of learners' work at entry level. Learners enjoy their learning sessions.
48. Insufficient use is made of ILT in learning sessions. Tutors do not access the wealth of internet materials available and learners do not use it. Digital projectors and boards, where available, are not used to full effect to support teaching and learning. Few computers are available for learners to use in learning sessions and, where present, are rarely used.
49. The assessment and monitoring of learners' progress are satisfactory. Initial assessment is now in place and takes place before enrolment. Materials for assessing learners' needs, and processes for recording the results of diagnostic assessment, are satisfactory. Assessment takes place in appropriate accommodation set aside for advice and guidance. Individual learning plans have clear individual targets and precise long- and short-term goals. The standard of reviews, however, is patchy. ESOL learners are confident in the progress they are making.
50. Programmes and activities satisfactorily meet the needs and interests of all learners. However, the range of ESOL programmes is narrow. Less than 30 learning sessions are delivered each week and all classes take place during the day. The number of locations is limited, with two thirds of classes in the main learning centre. This has been recognised by SALS which now works increasingly with subcontractors to provide learning sessions for parents in schools and children's centres. Men are under-represented in the provision and strategies are in place to remedy this.
51. Guidance and support for learners are satisfactory, with good individual and personal support by tutors in learning sessions. Tutors have a good understanding of learners' individual learning needs and learners appreciate the support they receive.

Leadership and management

52. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Curriculum management within the main centre is satisfactory and improving. Positive improvements have been made in arrangements for internal verification, in improving attendance and punctuality and in increasing the number of male learners. A strategy to conduct dyslexia assessments has been implemented through a partnership arrangement with another organisation. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The promotion of equality and diversity is satisfactory.
53. Positive action has been taken to improve teaching, learning and the recording of learners' progress. A detailed quality assurance pack for tutors is now available. Systems within teaching and learning, for example, tutors' course files, have been standardised to ensure equality of provision. Improvements in teaching and learning resources have not yet impacted on the use of ILT in learning sessions.
54. Good partnership arrangements provide ESOL classes for parents through subcontractors, but management arrangements do not allow for common teaching and learning systems, accreditation and the sharing of good practice. The reporting of achievement in RARPA does not include the attendance of learners. All staff are Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checked and safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Literacy and numeracy

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

55. Accredited and non-accredited literacy and numeracy courses for adults are offered throughout the borough. Most of the teaching is delivered at the main SALS centre in Peckham. At the time of the inspection 325 learners were enrolled on courses, ranging from pre-entry level to level 2. Of these, 151 learners were enrolled on numeracy courses and the remainder on literacy courses. Some teaching is delivered by subcontractors at two community venues within the borough. One venue currently teaches 50 literacy learners, the other has three literacy and two numeracy learners. The lead manager for this area is responsible for a team of five part-time tutors who teach at the main centre.

Strengths

- High numeracy success rates on accredited courses in 2007/08
- Good support for learners

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient use of creative activities and resources in learning sessions
- Inadequate system to analyse data

Achievement and standards

56. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The overall success rate for accredited courses has improved over the last two years and in 2007/08 was high, at 92%. During the same period the success rate for literacy was satisfactory, at 75%. Learners on non-accredited programmes achieve their appropriately individualised targets. During the inspection no data was available to inform analysis of trends or of significant variations between groups of learners.

57. Learners' achievement of skills is satisfactory. Many learners have gained in confidence. Some, including formerly nervous individuals, are able to present information to their peers. A few learners have used their improved literacy skills to write letters to suppliers and have achieved their desired results. Some learners from all levels progress onto higher level courses or into jobs.

Quality of provision

58. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors are very dedicated, preparing well for learning sessions and working hard to ensure that all learners participate in the activities. Tutors present information

in a suitably clear and accurate manner. They differentiate work for their learners appropriately and work individually with learners according to their needs.

59. Too many learning sessions are no better than satisfactory. Tutors make insufficient use of creative resources and activities in learning sessions and have an over-reliance on worksheets. While some use their own good quality resources they miss opportunities to use widely available and well conceived stimulus materials to help make learning more enjoyable. For example, insufficient use is made of the widely available printed teaching resources from both private and public sources.
60. Digital interactive whiteboards have recently been installed in all classrooms. Some tutors make effective use of these in learning sessions and some use appropriate intranet websites to reinforce learning. Computers are not available in all classrooms. Tutors are suitably qualified tutors, although none have achieved the relevant subject specialist qualifications.
61. Teaching accommodation is satisfactory. These are safe environments that are accessible to all. Tutors make use of learners' own work and of religious and cultural posters to enhance the learning environments. However, insufficient use is made of relevant eye-catching literacy and numeracy posters.
62. Initial assessment is satisfactory. Learners undertake relevant activities to identify levels of ability. Diagnostic assessment appropriately identifies detailed strengths and gaps in knowledge. Tutors make insufficient use of the learning styles information gleaned. No formalised assessment of dyslexia currently exists, although a package has recently been purchased. Induction is satisfactory. A few learners are unaware of any induction.
63. Learners' reviews are satisfactory. All learners are required to keep a work record to chart their own progress. They write, or are assisted to record, briefly their activities and feelings about each learning session. Tutors record achievement of targets on individual learning plans, however when targets are partially completed there is no clear follow on to new targets.
64. Programmes and activities satisfactorily meet learners' needs. Courses are provided at all levels, however, insufficient learning sessions are available in the evening or at weekends. Some learners are on waiting lists. The roll-on modular approach of the programmes makes it difficult for tutors to establish learners' foundation skills.
65. The guidance and support of learners is good. Tutors provide good personal support, both in learning sessions and more widely, and make effective use of peer support, which learners value. One former achiever has returned as a teaching assistant. Learners are able to attend relevant on-site advice and guidance sessions. In addition, advisors provide relevant advice and guidance as part of some learning sessions. Learners also receive good additional personal support from advisors with regard to benefits, housing and medical matters. Learners who may have dyslexia are referred to specialists for appropriate help.

One tutor sends texts to absent learners to enable them to keep up with the progress of learning sessions.

Leadership and management

66. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Communication within the team is satisfactory and the team leader holds regular meetings with tutors. Agendas and minutes for meetings are appropriate. The small team also makes good use of informal communication.
67. Quality assurance is satisfactory. The self-assessment report accurately reflects many inspection findings. Internal verification is satisfactory and external verification actions have been addressed. The sharing of good practice is insufficient. Systems to analyse data is inadequate. Learner data is not readily available and the team leader is unable to readily identify trends or compare the performance of different learner groups. Information on learner progress is retained within course files.
68. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Various information sheets have been produced to be used at induction in relation to diversity, safety and complaints, however some learners have poor recollection of seeing or using these.

Community learning

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

69. SALS offers accredited and non-accredited courses in health, public services and care, arts, media and publishing, literacy, ESOL and education and training from entry level to level 2. Approximately one third of the provision is offered through 13 community providers across the borough. A wide range of venues is used to meet diverse local needs.

70. Courses are delivered on a part-time basis. At the time of the inspection, no evening courses were operating. In 2007/08, there were 1111 enrolments on Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) and PCDL programmes, representing 342 learners. Currently 287 learners are enrolled on courses, which run at 10 centres. Approximately 64% of the provision is through community partnerships, with the remainder delivered directly by the provider's staff. Three hourly-paid staff teach on the programme, in addition to one pro-rata curriculum leader.

Strengths

- Good standards of work
- Good teaching for health and fitness courses
- Very effective engagement of learners with particular needs

Areas for improvement

- Insufficient use of systems in subcontracted provision to record learners' progress
- Insufficient use of data to develop management decisions
- Insufficient monitoring of the performance of subcontractors

Achievement and standards

71. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Good standards of work are achieved in learning sessions. Learners acquire new skills early in their courses. For example, in a sewing class, new learners had mastered sufficient machine embroidery techniques by the fourth week to complete their own design on a cushion. Learners enjoy their studies, and can articulate the positive impact of learning on their lives. Older learners feel that learning contributes positively to their physical and mental wellbeing. Learners feel they are making good progress. Some learners are using their skills to benefit the community, for example, by taking part in sponsored events to raise money for charity.

72. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Success rates in 2007/08 were low at 66%, but many learner

outcomes in subcontracted non-accredited provision were not collected or counted by SALS.

Quality of provision

73. The quality of provision is satisfactory. Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teaching is good on health and fitness courses where learning sessions are well planned with clear learning objectives that are understood by learners. Tasks are well differentiated to reflect the abilities of individual learners. In the better learning sessions, a friendly and relaxed atmosphere exists, which is highly conducive to learning and social integration. Health and safety issues are given high priority, and their importance is well understood by learners. Learners are encouraged to develop a healthy lifestyle, for example, some learners have given up smoking and some were reducing their weight. Learners participate enthusiastically in all learning sessions. The use of ILT in learning sessions is underdeveloped.
74. The assessment and monitoring of learners' progress is satisfactory overall. The use of individual learning plans and the recording and reviewing of learners' progress have improved in the directly delivered provision since the previous inspection, although the self-assessment report recognises that the quality of individual learning plans is inconsistent. However, systems to record learners' progress in subcontracted provision are insufficiently established. In some subcontracted courses, initial assessment is inadequate and individual learning plans are not formulated. In some subcontracted provision, staff do not understand what constitutes learners' achievement, and confuse it with attendance. In directly delivered provision, initial assessment is satisfactory and individual learning plans contain clear targets which are reviewed regularly.
75. Programmes and activities meet the needs of most learners satisfactorily, although no evening provision is available. Access to centres for disabled learners is satisfactory. Some classes are poorly sign-posted.
76. Learners with particular needs are well engaged. Community-based organisations are subcontracted to make provision relevant to these learners. These include older learners, partially-sighted learners, women from specific ethnic backgrounds, learners with mental health issues, ex-offenders and learners with a history of drug or alcohol misuse.
77. Learning resources are satisfactory, and appropriate to the learners. Guidance and support for learners is satisfactory overall. Limited use is made of volunteers to support learning. Personal support for learners is often good; for example, one learner is being supported to complete her course while her mother is terminally ill. The progression of learners into employment, further education or training is not formally monitored.

Leadership and management

78. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers have made quality improvement a high priority. Good links exist with community-based providers. They are well supported to build their organisational capacity. A transparent system of bidding for funding has been established, with specifically defined criteria for the allocation of funding. Representatives from community organisations assist in the assessment of bids. Formal service level agreements are in place, and subcontractors are set clear and realistic performance targets for recruitment and achievements.
79. Insufficient use is made of data to help develop management decisions. Data is not routinely analysed to monitor the performance of different groups of learners, either by gender or ethnicity. High priority is given to social inclusion, but no analysis is made to check whether recruitment targets are being met, even though information about new learners is collected at enrolment. Data from subcontracted providers is not analysed at review meetings.
80. The performance of subcontractors is insufficiently monitored. Although course evaluations are undertaken, they are analysed after the courses are completed, so timely interventions to improve quality do not take place. Insufficient checking of subcontractors' safeguarding procedures takes place.
81. The self-assessment process is inclusive and well understood by staff and subcontractors. The judgements made in the self-assessment report are generally accurate. Equality and diversity is promoted well in teaching.

Family learning

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Context

82. SALS delivers family learning courses both directly and through six subcontractors. At the time of inspection 75 learners were enrolled on subcontracted courses and 81 on courses delivered directly. Courses are at venues including schools, children's centres, community centres and libraries. Priority is given to providing courses in areas of high deprivation. These include courses for parents to support their children in developing skills in language, literacy and numeracy. Wider family learning includes courses to support healthy eating and active lifestyles, computer skills for families, crafts courses and other courses which enable participation by learners and their families in their communities. At the time of the inspection, 74 learners attend courses which lead to accreditation. Almost all learners are women, and over 70% of learners do not have English as a first language. The provision has a part-time manager who co-ordinates the work of 12 sessional tutors.

Strengths

- Very good achievement of learners' goals
- Good planning of courses and teaching to meet learners' needs
- Good partnerships to support learners

Areas for improvement

- Inadequate processes to record and monitor learner's progress
- Underdeveloped curriculum management
- Inadequate procedures for health and safety

Achievement and standards

83. Achievements and standards are satisfactory. Overall, the development of learners' skills and confidence in supporting their families is good. The achievement of learners' goals is very good, which include opportunities both to contribute to their children's education and to improve their own literacy, numeracy and language skills. Head tutors appreciate improvements in adult support for children's learning, and can demonstrate improvements in adult participation in schools. This includes learners for whom participation in family learning is a first step in further training, and some whom schools are able to recruit as teaching assistants.

84. The standards of learners' work are satisfactory and they make satisfactory progress on their courses. Attendance and retention are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

85. The quality of provision is satisfactory and teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is often good. It is supportive and encourages very good participation by learners in learning sessions. On one course learners and their children decide the topics they would like to cover. Tutors support them to lead learning sessions and develop their story telling, reading and social skills.
86. Teaching is often well planned. It takes into account the needs and backgrounds of learners. In a learning session with learners originally from three different continents, sensitive discussion comparing their experiences gave them a better basis to understand the very different ways in which their children are playing and learning in Southwark. The use of ILT in teaching is underdeveloped. In a few learning sessions insufficient checking of learners' understanding of safety issues takes place.
87. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory, with well chosen teaching materials, however, the provision of individual learning aids for learners for whom English is a second language is inadequate. The training and qualifications of tutors are good, and the service extends its programme of staff development to other providers in the borough.
88. Assessment, including the initial assessment of learners, is satisfactory. Initial assessment helps to identify additional learning needs effectively and helps develop the provision of additional learning support. While there are some good examples of using initial assessment to plan learning, this is not consistently the case. Some courses record learners' progress well, but overall the processes for recognising and recording learners' achievement are inadequate.
89. The needs and interests of learners are well met. A good range of courses are offered at an increasing number of venues. Effective partnerships provide a focus for the development of priorities. SALS promotes opportunities for accreditation for courses which is valued highly by learners. It is especially significant for the many learners who have no previous UK qualifications. There are some initiatives to engage men in family learning, but their participation is still insufficient.
90. The guidance and support of learners is good. Parents receive well considered initial advice and guidance. It is supportive and provides realistic encouragement for learners and their children. Tutors provide good personal support for learners and work closely with them to match courses to learners' needs. Learners comment about the insufficiency of crèche provision on some courses.

Leadership and management

91. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Managers and staff work closely together to meet learners' needs. Informal communications are good.

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92. Good partnerships support learners and help to develop the very effective inclusion of hard-to-reach learners. SALS is responsive to partner schools that identify needs for family learning with priority groups or in areas of high deprivation. Partnerships are also very effective in promoting and extending training for staff, and in supporting information, advice and guidance activities. Partnerships also enabled some mapping of provision in the borough, and helped plan more effective allocation of resources. SALS has successfully gained Family Learning Impact Funding to enable it to remedy some of the gaps in its provision for family numeracy and work with men.
93. The arrangements for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are satisfactory in the provision delivered directly by SALS, with both recent training for all staff and recent CRB checking. However, no verification by SALS of the safeguarding procedures of subcontracted providers takes place, although this is now to be undertaken.
94. Curriculum management is underdeveloped. Data is insufficiently used to support management, in monitoring outcomes and the quality of provision and in planning. While self-assessment is satisfactory, and inspectors' judgements are often reflected in the self-assessment report, its focus is restricted by this insufficient use of data.
95. Observation of teaching and learning is insufficiently used. The monitoring of the subcontractors' own quality improvement measures is insufficient.
96. Procedures to ensure health and safety are inadequate. Health and safety documentation is not completed in some courses and insufficient information is given to learners to prevent foreseeable accidents. Risk assessments inadequately identify potential risks for tutors and their managers and insufficiently pay attention to additional problems which can arise when activities are for parents and children together. Staff receive insufficient guidance about the full extent of their responsibility for ensuring safety and for checking that safety procedures are understood and acted upon.

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, compared with the national rates for GFE colleges.

Notional Level	Exp End Year	19+			Diff
		Starts – Transfers	Provider Rate	National Rate	
1 long	06/07	468	84.8	76.5	6.1
2 long	06/07	96	90.6	76.5	5.9
Short**	06/07	3	100.0	91.6	8.4

** Courses over five weeks long