

Westminster Adult Education Service



City of Westminster

Self-Assessment Report 2020/21

*To transform our learners' lives through
inclusive, inspirational lifelong learning*



Inna Duckworth – Level 2 Fine Art



Chantel Smith – Artiste in Residence

'Disruption but not Disadvantage'



Karawan Thabet – Level 2 Certificate in Floral Design



Souada Shalef – Level 3 Media Make-Up

*'I love the passion of the teachers. The absolute wonder of having this
opportunity to update skills and learn new digital skills.'*

CELEBRATING SUCCESSES AND AWARDS

PRIVATE VIEW

Councillor Matthew Green and WAES Governor Ellie Botti joined us to celebrate the achievements of our creative learners at the Private View on 1 July.

Due to Covid restrictions in place at the time, we weren't able to have the big celebration we wanted with everyone joining us in person, but those who were able to attend our socially distanced celebration were blown away by the quality of creative talent on display from our Fine Art, Ceramics and Graphic Design Learners.



CELEBRATING SUCCESSES AND AWARDS

THE SHOW

On 23 June we celebrated the hard work of our Fashion, Hair & Make-up and Floristry learners. Due to Covid restrictions, it was a virtual celebration this year.

We were joined online by nearly 100 attendees with learners, WAES tutors and staff, Councillor Matthew Green and WAES Governor Ellie Botti joining in the celebration. The work showcased the talent, creativity and dedication of our learners during a year that was challenging for hands-on creative learning.



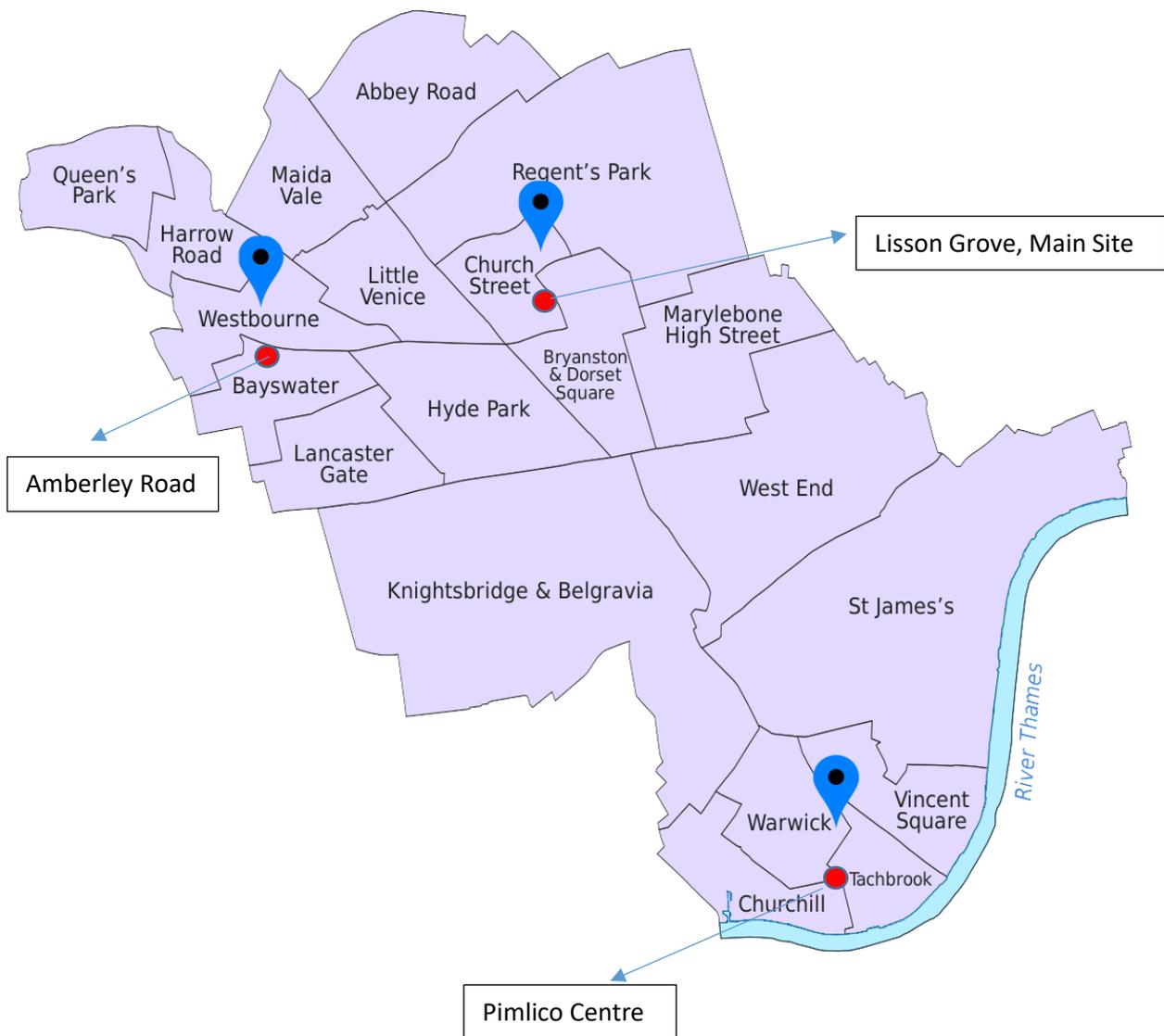
Contents

	Page
1 Context	4
1.1 Demographic Context	5
2 Grading	7
3 Key Strengths and Areas for Improvement	8
4 Types of Provision	
4.1 Adult Learning Programmes	10
4.2 High Needs Programmes	14
4.3 Apprenticeships	15
4.4 Ministry of Housing	16
4.5 Innovation Funding (GLA) – Positive Pathways	16
5 Quality of Education	
5.1 Intent	17
5.2 Implementation	19
5.3 Impact	22
6 Behaviour and Attitudes	29
7 Personal Development	32
8 Leadership and Management	36
8.1 Governance	37
8.2 Safeguarding	38

1 Context

This self-assessment report covers the academic year August 2020 to July 2021. Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES) is the largest local authority adult education service in London. Operating as a department within the Growth, Planning and Housing Directorate of Westminster City Council (WCC), WAES has a well-established delegated scheme of management from the City Council and operates with a Board of Governors, two of whom are Westminster ward councillors.

Map of City of Westminster Council and WAES locations



WAES has three centres, which are located across Westminster to attract learners from the most deprived areas. The Service also typically delivers from an additional 80 centres annually to engage our hardest to reach learners through the delivery of community and family learning, although this has been more limited this year due to lockdown restrictions. Through the continued disruption due to pandemic restrictions, WAES prepared the September curriculum offer to enable a quick response to any lockdowns that were imposed to minimise disruption to learners. Programmes operated online with the support of IT devices from WAES, practical kits

were distributed to the creative sector learners and exams continued where they led to professional outcomes.

WAES is grant funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) to deliver education and skills training and community learning to post-16 learners, but predominantly to adult learners. WAES also receives a smaller grant allocation from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The principal purpose of the skills funding is to engage adults and provide the skills and learning that they need to equip them for work, an apprenticeship or further learning. The community learning funding aims to support those who are furthest away from learning and work, promote community cohesion and reduce isolation. WAES was inspected by Ofsted in March 2016 and was graded as 'remaining a good provider' with many outstanding qualities. Inspectors highlighted the very good progress made by the vast majority of learners who are extremely successful in their studies and develop a wide range of vocational and life skills which has continued. In addition, WAES received a monitoring visit by Ofsted in September 2020 where activities to support the pandemic were highlighted in their subsequent published report.

While WAES is an Adult and Community Learning provider, many learners see this as Westminster's Adult College.

1.1 Demographic Context

Westminster is a very ethnically diverse London borough with an extremely varied economic, social and cultural mix. Almost one-third of residents state that English is not their main language. In the 2011 Census, 47% of residents stated that they were born outside of the UK, with 18% coming from EU countries and 6% from Commonwealth nations. Most of the other residents were from the Middle East and North America. As a result, a sizeable proportion of the Service's provision is English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Of our learners, those who declared themselves as being from a Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic (BAME) group were 51% of the cohort, and learners with Arabic and African heritage comprised the largest groups within this cohort, at 15% and 14% respectively. This cultural mix of learners is representative of previous years' trends, with some minor fluctuations.

WAES has a strong community and cultural learning provision for learners that are furthest away from employment, which includes community and family learning. Within this provision, a sizeable proportion declare as BAME and live in the most economically challenged wards of Westminster.

Westminster's population is younger than the national average, but it is ageing fast. Working aged people (18-64) comprise 69% of Westminster's 271,560 residents (GB: 62.5%, London 67.4%). The local population is growing fastest among the over-45s and all five-year age bands above 60 are set to grow by over 25% between 2018 and 2028. In 2018, there were 73,565 over-50s living in Westminster and by 2028, this figure is forecast to rise to 97,787. Over the same period, the number of people aged 65+ (which is currently 35,302) is expected to rise significantly, to reach 45,157. *(Source: 2018-based subnational population projections, ONS & Westminster Ward Profiles)*

The Westminster population has more males (53%) than females (47%) (*Office for National Statistics, 2013*). The proportion of females in employment in Westminster is 62.9%, which is well below the London (71.1%) and GB average (72.2%). This gap to the national average (-9.3%) is three times wider than for Westminster males (-3%). The WAES learner cohort is 74% female and 26% male. (*Source: WAES Individualised Learner Records 2020-21*)

In employment terms, the occupational profile of Westminster residents is heavily skewed towards higher skills occupations. 68% of employed Westminster residents work in management, professional or associate professional/technical roles (London: 62%, GB: 50%). The general attainment of working-age Westminster residents reflects this. Almost two-thirds of Westminster working-age residents are qualified to NVQ Level 4 (first degree) or above, well above the London and GB average. However, almost 10,000 residents (5.8% of working age) have no qualifications and less than half of those whose highest qualification is at Level 2 are in work, compared to over 60% across the UK. (*Source: ONS Annual Population Survey*)

Unemployment soared during the pandemic and the claimant count in Westminster almost trebled due to the impact of the pandemic, compared to it doubling nationally. The 18-24 claimant count quadrupled over the same period, and among the over-50s, it was at its highest level ever, and 50% higher than its previous peak in 1986. The Westminster neighbourhoods that had the highest levels of unemployment pre-pandemic experienced the highest increases in the claimant count as a result of the pandemic. These same neighbourhoods are also the areas with the highest number of residents at risk of redundancy and in insecure, low-paid and low-skilled employment. (*Source: NOMIS, claimant count*)

The WCC City for All strategy has four key strategic priorities:

- Thriving Economy
- Greener and Cleaner
- Vibrant Communities
- Smart City

Thriving Economy was added in response to the devastating impact of Covid-19 on Westminster's economy, with key sectors like hospitality, tourist economy or retail, which forms a high proportion of economic activity, being completely decimated due to national lockdowns and Covid-19 restrictions.

2 Grading

Overall

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Overall Effectiveness	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Education	Good	Good	Good
Behaviours and attitudes	Good	Good	Outstanding
Personal Development	Good	Good	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding

Types of Provision

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Adult Learning Programmes (including Community and Family Learning)	Good	Good	Good
Apprenticeships	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good
High Needs/SEN	Good	Good	Good

Curriculum SAR Grades

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Basic Skills (including Digital)	Requires Improvement	Good	Good
ESOL	Good	Good	Good
Learners with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LDD)	Outstanding	Good	Good
Professional Pathways	Requires Improvement	Good	Good
Distance Learning	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Creative Industries	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Community and Cultural Learning	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

3 Key Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Key Strengths

- **Excellent and resilient response at all levels of leadership in planning curriculum and development of tutors during the Covid-19 pandemic to keep learners learning and achieving.**
 - Preparing staff and learners for another lockdown
 - Development programmes for staff at all levels for online delivery
 - Responsive to local needs, e.g., community learning provision, employment construction, SWAPs, curriculum offer
 - Development of employer/sector curriculum needs for post pandemic needs, e.g., Amazon Web Services (AWS) Restart digital, Construction face to face, hospitality
 - High levels of cross-service team working, e.g., Safeguarding support, at-risk learners targeted support, mentoring, TAG grades and moderation
 - High levels of engagement from learners in TEAMS events focused on enrichment, progression and employment.

- **Good quality of education and excellent support across the provision to ensure no learners are disadvantaged, evidenced with high levels of retention and achievement.**
 - High levels of retention – 94%
 - High levels of achievement – 88%
 - Strong positive destinations of learners
 - ALS outcomes for learners - 92.3%
 - Increased levels of support for learners

- **Outstanding community learning provision and partnership, working with the most deprived learners within the wards of Westminster, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.**
 - Mainstream and community learning progression data
 - Learners confirming their confidence and wellbeing has improved
 - Learners being able to be active citizens in everyday life, e.g., visits to doctors, shops, etc.
 - Recognised a growing need to offer and meet digital needs of individuals
 - Flexing the curriculum offer to deliver online where possible

- **Highly developed practical skills, despite the pandemic, meeting current and relevant industry standards on creative programmes.**
 - Ensuring all learners have the relevant equipment during lockdown
 - Teachers are highly qualified, skilled and practising professionals
 - Supported by tutors with additional workshops and 1:1 tutorials

- Ceramics learner chosen for national calendar for 2021
 - Selling products in local markets at commercial rates
 - End-of-year sales at commercial rates
 - High grades maintained over a number of years
- **Exceptional behaviour and attitudes and wide-ranging personal development.**
 - Active learner involvement with the learner representatives' system, e.g., over 120 reps
 - Progression weeks, HE fair and other enrichment engagement
 - Training for learners in mentoring to support other learners
 - WAES support for those in most need to ensure everyone able to achieve
 - Bullying never tolerated and this is communicated regularly and clearly
 - Strong induction and preparation for online learning, including e-safety training
 - Learners attending and participating in their learning – 89%
- **Excellent and responsive distance learning provision providing flexible learning opportunities to meet sector and employer needs.**
 - Health & Social Care sector training needs met
 - Learners retained in employment
 - Responded to the learner demand during the lockdown period, e.g., doubled in size
 - Learners progressed to Level 3 qualifications and aspire to better job roles
 - Learners' promotion within the sector from studying

Areas for Improvement

- **Functional Skills outcomes for a small number of learners at Level 1 and 2 caused by the lockdown and restricted exam arrangements.**
 - Results for Functional Skills at Level 1 and 2 to improve for English and maths
 - Consistency across the Service in experience, regardless of pathway
 - Interim skills development between Level 1 and GCSE maths
 - Functional Skills for apprenticeships outcomes improved

4 Types of Provision

Breakdown of Funding Pathways for 2020/21:

Funding Pathway	Funding
AEB Grant Funded Allocation	£7,008,206.50
of which Community Learning	£1,533,227.00
ESFA Funding	£770,014.39
Ministry of Housing – ESOL Funding	£152,000.00
Full Cost Courses	£65,965.65
COVID-19 related funding	£388,850.00
Apprenticeship Funding	£68,788.92
Traineeship Funding	£11,822.70

4.1 Adult Learning Programmes (Good)

Learners benefit from local learner-centred provision that offers programmes from Pre-Entry to Level 3 across 10 of the subject sector areas. This provision engaged learners during the pandemic to provide a high-quality learning experience and programmes were designed so that remote learning could be implemented quickly and easily. 44% of our London learners are Westminster residents and many are from the most deprived wards.

Outcomes for learners dipped in 2019/20 to 80% during the first pandemic lockdown, however, due to meticulous planning and delivery, this improved in 2020/21 to 87.8%. Retention of learners has remained high during this year (94%), as learners were aware of the plans should a local or national lockdown reoccur, and in December learners were able to switch to online learning swiftly with support from WAES. In person attendance has remained good during the pandemic at 89%, with online learning being higher at 95%.

Due to the disruption and cancellation of exams, Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) were adapted for some of our qualifications, including Creative Industries, ESOL and English. The process was quickly grasped by teachers through high levels of team working to ensure that learners gained the qualifications for which they were studying and were not disadvantaged.

Many learners reported that teachers ‘had gone above and beyond’ during this year and often held tutorials outside of class time and working hours to ensure that learners could engage. In addition, learners received the necessary equipment (laptops, sewing machines, art resources, etc.) so they remained in learning while working remotely.

Despite the pandemic, WAES has three areas which continue to be outstanding and with high levels of achievement. This has been accomplished through outstanding leadership and management and the dedication of teachers/assessors to their learners. A key feature from all areas is they have a commitment to learning and ensured that no learner was disadvantaged during the disruptive period. Approaches were taken to ensure the best teaching and learning culminated in a positive attitude from learners and high levels of achievement. Our distance learning team saw twice the usual volume of learners subscribing to programmes and successfully

maintained high outcomes. The creative industries flagship area had excellent levels of student attainment, and in December a learner had their artwork accepted onto a calendar for the renowned network ICAN.



Learner X – Level 3 Ceramics

Learner X has had her visual ceramics work accepted in the 2021 ICAN Wall Calendar (International Ceramic Artist Network) for the January 2021 page.

Her tutor says, 'This learner made good use of WAES's Intermediate/Advanced Ceramics classes to produce impressively large-scale elongated "moon jars" with interesting surface decoration. She also launched her own website (KilnGod Ceramics) in September 2020.'

The 2020 Learner Awards were celebrated in a virtual setting due to restrictions (but continued nevertheless) as they are an especially important calendar event for our learners. Three different events took place to enable learners to celebrate their achievements during this difficult period. A learner worked with us on the awards and designed the brochure based on his experiences during Covid-19.

Humerto Lopez – Level 3 Graphic Design

'I studied Graphic Design to improve my skills and for my mental health and to develop confidence and self-esteem to be more creative.

I entered the competition because ideas were coming up about the mental health situation because of Coronavirus and I had a family member of mine, she died because of Coronavirus, and it breaks my heart. I did that because I wanted to memorialise her and the only way I can keep this peaceful soul in my mind is to write about my family member.'

This inspiration was from the heart displays on the National Covid Memorial Wall in Westminster.



LEARNER AWARDS

On 7 July we celebrated the WAES Learner Awards 2021. Though we had to move the event online at short notice, nearly 200 learners were able to join us virtually for an evening celebrating their incredible achievements. We were joined by many esteemed guests including the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Jonathan Glanz, WAES Chair of Governors, Carolyn Keen, and Cabinet Member, Matthew Green. The Learning Curve Group and CAS TRAINING generously sponsored these awards.



Community Learning is outstanding with excellent partnership working across a wide range of organisations in the voluntary and community sector (VCS). The offer is responsive to the local environment and demand driven.

While all activity has continued during the lockdown period, it was not as extensive as in previous years. This was due to many community venues closing and learners on lower-level programmes not having access to technology or the time to dedicate to learning while home schooling and dealing with their lives.

The programmes that were highly successful and in demand were Wellbeing, Digital Access, early ESOL, Building Resilience against Violence and Extremism (BRAVE - Prevent) and Domestic Violence awareness.

Our community partners continued with their programmes throughout the year, adapting and flexing as necessary. Despite these difficulties, 1,506 learners engaged in 3,557 community learning programmes. with 20% being about digital access.

<p>Learner O has only been in the country for six months. She is an Arab Muslim woman from Egypt. O is 22 years old, recently married and, apart from her husband, she has no friends or family in London.</p> <p>Initially, her husband got O enrolled because he was so worried about her. She didn't go out or socialise. He said she was very unhappy. In the beginning of the course, O spoke very little English. She didn't know anyone and rarely spoke out in class. She was, from the start, a keen and diligent student. Now, at the end of the course, she writes in full sentences, she can hold a conversation and read texts. She attended the World in a Suitcase storytelling workshop, and the ESOL conversation workshops. Her wellbeing has also clearly greatly improved.</p>	<p>Learner M is originally from Bucharest and, after attending our remote preparation course in February, has been supporting her family remotely via Zoom.</p> <p>'I was surprised by how well my family and I connected over Zoom – we even managed to use the platform to draw with our fingers on the screen, which was quite fun. This whole experience showed me how powerful it is to just be there for someone and listen to them non-judgmentally – especially for new mums who, after spending so much time in lockdown with a baby, sometimes just crave chatting to another adult. I've been supporting one family through lockdown. There hasn't been a week that I haven't looked forward to seeing my family. I love volunteering here, and I appreciate the support that Home-Start offers in terms of training and supervision. It's incredibly meaningful for me, and I'm learning and growing so much as a person from doing this work.'</p>
---	--

WAES works closely with the Job Centre and Westminster Employment Service to provide bespoke programmes on employability and Sector Work-based Academy Programmes (SWAPs). These have been in Construction and the Public Sector. In Term 1 many learners successfully entered employment in the sector. However, during the pandemic, the courses for public sector were not accessible, but construction continued to recruit and place learners into work. WAES also successfully ran other SWAPs in public sector working and 11 residents were immediately recruited to work in the vaccination centres. Our new traineeships contract was very difficult to initiate and engage the 18-24 client group. Many employers engaged with WAES to provide work experience and apprenticeships and work at the end of the programme. However, despite the local claimant increase of 50%, potential learners did not respond to the opportunities, mainly due to the conflicts with the Kickstart programme, which was a paid opportunity. However, all those on the programmes that we delivered progressed to either work or an apprenticeship.

Chris was working in construction entry roles, but he wanted to learn a trade and saw the opportunity that we advertised. He was told that he needed a positive attitude to succeed at interview and so Chris focused on this throughout the programme. Chris studied and completed customer service, maths and English as part of his short traineeship and because of his approach throughout the programme was accepted onto G-Network Apprenticeship programme. His passing comments to others were, 'It is important not to be disheartened if you don't have your maths and English. WAES can provide you with those. It is a great opportunity. There are opportunities out there, you just must look, and this is one of them.'



4.2 High Needs and Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD) (Outstanding)

WAES had 92 learners with high needs and an additional 6 learners with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), some of whom are studying on mainstream programmes. These learners benefit from supportive and stretching teachers who ensure that they develop at the right pace. This improves their learning experience and enables them to progress well within their milestones. Learners benefit from very high outcomes, at 99%, and follow a number of pathways (see Strategic Plan) as part of their learning journey. Learners benefit from accredited provision as a steppingstone to mainstream delivery to support their journey. While work experience was difficult to organise during the pandemic, more structured work experience will support those able to enter work in the future for those on employment pathways.

WAES recognised that the learners in this department were the most vulnerable. Work took place before national lockdown to ensure that they were off-site and set up with appropriate learning, as 25% of our LDD learners have additional high healthcare needs. WAES managed to keep 99% of the learners, all of whom were successful, and adopted two approaches for learners:

- a) Giving out and sending out work packs to learners to complete at home with families and carers, as well as regular weekly phone calls to support parents/carers with their learning.
- b) Engaging those learners who could join online TEAMS lessons. Many learners appreciated and enjoyed the contact with the class and teacher.

Following on from the first lockdown in 2019/20, WAES engaged with the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) and secured funding for a project on supporting Essential Digital Skills with learners with learning difficulties or disabilities. This group was very effective in developing resources, so that these learners could log on and continue with their education programmes.

For those that could not engage in learning due to their vulnerable health issues, sickness, moving away with families, etc., we maintained regular contact to check in on their wellbeing and development.

Learner LKB was very much a smartphone user and loved using his phone to access work and email teachers regularly.

To overcome digital poverty, LKB was provided with a smartphone (as he broke his old phone) which we secured through 'The Good Things Foundation'. LKB is now able to access Teams on the smartphone, as well as on a new acquired tablet. He now regularly communicates with the project lead using the Teams chat facility. LKB also uses the chat facility outside normal class hours to communicate with peers. He has completed his E1 Digital Skills for Life and has progressed to the next level.

LKB said, 'I was never happy around using laptops and preferred my phone, but this has now changed. When I broke my phone, the college helped me get a new one which helped my studies.'



We started our first inclusive apprenticeship programme with Westminster City Council for two learners that had completed their supported internship programmes. Learners have been fully supported in their training and their work and were making good progress towards the completion of their apprenticeship programme.

The safeguarding team work effectively and closely with all these learners, keeping parents and carers involved with any concerns raised. All members of the management team in this area have enhanced safeguarding training and are designated safeguarding officers to support the process.

4.3 Apprenticeships (Good)

WAES offers a small range of apprenticeships as a training provider as well as internally to Westminster City Council. The planned rationalisation of the offer was completed at the beginning of the year to ensure that high quality provision could be maintained and with the emphasis on improvement. The provision is now good, and learners have good outcomes in terms of achievement and all apprentices leave the programme with full-time employment contracts. Libraries is a niche provision and WAES saw the first achievement of Libraries apprentices (within the UK) to go through their End-Point Assessment (EPA) successfully in a timely fashion. We are currently working with high profile organisations on our Libraries offer.

All assessors have extensive industry knowledge that they share with apprentices and work well with apprentices to share their own learning experiences and environments with the wider group. They work with the employers to ensure that the training not only meets the apprenticeship requirements but covers any additional requirements of the employer.

Apprentices have significant exposure to enrichment and additional qualifications. For example, apprentices studying Library programmes have excellent trips to different library settings to diversify their knowledge base. Those on Outdoor Activity Leadership also study first aid and health and safety qualifications to complement their programme.



Zeba – Level 3 Library, Information and Archive Services Assistant apprenticeship

Zeba completed her apprenticeship and is now working as a permanent staff member of the library team at Church Street library. After finishing her degree, Zeba wasn't sure what to do after not securing key appointments. When asked about her next steps Zeba said, 'I want to be a mentor to the new apprentice so I can share my experiences and advice, suggestions and increase that person's confidence so they feel comfortable enough to share their ideas about how the library service can be improved or what we can do to engage the community.'

In response to the previous lockdown, the delivery of apprenticeships changed, with all programmes moving online as the learners work in professional office settings. This made accessing lessons on TEAMS easy, very accessible, without having to travel. This meant that when restrictions were imposed, the learning continued for these learners. Attendance to lessons is high at 97% and learners were still able to share different library settings in a virtual capacity.

4.4 Ministry of Housing Funding ESOL

The successful project was run from September 2020 to July 2021 to deliver two aspects of ESOL. Firstly, to provide short Pre-Entry and Entry level programmes (80 learners) to the most disadvantaged learners in the borough to help them integrate into life in Britain, and secondly, to hold conversation clubs to encourage the speaking and listening aspect of English (60 learners). During the Term 2 lockdown period, conversations were set up and conducted online, and while face-to-face delivery is a much more appropriate aspect, learners appreciated the contact and access to learning and engaged well in the programme. Many of these learners have progressed onto our grant-funded provision.

4.5 Innovation Fund – Positive Pathways

This specialist project was funded by the GLA to address violence and crime reduction. The project was set up before the pandemic began and was designed to engage a total of 340 individuals. There was an awareness programme, motivation programme and careers and skills programme. The emphasis of 'crime' changed during the pandemic as street crime reduced but domestic abuse and home violence increased, and therefore we were able to respond to these needs through this project and WAES successfully engaged 297 individuals in total over the year in mainly virtual sessions.

5 Quality of Education

5.1 Intent

WAES has a three-year strategic plan spanning 2019 to 2022, which reflects both the local needs of Westminster and the wider pan-London agenda. The local and regional policy that this plan incorporates are the Westminster 'City for All' Strategy and the Mayor's Skills for Londoners Framework, including the Nine Missions.

The WAES strategy has three main pillars: Careers, Culture and Community. Through our management structure and programmes, our curriculum delivery has been divided between learners studying on an adult career plan or a cultural life and wellbeing plan. Learners will be on either one of these plans depending on their programme of study. Many learners will be on a career plan to help them fulfil their long-term career aims and job prospects. For some, they will be on a programme of study which is about improving their quality of life and health. For example, they may be studying ESOL to support their children through their education, combat the risk of social isolation and loneliness, access services and be independent. The pillars are not isolated and at various points learners may well cross between them.



(See full Strategic Plan 2019-22 for more details)

To meet the needs of learners we have different approaches and delivery methods to suit:

- Classroom-based learning which runs during the day, evenings and weekends across our three centres (which was adapted during the pandemic restrictions).
- Distance learning/online learning delivery which suits those in work or those that require/want the flexibility of learning and studying at a time to suit them.
- Employability pathways which are shorter and intense programmes to help 'entry to work'. These are designed to offer some up-front employability skills training and work experience. In many cases we work with key employment partners to help place the individuals and offer guaranteed interviews.
- Apprenticeships and Traineeships which includes delivery on behalf of WCC.

- Cultural links across different venues, as part of our volunteering programme, to visit and deliver learning.
- Community and family learning from 80 community centres, children’s centres, schools and libraries across Westminster.
- In-work delivery model for those upskilling and requiring additional ESOL skills to be able to progress in work.

At the start of 2020/21 WAES agreed a strategic partnership that AEET, an external provider, would deliver Construction employability programmes for industry. They have the expertise, contacts and high-quality provision to enable the learners to be successful on this programme. This was managed through a subcontracted provision with high achievement rates of 94% in this area with over 400 learners.

Community Learning Strategic Intent and Progression

Community learning has a very clear engagement strategy (as displayed below) to engage learners in their first steps of learning. Many learners join community learning to improve their confidence, develop their English skills, reduce social isolation, and promote cultural integration. The map below shows the progression milestones developed for community learners to help them move into mainstream education.



While the overarching curriculum intent did not change during this period, the delivery and implementation of the curriculum had to change and adapt to adhere to government Covid-19 guidelines.

The planning for 2020/21 was about ensuring that the curriculum could flex and adapt if restrictions were imposed and establish how we could deliver classroom-based learning in a safe way. All classes were set up with TEAMS and had online elements to them, even when they were on site, so that they could switch to being delivered completely remotely if needed. This made the transition to an in-year lockdown quick and effective with the vast majority of learners being able to continue and engage, despite other challenging circumstances.

Community learning has seen an increase in working with different agencies and WCC departments to serve the local needs of Westminster residents. Social prescribing was a clear direction of travel, working with key social prescribers on developing a fit-for-purpose offer and signposting to the existing offer. Many of our learners self-prescribe for mental health reasons, which has resulted in an increase in our 'at-risk' safeguarding cases. This is monitored closely, with targeted support being provided to ensure that learners can participate, achieve and progress.

5.2 Implementation

Curriculum delivery has been sustained through a combination of face-to-face and remote learning, utilising a 'business as usual' approach to teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that learners get the best possible learning experience within the constraints imposed by Covid-19. Consequently, the quality of education remains consistently good, and this is reflected in the positive feedback from learners. Learners reported on the high-quality learning experiences they were having, both when present in a classroom and when online. They also reported on the barriers that lockdown had presented and their struggles to engage with learning despite their desire to do so. Tutors continued to adapt to the needs of the learners and made themselves available for tutorials outside of the classroom to support learners as much as possible. This was well received.

Tutors and assessors are fully qualified as teachers and are highly qualified in their chosen professions. They are informed on current developments in their curriculum areas, with many still practising in their chosen sectors. They use their current industry and sector experience to plan and sequence activities, helping learners gain new skills which are highly appropriate to their career pathways and ambitions. This is evidenced in the feedback from External Quality Assurers (EQAs) who highlight the high standard of work produced by our learners. Tutors regularly update their knowledge with mandatory training in Safeguarding, Prevent, GDPR, Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, and Fundamental British Values (FBV) embedding, which is then cascaded to the learners.

Building on the previous year's 'Digital Champions', the Quality Team continued to advance the digital delivery of programmes. The Quality Team worked relentlessly, within the changing requirements of in-year lockdown restrictions and throughout the remainder of the academic year. Training and support were provided so staff could continue to adapt and refine their skills in online learning to ensure that the curriculum offer was not compromised. WAES also continued an extensive support programme for learners who had little or no experience of operating in the digital world, so that they could be upskilled to access their learning online. This was supported with access to equipment such as phones, laptops, connectivity, art kits, sewing

machines, mannequin heads etc. This enabled the Service to continue with 98% of its provision and to retain 94% of its learners during another challenging academic year. Staff continued to support learners who had been affected personally by the pandemic through sickness, caring or loss.

Lesson observations are ungraded to enable a focus on continued development and improvement of teaching and learning. To validate online delivery, virtual lesson observations were conducted. This highlighted that online delivery was continuing to engage learners and staff were effectively using their recently gained skills in making effective use of digital delivery platforms and apps to make lessons interactive, interesting and fun.

WAES is proud of its positive relationships and the learning atmosphere, both in classrooms and online. Learners are warmly greeted at the start of lessons and given time to share aspects of how their week has been going. Classes offering blended delivery meant that learners in the face-to-face classroom are encouraged to work with learners attending online in group work and vice versa, making all learners feel a part of the learning environment. A variety of tasks and activities are clearly structured and sequenced to build upon the learner's prior knowledge and are designed to reinforce learning and build the learner's long-term memory. In many classes homework is frequently set and checked as part of recapping activities. In the best examples there is effective embedding of functional skills, British Values and employability, which give learners opportunities to build skills, draw on their own experiences and prepare for progression. Tutors display strong industry knowledge and provide a range of examples related to industry standards and career expectations to make it real for learners. In Child-Related Studies, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, British Values and Prevent continue to be a strength and are the golden thread throughout the content.

The use of technology across all areas is strong, with good use of Microsoft (MS) Teams chat facility, hands up, and breakout rooms to allow learners an opportunity to work collaboratively. Role play activities were delivered for business administration learners in a range of customer-facing scenarios and in a supporting teaching and learning lesson to drive small discussions and to include 'quieter' learners into conversations.

ESOL classes regularly display text which is highlighted or corrected live on screen to help with pronunciation and clarification of common misconceptions. SMART Notebook was used to move text boxes around the screen, and live annotation to create greater interactivity and engagement. MS Teams is used effectively in English and maths to create individual folders of learners' work using the assignments section of Teams. This allows learners to view feedback easily and to upload work straight onto Teams. Similarly, in Hair & Make-Up, the staff have set up individual areas online for learners to upload images and videos of their work, alongside a resources section with video guides, handouts and notes for each unit. There are also additional reading resources and activities to stretch and challenge learners further.

Funding was secured with the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) to have an action research project for learners studying maths that also had ESOL needs. This project involved developing approaches and language so that the functional skills exams were accessible to learners whose maths cognitive skills were strong but due to the way questions were asked the maths was inaccessible. These have been hugely successful, with over 75% being successful after the programme compared with previous outcomes.

In some Ceramics lessons, MS Teams is also used, with learners having individual channels for their portfolios and assignments. Learners use a variety of apps, such as *Pinterest* to get ideas and inspiration for their work, *Etsy* to sell their work and *Instagram* to promote and market their work. In both creative and vocational areas, learners are encouraged to assess and critique their own work and that of their peers. This builds their professional dialogue and helps with those transferable skills which learners can use in future careers and in their outside lives.

In LDD, tutors share clear objectives with their learners and ask directed probing questions to support differentiation. Different apps are also used to develop learners' use of technology, such as Padlet and Menti, alongside the features of MS Teams. Learners are gaining in confidence and skills at interacting with tutors and learning support staff online. In one observed session, a learner was taking part in the class from Nigeria and was made to feel part of all the activities in the sessions that he attended.

The quality of learner work is extremely high in the creative industries. Many reports from EQAs show that the skill base stretches and challenges learners as individuals to produce high quality work. A series of virtual end of year shows took place. There was The Show for hair and make-up, one for ceramics and graphic design and the Learner Awards, which enabled learners to showcase their skills and work. It was important for learners to be able to exhibit their work in this difficult time. Learners were also able to experience the world of employment and sell their work at the local street market in December (prior to lockdown), which saw 70% of their work sold to the public.

Apprentices have a tailored approach to their delivery and work well with their employer to ensure that job-specific training is incorporated into the programme and additional enrichment activities are offered to add value. For example, the library apprentices have visited a range of different library settings to compare different approaches within the sector. The delivery of 'off the job training' was converted to 100% online as all learners worked in a professional session and have access to the appropriate equipment. Staff adapted well and were able to use the professional TEAMS environment to emphasis the changing patterns of working and remote working.

Distance learning has been well received by learners as it has offered a flexible approach to gaining required qualifications while still working. The team saw a large increase in the demand for distance learning programmes, at 2,252 enrolments. A small team of online coaches work with the learners to make sure that they have everything they need and understand the programme on offer. Dedicated online tutors work with the learners to ensure that they have understood subjects and are ready for assessment and, where appropriate, learning support is provided to ensure all learners achieve equally. They provide good feedback to learners so that they can be successful on programme. EQA reports are very complimentary about the standards of work. These programmes are primarily in the health and social care sector, which is a sector with increased employment opportunities and more vacancies than can be filled locally and regionally. The courses have been highly effective in supporting staff retention and providing internal promotion opportunities for employees.

The community provision encompasses a varied curriculum, including ESOL, employability and creative courses. Due to restrictions and government guidelines, many sessions had to be cancelled/rescheduled but some did take place successfully online. Sessions were observed including Yoga, Mindfulness, Fine Art, Community Art, Learn How to Spell with Beginners, Phonics,

and Introduction to Volunteering. Tutors within the community understand their cohort of learners very well and have an empathetic approach to teaching and learning. There is a real emphasis on understanding the learners and facilitating learning towards meeting learner needs. Tutors use engaging activities to maintain motivation and to support learners. For example, learners with mental health needs are given a degree of autonomy in the way they approach activities. In the Fine Art course, the tutor used flipped learning by creating and sharing videos of the techniques which were made available to the learners prior to the session. Oral feedback is especially good in this area and learners are routinely praised, which helps build confidence and supports their progression.

5.3 Impact

During 2020/21, all WAES provision continued throughout the year, even during the lockdown period, and it was determined that learners' achievements would not be disadvantaged. Overall achievement rates were at 88% compared to the previous year of 80% and 87% in 2018/19 (pre-pandemic). This is an equal combination of learners staying on programme and achieving their programmes. High grades have also been maintained across the Service.

Due to rigorous planning of the curriculum offer and adjusting delivery, WAES was able to swiftly respond and keep learners in learning during a Tier 4 and national lockdown. WAES' offer supports those that live in areas with high levels of deprivation in London and need access to learning programmes. This is evidenced by our ESOL enrolments, with female learners accounting for 70% of the cohort. During the pandemic, these groups reported to us that their learning was severely disrupted, due to home schooling, caring responsibilities and supporting their family more widely but they engaged in learning where they could, and teachers worked tirelessly to keep them on programme. We supported a number of learners with laptops, but many learners used their mobile phone to engage in learning. Therefore, while the majority of learners stayed on programme, they could not engage enough to generate the evidence required for Centre Assessed Grades, but grades have remained high at 88%, which is the same as the pre-pandemic outcomes.

<p>Learner S – UAL Level 3 Creative Practice <i>Learner S completed the UAL Level 3 Creative Practice and went on (after achieving a distinction) to set up as a DJ and have his own residency in Norfolk and is now working a professional artist. He also makes his own music. His paintings, and especially his portraits, have been influenced by his exposure to music venues. The spaces have been instrumental in attracting him to the work of Otto Dix and other German artists influences by the Expressionist movement.</i></p>	<p>Learner L – Level 2 UAL Diploma in Art & Design (Graphic Design) <i>'I am writing to thank you for your significant involvement in teaching me and especially those who devoted their personal time to supporting me with my applications for future studies. I chose to try to pursue a Postgraduate Certificate in Applied Data Science from Birkbeck University of London, which also offered me a scholarship. In addition, I hope to continue my studies in the field of Artificial Intelligence and hopefully it will be University of Bath, if only the funding is successful. In any case, I am very happy to choose this path and I am extremely grateful to you for all your advice and support!'</i></p>
--	--

During the lockdown period, learners studying practical subjects were provided with equipment to continue developing practical skills, and from April 2021 a number of workshops were opened so

that these skills could be further deepened. The creative industries qualifications were, in the main, Teacher Assessed Grades but the high grades that learners achieved were similar to those pre pandemic. The skill levels of learners' work was high due to the dedication of the teaching team stretching the learners' abilities and making sure they completed the highest standard of work possible.

<p>Learner X – Level 2 Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care</p> <p><i>Learner X was anxious and, although wanted to do the course, he kept doubting his ability. He has always found learning quite daunting, especially where there was writing involved, due to his background. He was bullied at school for being gay and didn't attend school much because of this. Consequently, he left with no qualifications and took low-level jobs most of his life. He has said that doing this course has helped knock down a lot of his negativity that he had about learning and realises he can do it. He has said at times it has been challenging with the demons of the past about 'stupid' and 'thick' but thankfully, with the support from his tutor and WAES, he has stuck with it and achieved with flying colours. He is now looking forward to carrying on learning in the future and has progressed to do English. He wants to go into social care or work with people with learning difficulties.</i></p>	<p>Learner X – Level 2 Business</p> <p><i>Learner X undertook the Level 2 Extended Certificate in Business Administration. She initially struggled as an older learner and found many challenges with online learning and was given support and guidance and tutorials to support her. She persevered and stuck with her learning and demonstrated commitment to the course. She has been away from the job market for some time and, upon successful completion of the course, has secured part-time employment.</i></p>
---	--

During 2020/21 WAES tutors had to adapt quickly to provide evidence for awarding organisations on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs), which followed a completely different process to the previous year. Not all learners could produce the evidence required for the TAGs and when the Service reopened these learners were supported to gather the evidence to compile their portfolios or to sit examinations. GCSE Teacher Assessed Grades were introduced and a process agreed with the awarding organisation which saw the same high standards of work achieved by learners, with English having 62% of high grades (92% total pass) and maths at 56% high grades (98 % total pass), which is similar to previous years.

<p>Learner X – GCSE English (Grade 4) <i>Learner X was working as a labourer but during the pandemic the work dried up. He decided to use this time to come back to education and focus on his studies to give himself a brighter future.</i></p> <p><i>‘I just decided that I wanted to progress in life (being out of education for 10 years) and had been in a dead-end job not having any qualifications or skills. I’ve realised in coming back how important it is to have those skills and that I am quite behind academically. I haven’t quite decided what I want to do and having had careers talks I know that just being in education will open more doors for me.’</i></p>	<p>Learner J – GCSE English (Grade 9) and GCSE Maths (Grade 4) <i>Learner J, who got a Grade 9 for English GCSE and Grade 4 for maths, was suffering from bullying and emotional abuse at a previous school and college and was unable to attend in person due to anxiety levels. He also had an EHCP.</i></p> <p><i>He joined the class very late in January which was a remote GCSE class. A learning support assistant was also assigned to support him and mentoring and coaching were provided on a regularly basis.</i></p> <p><i>He achieved well and, as a result of his positive experience, has now joined a face-to-face Level 2 Software Development class.</i></p>
---	---

The digital curriculum involved delivering entry and Level 1 qualifications to individuals who have not used computers before. This was a new curriculum offer and many learners when faced with an examination did not want to take it. These learners were also impacted during the time of national lockdown and found it difficult to engage due to the subject nature and often required extensive support to enable them to continue their studies.

<p>Learner M – Level 3 AAT <i>Learner M undertook the Level 3 Diploma in Accounting after completing the Level 1 Bookkeeping and Level 2 Accounting the previous year. M had a young family whom she home-schooled throughout the pandemic while continuing her own studies. M consistently demonstrated leadership skills and, as a result, her peers nominated her to be the Class Representative for the year, a role that she took on with gusto, confidently speaking in forums on behalf of her classmates and making positive changes. M successfully completed her Level 3 qualification and has secured part-time employment where she is developing her skills and knowledge and she intends to do the Level 4 Accounting qualification in 2022.</i></p>	<p>Leaner N – SWAP Micro Mobility <i>Learner N did a short employment SWAP Micro Mobility course in April 2021. He was very happy with the course and the new skills he had learnt even though he didn't get the job as an E-Scooter or E-Bike Mechanic with Tier Mobility. He was extremely happy when a few months later we thought of him immediately when jobs came up at Smyths Toys as a Bike Mechanic! He went for an interview and was offered the job on the spot.</i></p>
--	---

High Grades Data

Level	Learning aim title	High grade %
Level 1	Diploma in Art, Design and Media	58%
Level 2	BTEC First Award in Creative Digital Media Production	45%
Level 2	Diploma in Art and Design	38%
Level 2	GCSE (9-1) in English Language	62%
Level 2	GCSE (9-1) in Mathematics	56%
Level 3	Advanced Diploma in Accounting – Level 3	37%
Level 3	Diploma in Creative Practice: Art, Design and Communication	61%

Ethnicity Achievement Data 2020/21

Overall achievement rates	87.8% with 8,148 enrolments
White British achievement rates	90.1% with 2,304 enrolments [28% of overall cohort]
White other achievement rates	87.9% with 1,478 enrolments [18% of overall cohort]
African achievement rates	84.5% with 853 enrolments [10% of overall cohort]

The third largest ethnic minority group of learners at WAES is African. A Service-wide project was introduced at the start of 2020/21 to help improve the achievement rates for these learners, and consequently their life chances, as it was identified that this group of learners were under-performing, with a gap of 16% compared with their White British counterparts. Through a structured programme, early identification, support and mentoring, the achievement rates for these learners have improved dramatically and there is now only a 5% gap. Next year will continue with an adapted project taskforce entitled 'Prevent the Gap' to support no achievement gap. The main curriculum areas for focus are AAT, Graphic Design and Basic Skills, which includes digital.

Learners with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LDD)

Learners with SEND needs are extremely successful at WAES and are integrated within the curriculum areas and some groups have specialist programmes to help them engage in the learning process. Learners on discrete provision have high achievement rates and during the Covid-19 pandemic still managed to maintain high success rates of 99%.

The Service had 5 learners with an EHCP, both in discrete and mainstream curriculum studying 15 different programmes.

<p>Learner E – Function Skills E3 English, Level 1 Maths, Level 1 Web Design and Level 2 Web Design. Learner E has MLD and Autism and sometimes struggles in large groups as he has issues with being sensory stimulated.</p> <p>As well as making sure his basic skills were catered for, Learner E also wanted to complete a vocational programme. The class was taught online mainly which supported his autism, as it was a large class. He was</p>	<p>Learner T – GCSE English (Grade 5) and maths (Grade 4) TW was referred by social services and has autism, associated speech and language difficulties, curvature of the spine and a congenital medical condition which impacts memory and concentration.</p>
--	--

<p><i>nominated by his teachers for a learner award. With the right focus, 1:1 tutorials and clear understanding of his needs, he achieved in all his programmes and is continuing his learning journey with GCSE Maths and L1 English and Digital.</i></p> <p><i>He is still unclear about what he wants to do in the future, however he is sure that these classes will support him to gain a job and he will be supported by our careers team.</i></p>	<p><i>He joined the GCSE programmes in January (online) and with the right support, personalised programme of study and high expectations he achieved well. He is continuing on the Level 2 Digital Programme as he hopes to work in IT in the future.</i></p>
---	--

Out of the 8,148 enrolments, 1,722 have a declared learning difficulty or disability, which accounts for 21% of our learners. These learners are extremely well-supported and achieve consistently high at 93.5% against other learners at 87.8%. Due to this, many learners return to WAES to progress their learning journey.

For those in receipt of Additional Learning Support they were highly successful, with an achievement rate of 92.3%.

Gender Achievement

74% of the enrolments at WAES are female compared with 26% male due to the curriculum offer and our high female ESOL contingent. However, both gender groups perform similarly, with 88.5% achievement for female and 88.9% for males.

Community Learning

Community Learning attracts 1,506 learners a year and is very successful provision. It enables most learners to achieve, with 98% having a positive outcome. The pandemic meant that these learners found it difficult to engage, as community centres, sport centres and faith centres closed their doors during lockdown. However, WAES responded with a digital offer, appreciating that many learners would find it difficult to engage and the proportion of community learning digital delivery increased from 4% to 20%.

<p>Digital Champion</p> <p><i>Learner L is a Sudanese housewife and mother of three young children. She was born in Reading while her father was studying at university as an international student. Upon completion of his studies, they returned to Sudan. L studied dentistry and worked as a dentist in Sudan before coming to the UK with her husband and young children where she is now a housewife. She has a classic ESOL student's 'spiky profile', meaning her skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking are very varied. She has good writing skills but struggles with spelling, often omitting vowels in words. Her professional background means she has good academic and study skills, however, her confidence in spoken English has been a key area for her to</i></p>	<p>Feedback from Safe Families and Brave Training</p> <p><i>'As a single mother for two children it is very worrying that my children could be in any danger when they grow up. This workshop helps identify the early signs of grooming . . . with useful information on who to turn to/contact when have any concerns.'</i> [Safe Families]</p> <p><i>'It was an amazing film to watch, especially that I'm a parent. The video was needed to watch because of awareness and know what to watch out for and how grooming all begins.'</i> [Brave]</p>
--	--

<p><i>develop. She participates effectively in online sessions and has been happy to take on the role of class 'IT champion' due to her stronger IT skills which she uses very well to support others in the group. This, in turn, has helped her develop her confidence in speaking and listening, especially when working with other students who are not Arabic speakers.</i></p>	
--	--

Safeguarding

The Service had 16 ongoing cases that were considered as part of the safeguarding remit and in addition a further 33 were considered at risk cases, which required a watchful eye, mainly due to poor mental health. The Service was highly successful in retaining these learners and the vast majority of these learners also went on to achieve where their circumstances allowed them.

Progression/Destinations

Learners progress well and those that leave enter positive destinations and, in many cases, stay in touch with WAES to talk to learners and teachers about their progress.

97% of the learning at WAES is Level 2 and below and therefore many learners stay on their learning programmes with WAES to develop their skills. From those learners studying in 2020/21, 70% have returned to WAES to continue their learning

While university is not always the initial outcome that learners aspire to when they join us, through the participation in progression weeks and inspired by tutors, those that do change their minds usually go into high-end prestigious universities with a very clear pathway of what they want to achieve. Of those applying, 93% progressed to universities for September 2021 starts.

<p><i>Learner Y – Level 3 Art and Design</i> <i>Goldsmiths University – Fine Art BA</i> <i>'I have learned how to develop my own artistic practice, learning fundamental skills such as line colour tone and perspective. I am able to write and speak confidently about my own and other people's art in a critical way. I have also learnt about art theory which underpins my practical learning. I have also learned to work in 3D and 4D, learning skills such as photography, website creation, film, video and ceramics. This diversified my creativity and enables me to create an eclectic and dynamic contemporary portfolio to submit to universities. I have successfully been offered places at four out of five of my choices.'</i></p>	<p><i>Learner J – Level 2 Floristry</i> <i>'I just wanted to thank the teacher for doing such a splendid job of continuing our development and guiding us through the course under incredibly difficult circumstances; two classrooms in the actual centre, plus those of us who were distance learning. It really isn't easy to teach a "hands on" practical class by Teams, or with the group split between two rooms on the opposite side of the building – but somehow, she did it. Everyone was given the same amount of time, patience and guidance. The teacher was able to allow the capable members of the group to carry on, improve their skills and also able to give those that needed extra help attention without keeping the rest of the class behind.</i></p> <p><i>I thoroughly enjoyed and has given me the confidence to start my own wedding floristry</i></p>
--	---

	<i>business as a sideline to my full-time job (with a little bit of luck and hard work the floristry might become full-time).'</i>
--	--

Destinations of Learners

During October-December we worked to find out the destinations of 3480 learners who studied with WAES. From these only 3% informed us that they were not in education or training. We were unable to made contact with 909 learners accounting for 26%. Out of the remaining 2442 – 42% were continuing in further education or training and 54% were in employment. Of the 42%, 82% were continuing their studies with WAES. The data was similar across different ethnic groups, gender, age and disability. The main exception to this would be that more ethnic groups continued their studies whereas more British/English went into work.

This provides WAES with a baseline report and in 2021/22 we will be doing a wider scale destination reporting so we understand more about our learners and their outcomes.

6 Behaviours and Attitudes

WAES' Centres and approach to learning is to provide a calm environment where all learners can reach their potential in both classroom and virtual settings. Guidance was introduced for staff to enable them to implement this. This is often reflected in learner feedback, with learners often stating that the environment is inclusive, stimulating and helps them to be successful. Artistic work is displayed throughout the centres, demonstrating our learner focused approach. Through the year, learner forums were conducted and learners reported back that, while their home environments were not conducive to learning, the WAES presence was welcome and helped them to focus and continue their studies. It is clear from the feedback from learners that staff care highly about their learners and regularly support learners outside of the classroom. This was evidently understood during the lockdown period.

WAES has very clear expectations of learners and shares these with learners from the onset of the programme through to final achievement. Learners understand their commitments when they join the programme and through a range of available support (e.g., financial, childcare, learning, emotional and wellbeing interventions), learners are able to join and remain on programme. An online induction app was introduced so that learners could refer back to this as a source of information and was well used. WAES works with learners so that they can be successful. During the pandemic, a focus on wellbeing was promoted at all times to learners and community learning provision focused heavily on this aspect. In addition, WAES supported many learners with laptops, mobile phones and learning devices so that they could continue their learning at home. Many work packs (ceramics, art, hairdressing etc.) were distributed, along with specialist equipment (e.g., sewing machines).

Learner V – Level 2 ESOL

'A learner at Level 2 was struggling as a single parent with two children being home-schooled in lockdown. The three of them were sharing one tablet and her smartphone for learning, and she never got a look in.

Thanks to WAES, she now has a laptop and her confidence, attendance and work completion have gone through the roof! I suspect our patience and supportiveness – from the whole team – have played a part in helping to support her with her relationship with her children. We have many single parent families among our students, and this has been a really hard time for many of them.'

WAES learners understand the importance of attendance, and learners are supported to realise that if they are in attendance, they are likely to be more successful. Mechanisms exist to follow up when learners do not attend to remind them of this, and learners speak highly of this process. Adult learners' lives do not always allow for 100% attendance, with time off for statutory and hospital appointments often required. Staff therefore ensure that learners have access to their learning, so they do not miss out when this happens. During the lockdown, attendance improved once learners were supported to get online, and learners were able to continue their learning at times when it was more convenient outside of the timetabled sessions. For example, recordings of lessons were made, and Microsoft Forms were introduced to make homework easier to complete.

Learner C – Level 3 Creative course

This learner struggled with her mental health and had other health-related problems (underwent an operation and slipped and ended up with a broken foot). In addition, this learner got evicted during Term 2. This greatly affected this learner's health and wellbeing, who then started to struggle from social isolation and severe lack of confidence.

Through twice weekly meetings, outreach support in the form of equipment being issued to the learner and additional coaching and mentoring from her tutor, the learner started to produce outstanding work and her confidence started to grow. The main thing that this learner focused on was painting and started to produce outstanding work.

Through consistent support, both through Safeguarding and Course Leader, the learner began to flourish and gain confidence to the point she applied for university and was successful in progressing by securing a place on a BA in Fine Art.

Learners joining WAES are highly motivated to achieve, and this is stimulated further by their teachers' expectations and consistent high support provided in different ways. Staff care about their learners and during the lockdown period went above and beyond to ensure no learner was left behind. In many cases, technicians were involved in offering 1:1 support over the phone to ensure all learners could engage and complete work for practical courses. Learners also engage in wider activities on offer in WAES, with over 120 learners being part of a learner representative system and finding time to listen and address the needs of their peers in meetings. Some involved themselves with WAES by undertaking volunteering, either in community settings to support the most disadvantaged or in supporting their own skills development by completing work experience.

Learner G – ESOL Pre-Entry Community

G is a single woman in her early 40s currently living in sheltered accommodation. She had no schooling in her home country of India. She worked in the UK as an unpaid live-in carer for her aunt. When her aunt died, G was not given any payment for the years of work for the aunt – the woman's son did not support her in any way. She was abandoned and became homeless. She has lived in the UK for 21 years. In class, G was initially very shy and subservient in manner – hunched and apologetic and not even able to look up at the board or the teacher. After some time, it emerged that her English speaking and listening were quite good, and it was wholly her literacy skills and lack of study skills that were holding her back. After the class received some focused phonics workshops she began to grow in confidence. Sometimes she stayed behind and spoke to the tutor. The vaccination workshop was a breakthrough for her confidence. She learnt how to request the vaccination at her GP and explain that she couldn't read or write, so they helped her without having to go online. This really boosted her confidence. She is now beginning to develop good study skills and was seen to use look, say look, write, cover, check technique for writing her name. G is reluctant to or unable to go online but told the tutor she can continue her reading practice at home and will buy books to help her. She got a spontaneous cheer and applause from the class when she read a simple sentence aloud to the class. She now contributes in class regularly – she now behaves as more of an equal to the other students. She is beginning to see herself as a worthy learner and human being.

The physical environment at all three centres promotes equal opportunities, celebrates difference and we do not tolerate bullying or harassment. WAES has policies in place that learners are aware of, but these are rarely needed due to the strong emphasis on individual responsibility. During the

pandemic WAES was clear with learners about their conduct in an online environment and our expectations of them and how to keep themselves safe online. This was also supported by a full training programme with staff so they could also support learners to be safe online.

7 Personal Development

A large part of the provision is ESOL and the many different programmes we have enable those learners to be active citizens, both through the development of the English language and the materials and topics used during ESOL delivery. For example, learners are regularly exposed to political debates, climate awareness, equalities discussions and Westminster Council campaigns, etc. For learners on low-level English programmes, social integration and community cohesion are key outcomes, so that individuals can take part in everyday life in Britain. There is a wide range of additional enrichment programmes and volunteering offered by WAES that support active citizenship. Conversation clubs which run alongside the formal ESOL training also engaged over 60 learners (online during the lockdown period) to improve their spoken English which is run by volunteers through the City Council and higher-level learners on ESOL programmes.

Family Learning Case Study

Using a high-quality children's picture book to promote literacy and motivation in the phonics class. This text was used in class to motivate the low-level readers. Most learners were from a Muslim background, so the idea was for them to combine their life experience with newly-acquired reading skills in order to read a quite ambitious text with the enjoyable element of some beautiful illustrations. There had also been some rumblings of disapproval by a non-Muslim learner about Muslim learners requesting to have no classes to celebrate Eid. This disgruntled learner was delighted by the book and openly expressed joy reading it. She seemed to gain a better understanding of the importance of Ramadan and Eid for many people. Two learners who had been reluctant to read aloud even very simple texts were clearly inspired and motivated by this book and both read well – high above the level previously seen. Three of the learners took the details of the book to buy it for their families.

The Service has a well-developed programme on offer for Prevent and Fundamental British Values. This starts at induction and continues in workshops throughout the year. In ESOL, this is embedded as part of the curriculum and English language development. In other areas, learners are exposed to key tutorials and have the option to undertake additional training in this area. Throughout the Service there are posters and displays reinforcing messages and the Safeguarding Officers demonstrate their duties well when working with learners in this area.

During the pandemic, it was evident that many of our ESOL learners had concerns about the vaccination programme, so we introduced an enrichment programme which enabled learners to attend in a friendly and familiar setting to hear about the vaccination. We ran over 10 workshops and, as a result, all those who attended went ahead and booked a vaccination.

Learner V had been fearful of the vaccination. She does not speak English well and had been hearing different information and not really understood what any of it meant. As a result, she had not wanted to get the vaccination. After the training she was sure that she wanted the vaccination, and she also had the knowledge on how to book it online. This learner has many health concerns and was delighted to now have had her first vaccination and feels a lot safer going outside.

Learner M was worried about his elderly father having the vaccination. The workshop reassured him and motivated him to get his father vaccinated. He is relieved to know now that his father is better protected.

WAES prides itself on its inclusive nature. Over 70% of learners are from diverse ethnic backgrounds other than White British, with the composition distributed evenly across all different backgrounds. This is also reflected in the curriculum offer, with a considerable proportion (40%) of ESOL learners. There is also a good and well-established LDD department with over 100 learners. WAES promotes diversity through events such as Black History month, LGBTQ+ month, etc. and also through the different community learning engagement programmes, such as Dementia Awareness programmes and 'World in a Suitcase'. This was extended during the pandemic to cover domestic violence, family harmony, crime reduction, etc. WAES also celebrates many different cultural festivals.

Z – Family Learner and N – Volunteer Learner

Z was referred by her social worker in March 2021. She had 4-month-old twins and was caring and had parental responsibility for two older twin boys (16 years old) at the time of referral, one of whom had special needs. Z and her son with special needs had been experiencing domestic abuse from father of twins and so they had separated. Being a single parent, Z was struggling to cope, being involved in community services, and managing stress of an abusive relationship. Z was finding it difficult to carry out tasks such as shopping or going to appointments. Z started to feel isolated and disengaged with services. Z began receiving weekly wellbeing calls from her volunteer befriender N in April 2021. She was unable to receive face-to-face practical support due to the current domestic abuse risk. As a result of the support, Z started to engage more with other services, felt emotionally supported and was less isolated within the safe environment of her home. Z says, 'N has been so helpful to me. She helps with phone calls to book appointments and follow-up with professionals. She finds information for my issues and encourages me. I really appreciate her support'. N will continue to support Z remotely until it is safe for face-to-face support to begin. We are looking to arrange a laptop for Z, enabling her to have video calls with N and helping her to join our virtual group 'Mammas, Papas and Minis'.

Learners from all areas of the curriculum speak highly of the confidence they have gained as individuals since they engaged in learning with WAES. The Service works with our most vulnerable in the community and helps those learners reach their ambitions, for instance, by putting in milestones that can be achieved to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Alumni speak highly of the additional support that is offered to them and the opportunities that WAES has provided. We have well-developed relationships with key partners across Westminster, enabling us to engage and support learners in a variety of settings, such as St Martins Centre, where we deliver therapeutic art programmes, and Church Army Women's Day Centre (homeless women), where ESOL and early employability programmes are offered. Much of our learning is focused on enabling learners to prepare for life and work in the 21st Century. During Covid, this strong commitment to the development of digital skills and confidence of learners was even more prominent.

120 learners engaged in our learner representative system to develop themselves and support the experience of fellow learners. Learners engaged well in online sessions from all areas of the curriculum. Training was delivered in Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity, as well as expectations of the roles. As a result, learners were able to put their points of view across well, to both inform areas that were working well and provide suggestions on how things could be better. As a result, leaders and managers were able to make some additional interventions to improve their experience.

Learner A – ESOL Entry Level 3

This learner struggled with her language and, as a result, often spoke out and this was a concern in the classroom. After several meetings with a translator, it was identified that this learner had housing problems, was also working as a cleaner but the money received was not enough to live on and did not have enough money to buy food. This learner was not registered with a GP and had started talking about feeling low and clearly showing signs of distress.

A safeguarding lead contacted a GP surgery and booked an appointment, we also supported with an application to access Universal Credit and Housing Benefit. We were also able to support with the loan of a laptop so she could start reading and writing to support her ESOL course. This learner achieved, accessed support through a GP and started to receive Means-Tested Benefits to supplement her low income and is now an active member of the group and has progressed onto the next level.

WAES utilises the National Careers Service well to support learners across the year. This has been conducted both in our centres and virtually. WAES also has a highly qualified Careers Co-ordinator who is key to providing careers entitlement advice to learners and supporting them on their next steps as part of a wider careers strategy. Progression weeks were introduced at key points across the year to help learners focus on their individual plans, with all areas of WAES engaging in this process with high levels of engagement from over 700 learners and positive feedback. A Higher Education Fair was introduced in response to learners' requests, which saw 100 learners in attendance and high levels of positive feedback from speakers and learners. At the same time, different workshops and events were designed and well attended by learners to advise them on their next steps. For example, employers gave guest talks and employment agencies talked about local vacancies. Learners booked appointments with our Careers Co-ordinator or National Careers Service to look at their career and progression opportunities, including those entering university. We worked with the Westminster Employment Service and MATRIX to deliver sessions, which supported learners to seek employment during lockdown and adapt to the new digital recruitment methods.

Enterprise at Tachbrook Market

WAES learners from the creative sector continued to develop their enterprise skills and worked with WCC and held a market stall in Tachbrook Market (just before the second lockdown). It was a great experience for costings, selling and negotiating price and over 80% of the wares were sold.



A Fusion Skills programme was piloted with our childcare students. These learners undertook a survey at the start of their programme to judge their current view of core employment skills, e.g., collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creative thinking and cohesion skills. At the end of the programme, they were asked the same questions. All areas improved, with critical thinking increasing the most. The vast majority of these are now studying a higher-level course or in work.

Progression to higher education programmes has been a huge success, with 93% of our learners who made an application for a higher education course being offered a place for 2021/22.

Learner J – now at Kingston University MFA (Master of Fine Art) full-time

'I have learnt so many practical skills during the course. Lectures in a class and a tutorial allowed me to understand how I approach visual art. I studied performing arts in University in South Korea. Based on this experience, I could explore various forms of art. Tutors encouraged me to combine performance and visual art. Although I didn't specialise in fine art at undergraduate level, I could make MFA because of tutors' attentive teaching and supporting me. Thank you.'

8 Leadership and Management (Outstanding)

Leaders and managers across WAES have high expectations of the learners, which is evident in the outcomes for learners and the commitment to keep learners in learning during the pandemic. The Curriculum Plan for 2020/21 was designed so it could respond quickly and effectively in-year to any restrictions introduced. In December, when London was in Tier 4, we switched to online learning quickly. Clear and high key performance indicators were agreed across the organisation and worked towards during the whole of the academic year. Excellent commitment of all staff across the year and high levels of teamworking, especially during the pandemic, impacted on how the Service continued. From the start of the lockdown until the end of the academic year, Service operations were organised to ensure that learners could be successful and new learners to the Service could do so in a simple and safe way.

WAES has been highly effective in its financial resilience and always seeks funding opportunities to improve the variety of learning it can offer. During 2020/21 it secured funds to support learners displaced because of the pandemic and successfully trained 270 learners to meet initial demands in health and social care, digital skills and construction. It also secured other funds to support learners' understanding of crime, with a view to a reduction in local crime. This project was very successful in raising awareness with learners. WAES has been highly successful in securing additional funds for 2021/22 from GLA Good Work for All and the Ministry of Levelling up, Housing and Communities. A new full-cost plan is in development to support and enhance WAES' financial stability.

Excellent leadership and management at all levels was key to the success as the organisation was mobilised during the pandemic. Examples of such work included: calling learners and advising them of the situation and support available, ensuring staff had the right IT equipment to conduct their business remotely, quality reviewing and changing assessment processes, additional wellbeing for learners and staff, focused and purposeful ICT training, and inspecting facilities to ensure that premises were meeting Covid-19 risk assessments. All areas of WAES have been involved and proved that great teamworking can lead to great results. This was also reflected in being shortlisted by TES for Adult and Community Learning Provider of the Year for the second successive year.

WAES has always prided itself on its personalised approach to teaching and learning and ensuring that this always challenges learners to aspire to do more. Quality processes confirm that this is the case, and these are reported at all levels and to Governors. Throughout the year, a team of dedicated practitioners have supported the digital curriculum implementation and wider teaching and learning to ensure that, not only could lessons operate online, but they were the best they could be. All teaching staff across the organisation embraced the digital delivery, with many staff operating at intermediate and advanced level to offer the best possible environment for learners. The full year was planned to be Covid secure and adapt and flex as necessary to ensure learners were safe and that any further restrictions could be easily accommodated. The staff development day in May continued as usual, with over 150 staff engaged in specific sessions with a clear focus on the digital world and teaching and learning. Teachers regarded this training highly and noted the difference it had made to the learning in the virtual classroom.

Staff are committed to learners' achievement and success in their programmes and next endeavours. Due to this focus, outcomes for learners are at 88% and we were able to keep and engage learners – during a very disruptive period – to stay and be successful in the vast majority of the cases. Teacher assessed grades were only used within a small minority of the curriculum offer (10%), with the vast majority of learners completing portfolios and exams to show the progress that had been made. Some learners' outcomes have been deferred and will be realised in 2021/22 due to learners not being able to sit all exams in a timely way due to the pandemic, e.g., AAT.

The apprenticeship programmes were well planned at the beginning of the year with 100% of online delivery and therefore when restrictions were imposed impact on learning was minimalised, although some learners could not continue with their programme due to their own personal circumstances within the pandemic. Learners were well prepared by Tutors/Assessors for EPA and the first Library apprentices in the UK were successful in achieving their EPA.

WAES has a variety of mechanisms for listening and responding to learners. Leaders and managers led learner focus groups that were conducted before and during the pandemic period to ensure that programmes were meeting their needs and support was focused at the right level. Learners speak highly of this process and the responses which impact them directly. Apprentices also report back positively on their experience. WAES has key partnerships across Westminster and pan-London to develop programmes and ensure that the programmes offered meets learners' needs. This includes the development and delivery of community learning against some key social integration and wellbeing needs as part of the GLA Recovery Plan and the Nine Missions.

For a number of years, WAES has recognised the need to support staff in their physical and mental wellbeing. A Wellbeing Committee has been established for over three years and is supported by trained Wellbeing Officers. The committee really came into its own during the pandemic as the mechanisms were in place across the year for staff to provide opportunities for training and other support. During the pandemic, the Wellbeing Newsletter was increased to keep staff abreast of other support opportunities and the Wellbeing Officers also spoke with a number of staff during this period to reassure them and signpost to additional support where applicable.

8.1 Governance

The governance structure is well embedded at WAES, even though it has the added complexity of also reporting to the WCC Cabinet Member, who is the portfolio holder for Business, Licensing and Planning. WAES Governors are very active in both challenging the senior management and wider management team but also supporting the Service by offering expertise and moral support at events, etc. Governors understand and undertake their duties well at WAES and ensure that they provide the necessary challenge and many champion key areas such as Safeguarding and Health & Safety. This has resulted in year-on-year improvements by the Service. During the pandemic, the Governors were involved in key decisions at all times. For instance, they approved the use of financial reserves to support WAES with the investment in digital technologies required to keep WAES at the forefront of learning and ensure the continued success of the Service.

Governors conduct their own self-assessment showing the positive improvements in ensuring the Service is operating effectively and efficiently, and that it continues to deliver the best outcomes for learners. In addition, they are self-critical in ensuring that areas for development are addressed and implemented. For example, a data dashboard, highlighted in previous governance SAR as an area for improvement, was introduced and used across the year. Governors have also

undertaken an extensive training programme to ensure they are kept abreast of key developments such as equality and diversity. Governors also engaged in a number of activities across WAES to be better informed about the progress being made.

8.2 Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding learners are effective.

Leaders and managers follow safe recruitment practice. This includes ensuring that staff and volunteers who work with adult learners are safe to do so and all statutory requirements are fully in place. A Safeguarding Committee ensures that policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and robust and Governors are updated regularly with the cases and policy updates. As a result, learners feel safe and those on the Safeguarding Register are well-supported. Prevent is well embedded into the processes of WAES and learners report that they know how to keep themselves safe. WAES updated its induction and spent a great deal of time sharing with learners the processes for keeping themselves safe online. Following the onset of a further lockdown in December 2020, a 100% increase in mental health support needs materialised, with extended support provided by staff to learners over Christmas and across the New Year period.

During the lockdown period, the safeguarding team remained in contact with learners on a weekly basis to ensure their wellbeing and increased the prominence of online safety with learners. Learners were well supported with a variety of issues, including domestic violence, loneliness, homelessness, struggling with issues at home and general mental health and wellbeing. We were also supporting adults dealing with bereavement and signposting them to key services. WAES has been very successful at keeping learners engaged and giving them a purpose during very challenging times, with the majority being successful on their programmes.

Learner B – Level 3 Graphic Design

This learner struggled with her mental health. This learner's health began to become more traumatic when a critical situation arose involving Children's Services and a Section 47 notice. Over Christmas and New Year, a Safeguarding Lead stayed in contact, but unfortunately during January 2021 this learner was sectioned due to being identified as a risk to self and others. During a two-month window in hospital, the hospital allowed us to phone weekly and offer support and give reassurances that her place in WAES remained open, we also delivered some resources so that this learner could still create work.

As this learner could not complete during this academic year a 'break from learning' was issued. This was time-bound, and this learner has started back in 2021/22 to complete her Level 3 qualification.