

Short inspection of London Borough of Newham Adult Learning Service

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 March 2025

Outcome

London Borough of Newham Adult Learning Service, known as Our Newham Learning and Skills, continues to be a good provider.

Information about this provider

Our Newham Learning and Skills is a local authority adult education provider. They offer part time courses for adults and operate from five centres across the London Borough of Newham.

At the time of inspection there were approximately 1500 learners on courses, most of which lead to a qualification. The largest number of learners study on English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses offered from pre-entry level to level 2. Other courses include functional skills in English and mathematics, as well as small number of tailored learning courses in digital skills, cake baking and decorating and courses for adult learners with special educational needs/or disabilities (SEND). Courses for learners with SEND include sewing, well-being, painting with acrylics and independent living skills.

Our Newham Learning and Skills recently started working with one subcontractor who offers level 3 digital skills courses online such as software development.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Learners, most of whom have several barriers to education and employment, develop valuable new knowledge and skills as a result of their studies. Learners on ESOL courses improve their English language skills and gain confidence and independence in carrying out their daily tasks. Learners who previously required help and interpreters, are able to call their doctor's surgery to make appointments and explain their health conditions. They are able to help their children with their homework and express their views better in the workplace.

Most learners, including those on tailored learning courses and those on training that leads to a qualification complete their courses. A high proportion of learners move onto positive next steps such as higher-level courses, apprenticeships or employment. On a few courses, such as functional skills English and mathematics,

where achievement rates are not high, leaders have put appropriate actions in place that have started to make a positive impact.

Learners feel safe. They know how to report concerns and trust staff will take appropriate actions if they need to. Learners, including those with SEND, enjoy their lessons, participate in activities and contribute to discussions including when they learn online. Learners with SEND learn the essential knowledge they need to keep themselves safe in their communities and online. Tutors teach important topics such as personal and road safety in their curriculums.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Across all subjects, staff sequence their curriculums in an order that enables learners to build new knowledge and skills over time. On the level 3 software development course that is taught by the subcontractors, tutors teach the fundamental aspects of coding and the relevant technical vocabulary first. They then move on to teaching basic and complex coding used in their selected programming language. Tutors then teach learners how these codes can be applied to a range of projects.

Learners with SEND receive helpful support from staff and make good progress towards their goals. Staff have developed a curriculum for learners with SEND which is well structured and is based on a good assessment of what learners know and can do at the start of the course. Staff, who are suitably qualified and experienced, support learners to develop the knowledge and skills they need and to be independent in their daily lives. They teach learners about being safe when travelling, how to manage a bank account and encourage learners to expand their vocabulary. Learners with SEND achieve well, in line with their peers.

Tutors are knowledgeable and use a range of teaching and assessment methods effectively. Tutors on the tailored learning computerised bookkeeping course are suitably qualified and experienced accountants. They provide learners with suitable learning resources and relevant exercises for learners to complete after reading course books. Tutors display instructions for tasks clearly on interactive boards and provide learners with well-designed step-by-step guidance to work from. Tutors then check learners' work as they complete it and give learners helpful verbal feedback, so learners are clear how to complete their tasks.

Staff ensure that learners develop the skills needed for their future employment goals. In cake baking, tutors explain how to listen and take onboard their clients' preferences on choice of colour and fillings on a cake order, and to give information about allergens to their customers. Learners gain the skills to perform better at work, gain new jobs and a few start their own small businesses.

Tutors support learners on ESOL courses well to develop employability skills such as working in a team, giving presentations, and communicating effectively with others. This helps learners improve their confidence for future employment. For example,

when learners work as a group, they need to summarise their discussion and present to the class. However, many learners do not have specific employability targets set by their tutors. Consequently, learners do not recognise the employability skills they have gained or receive structured advice from their tutors on skills they need to develop to secure employment.

Advisory board members bring significant expertise and knowledge to their role, such as in adult education and finance. They have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the provision. This is because they receive useful reports from senior leaders, carry out learning walks and meet staff and students frequently. Board members provide effective support and challenge to senior leaders. For example, they have ensured curriculums are in line with the identified local needs in areas such as digital, data and technology.

Staff are well informed of local risks including gangs and modern-day slavery. However, they do not consistently ensure that learners have a sufficient understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism. Although ESOL teachers cover these topics, too often learners they cannot recall what they have been taught.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Teach learners so they develop a good understanding of risks associated with radicalisations and extremist views.
- Give learners on ESOL courses sufficient information about the skills they need to develop to help them with their next steps in employment.

Provider details

Unique reference number	53139
Address	Beckton Globe 1 Kingsford Way, Beckton London E6 5JQ
Contact number	020 8149 5200
Website	www.onls.ac.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Jaspal Dhaliwal
Provider type	Community learning and skills - local authority
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019
Main subcontractors	Code Institute

Information about this inspection

The inspection was the second short inspection carried out since London Borough of Newham: Adult Learning Service was judged to be good in March 2016.

The inspection team was assisted by the head of curriculum, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

Ramin Narimani, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Saher Nijabat	His Majesty's Inspector
Eileen O'Gara	Ofsted Inspector
Christina Christou	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025