

Westminster Adult Education Service



City of Westminster

Self-Assessment Report 2022/23

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



“WAES is good, our learners are outstanding”



**“I really love the fact that I keep growing my skillset, developing in every way possibly
by encouragement to experiment with different media by my tutor”.**

A snapshot of WAES Across the Year – 2022/23

September

*Celebrating our “Queen”.
Floristry learner’s display*



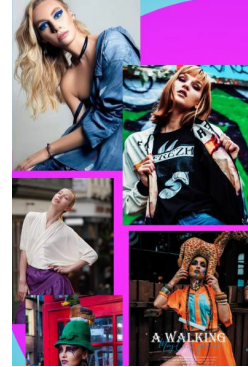
October

*Jenny Pistella, Apprenticeship
Manager Speaking at National
GEM Conference*



November

*Alumni, Jacy Garland, talks to
Media Makeup Learners.*



December

Christmas card winner 2023



January

Graduation of AWS Bootcamp



February

Apprenticeship Awards



March

WAES Sustainability Mapping



April

*Digital Academy
Employer Event*



May

*Community Learning Partner
Forum – Tai Chi*



June

IAB Accounts Winner of Year



July

End of Year Celebrations



August

Fashion Showcase



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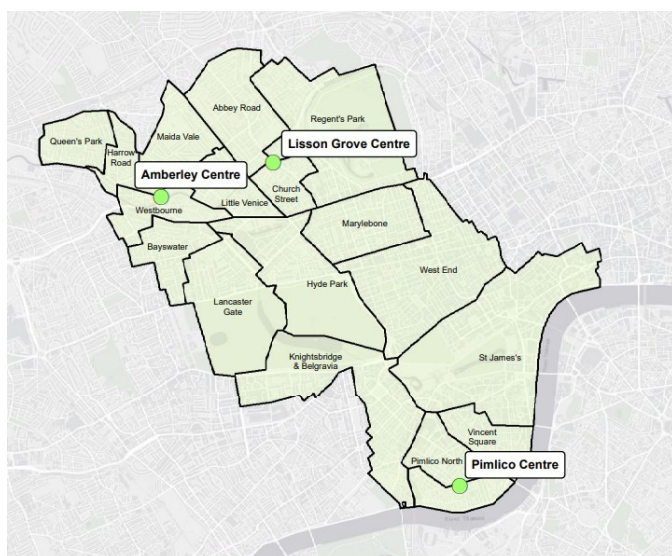
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1 Context

This self-assessment report covers the academic year August 2022-July 2023. Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES) is the largest local authority adult education service in London. Operating as a department within the Regeneration Economy and Planning 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, three of whom are Westminster ward councillors. In 2022/23, the Service was part of portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Young People, Leisure and Lifelong Learning.

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 50 centres annually to engage our hardest to reach learners through the delivery of community and family learning.

The service has 7014 learners with 13327 enrolments. WAES operates in 10 of the SSAs with provision from Pre-Entry through to Level 5.

Many learners see WAES as Westminster's Adult College.

WAES is grant funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and a smaller grant from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). We are the lead for Westminster's Digital Academy.

2 Grading

Overall	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Overall Effectiveness	Good	Good	Good
Quality of Education	Good	Good	Good
Behaviour & Attitudes	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Personal Development	Outstanding	Good	Good
Leadership & Management	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding

Provision Types	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Adult Learning	Good	Good	Good <i>Outstanding Features</i>
Apprenticeships	Good	Good	Good <i>Outstanding Features</i>

Overall	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
English and maths	Good	Good	Good
Digital			Good <i>Outstanding Features</i>
ESOL	Good	Good	Good <i>Outstanding Features</i>
Diversity and Inclusion	Good	Good	Outstanding
Professional Pathways	Good	Good	Good <i>Outstanding Features</i>
Distance Learning	Outstanding	Good	Good <i>Outstanding Features</i>
Creative Industries	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding
Community and Cultural Learning	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

3 Key Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Key Strengths

- **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 – 95.3 %
 - Strong pass rates – 97.7%
 - High levels of Achievement – 93.1%
 - Strong positive destinations of learners - 94% (where known)
 - ALS Outcomes for Learners – 94%
 - Increased levels of support for learners and more support needs identified
 - 2% higher outcomes for learners with a declared disability or learning difficulty
 - All learners, regardless of background, equally perform with no learner left behind
 - Across all teams the teachers are skilful in their subjects to sequence, develop and challenge learners to achieve their qualifications and goals.
- **Excellent and resilient response at all levels of leadership in planning curriculum and supporting teachers to deliver high quality programmes**
 - Highly ambitious and well developed and evolving curriculum offer meets the skills agenda at a local, regional and national level. e.g. community learning provision, employment hospitality, SWAPs, enterprise
 - Three curriculum areas graded outstanding and five graded good with outstanding features with all staff committed to being a leader of learning

- Development programmes for staff throughout the year aligned to key priorities with planned and responsive training
 - High levels of cross service team working e.g., Safeguarding support, at risk learners targeted support, mentoring, moderation leading to an excellent learner experience
 - High levels of engagement from learners focused on enrichment, progression and employment support
 - Involvement across different curriculum areas and levels at a national and regional level in sharing best practice at conferences, events, etc.
 - Culture within staff of wanting to achieve the best for our learners with a highly learner centred approach leading to high achievement rates.
- **Outstanding community learning provision and partnership working with the most deprived learners within the wards of Westminster**
 - Highly responsive and substantial curriculum – designed and positioned to respond swiftly and intelligently to ever-changing local needs. 154 different workshops/courses.
 - Robust Wellbeing and Mental Health offer to support increase in local needs (Older generation/children/work transitions)
 - Wide and relevant digital, maths and ESOL offer that supports progression pathways (5 digital/ESOL for work and communication)
 - Strong overall achievement rate 97%
 - Proactive engagement with sustainability values – Spearheading Innovation in Green Curriculum design (Green Live Learning Lab) by initiating and incubating nationally unique Green Live Learning Lab project for families furthest removed from WCC engagement.
 - Positive impact on Ukrainian refugees with an extensive offer and partnerships meaning over 400 supported across the year
 - Excellent strategic working partnerships with a wide range of organisations across the voluntary and community (VCS) sectors and Westminster Council which shapes the local learning offer. New successful partnerships established.
 - Exceptional and dedicated teaching staff. Strategic, highly trained team with combined in-house expertise who follow latest community research and training to continually improve the curriculum and find future opportunities.
- **Highly developed practical skills meeting current and relevant industry standards on creative programmes supported by high quality resources/accommodation**
 - Teachers are very highly qualified (many PhD), skilled and in all cases dual professionals and proficiently deliver a curriculum, which builds excellent skills across the year
 - Classrooms and workshops are well equipped and are professional training environments
 - Learning is well supported by tutors with additional workshops and 1:1 tutorials
 - Vast majority of learners achieve high grades – 65%
 - Selling products in local markets at commercial rates across the year
 - Enterprise and employability embedded into all programmes using specialists
 - End of year celebrations showcases the highly developed skills and abilities of learners at all levels
 - Strong collaboration across departments to ensure effective events and reflect industry working
 - Very positive learner voice articulating the excellent service response to ongoing health support needs
 - Staff expertly develop learners’ practical skills, including for those with high needs, to produce exceptionally high-quality work

- **Outstanding behaviour and attitudes and wide-ranging personal development**

- Active learner involvement with the learner representatives' system to bring the learner voice to life and influence change (120)
- Very large ESOL department who ensure all learners have curriculum related enrichment activities as part of their programme, including trips to museums, galleries, parks, historic royal palaces and exhibitions and language cafes, in addition to workshops on pronunciation, digital and study skills, careers and wellbeing
- Progression weeks, HE fair and other enrichment engagement with high levels of engagement from learners
- Training for learners in Mentoring to support other learners as well as strong mentoring programmes for learners including digital ambassadors.
- Very strong WAES support for those in most need to ensure everyone able to achieve
- High levels of attendance in the vast majority of programmes
- Bullying never tolerated and communicated regularly and clearly with swift intervention when required
- Strong induction and preparation to support transition to learning including referral mechanisms and e-safety training

Areas for Improvement

- Continue to develop learners understanding of Prevent and the development of approaches to ensure there is a stronger understanding cross-service.
- Further the development of sustainability (a new value of WAES) into teaching, processes and decision-making to contribute to the WCC Climate Emergency Action Plan.
- Approaches and mechanisms to develop and establish a framework for exceptional teaching, learning and assessment to ensure consistent high-quality delivery.

Learner Quotes

The tutors approach also assist with my queries and they provide great encouragement for me to the best I can be.

Learner support have been fantastic in understanding my needs and supporting me in lessons

The best thing about college life is that you get a fantastic new experience every day

My tutor is very smart and makes me want to be better in everything I do.

**Everything
is
Excellent**

Every day I learn new things and skills and my fellow classmates make the whole experience brilliant

4 Types of Provision

4.1 Adult Learning Programmes (Good) – (*with outstanding features*)

Learners benefit from local learner centred provision that offers programmes from Pre-Entry to Level 5 across 10 of the subject sector areas. Learners are provided with a high-quality learning environment and experience to ensure that learners achieve their learning goals. Over 50% of our London learners are Westminster residents and many from the most deprived wards. Outcomes are strong and remain high for learners at 93.1%. Retention of learners has remained strong and pass rates, including high grades have remained strong. In person attendance has remained high in the vast majority of our programmes. In the first year of bootcamp delivery there are good signs of employment outcomes.

Learners were well prepared for their exams and GCSE grades at maths grade 4 and above was 70%. All grades submitted to UAL were moderated and agreed with exceptional high grades. There were no blocks or action plan requirements from any of our 20 plus awarding bodies. The overwhelming majority of learners (96%) comment on the positive and good experience they get from their teachers to support them in the learning which allows them to achieve. Strong learner rep engagement across all areas of curriculum.

WAES has three curriculum areas at outstanding and five others graded good with outstanding features. This has been accomplished through outstanding leadership and management and the dedication by teachers/ assessors to their learners. A key feature, from all areas, is they have a commitment to learning and ensure that no learner is left behind. Approaches were taken to ensure the best teaching and learning culminated in a positive attitude from learners and high levels of achievement.

4.2 Apprenticeships (Good)- (*with outstanding features*)

WAES offers a small range of apprenticeships as a training provider as well as internally to Westminster City Council. The provision is very good and learners have good outcomes in terms of achievement and all apprentices leave the programme with full time employment contracts. We have developed an offer for Westminster and nationally in the Creative and Cultural sector starting with our Libraries offer and building up in Cultural Learning and Participation Officer and Museum and Gallery Technician with highly prestigious organisations e.g. V&A Museum, The British Library, Oxford University, etc. Employers speak highly of the work that WAES does.

Assessors have extensive and current industry knowledge that they share with apprentices. Apprentices share their own learning experiences and environments with the wider group. For example, library service apprentices share their research findings and resources and highlight interesting podcasts and videos. The assessors 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 and learn things to enhance their knowledge e.g. Bug infestations in books. Those on Outdoor Activity Leadership also study first aid and health and safety qualifications to complement their programme.

5 Quality of Education (Good)

5.1 Intent

WAES has a three-year strategic plan spanning 2019-2022, 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 City Council's Fairer Westminster Strategy and the GLA Skills Roadmap for London.



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 well-being plan. The pillars are not isolated and at various points learners may well cross between them.

For many they will move across different plans as their learning journey starts and continues.

(See full Strategic Plan 2019-2022 for full details)

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

- Classroom based learning which runs during the day, evenings and weekends across our three centres (which was adapted during the pandemic restrictions).
- Distance learning/on-line 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, usually 1-2 weeks intense programmes to help “entry to work” with guaranteed interviews.
- Intense bootcamps in the digital sector to meet a skills shortage and to train individuals quickly to get the skills to enter the sector with guaranteed interviews
- Apprenticeships 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 50 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.

Our awarding bodies are chosen with purpose. For example, the UAL awarding body is a leading awarding body in the creative sector, C&G are used in hairdressing, AAT for accounting, etc.

We have a long-standing arrangement with our trusted partner AEET. AEET offer programmes in construction, retail and hospitality and work across Westminster and neighbouring boroughs.

They have the expertise and flexibility to deliver these programmes and have high achievement rates with over 50% of learners entering the workforce.

In the distance learning team, WAES engaged with two strategic partners: The Learning Curve and The Skills Network to fulfil the ESFA contract which focuses on supporting those requiring a flexible online only offer. This offer will be reviewed in 2023/24 to ensure continued strategic alignment.

Community Learning Strategic Intent

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.



Community learning has seen an increase in working with different agencies and City Council 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. WAES works with 15 strategic partners in community learning.

5.2 Implementation

The Quality of Education remains consistently good with many pockets of outstanding practice and this is reflected in the positive feedback from learners. Learners and apprentices continue to

report positively on the high-quality learning experiences they experience. Learners enjoy the friendly environment and feel part of a community, and many describe attending WAES as like being part of a family.

In Accounting and Technical Digital subjects highly effective and relevant learner management systems are used so learners have access to high quality industry led materials at all times for both study and revision purposes. These are maintained and developed in partnerships with Mindful Education (Accounting) and The Code Institute and Amazon Web Services (Digital). Tutors facilitate and consolidate learners learning during taught sessions.

Tutors and assessors are fully qualified and have significant occupational experience and expertise to enhance delivery of the curriculum with many still practicing in their chosen sectors. Tutors demonstrate this through selection of a range of delivery methods and preparation of activities and resources that engage learners. They skilfully consider the order in which they teach learners the knowledge and skills they need to achieve their learning goals. As a result, teaching builds learners' skills and knowledge incrementally over time which are highly appropriate to learner career pathways and ambitions. This is further evidenced in the feedback from External Quality Assurers (EQAs) who highlight the high standard of work produced by our learners.

Leaders and managers support teachers effectively to develop their skills, including those new to the profession. They use information on the quality of teaching to plan staff training and development so that teachers improve their classroom practice.

The Quality Team continue to support and develop staff through a range of pedagogical and digital specific training, coaching and mentoring, and have focused this year on target setting and checks on learning. In addition, the sharing of best practice has been enhanced, using digital media such as Yammer, Pod Casts, and etc. Funding is secured from the ETF to support the mentoring training and development of teachers including one tutor completing the Taking Teacher Further programme.

Tutors and assessors regularly update their knowledge with mandatory training in Safeguarding, Prevent, GDPR, Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity and Fundamental British Values (FBV) embedding, which is then cascaded to the learners.

A quality cycle including surveys, forums, audits, curriculum reviews and lesson observations has enabled a strong focus on continued development and improvement of teaching and learning and includes oversight of sub-contracted provision. Those surveys have allowed WAES to respond to in year requests swiftly to meet learners needs.

Tutors and assessors have very high expectations of learners' attendance and punctuality and frequently highlight the importance of this as a key behaviour and skill for employment. As a result, learners attend very well.

WAES is proud of the positive relationships and the learning atmosphere created by staff across the service and the variety of delivery methods employed. Learners are warmly greeted at the start of every lesson and given time to share aspects of how their week has been going. Tutors and assessors are always very helpful and approachable and provide support if learners are struggling with their studies. Additional learning support is a key feature for learners that identify

and require support from the onset or those that are identified in year. This helps learners to remain on programme, catch-up and ultimately be successful.

A variety of tasks and activities are clearly structured and sequenced to build upon learner's prior knowledge and designed to reinforce learning and build learner's long-term memory. In many classes homework is frequently set and checked as part of recapping activities.

In most lessons there are examples of the effective embedding of functional skills, British Values and employability, which gives learners opportunities to build skills, draw on their own experiences and prepare for progression.

Teachers continue to develop their digital skills in a variety of technology and digital tools across the service to ensure lessons remain fun and interactive and widen the opportunities for learners to work more collaboratively as well as prepare them for work in the digital age. Learners are further supported by their peers (8 in total) who are WAES digital ambassadors.

5.3 Impact

WAES had a strong year in 2022/23 and exceeded the targets both in terms of programmes and funding. The overwhelming majority of learning took place on site in class and learners enjoyed their experience. Overall achievement rates for learners was 93.1% Learners progress very well and in 2022/23, of those known, 69% continued their studies at WAES with 25% being in employment. High grades have also been maintained and improved across the Service.

Our ESOL department, accounting for over 33% of all provision saw 93% achievement, which is higher than previous years. English and maths outcomes have improved on functional skills on previous years and our GCSE outcomes are improved with 70% grade 4 and above in maths. Learners in childcare and teaching and learning support had excellent outcomes. In year, our Hairdressing and Media Makeup department was under a growth and improvement programme and recovered well with achievement rates of 85%.

In the second year of our digital productive programmes, we had over 200 learners enrolled onto appropriate curriculum from Level 2 to Level 5 including bootcamps. Outcomes for learners into work on substantial programmes and bootcamps was at 40%. WAES will focus on employment and growth of employers involved in the sector as a priority.

High Grades Data

Level	Learning aim title	High grade %
Level 1	Diploma in Art, Design and Media	75%
Level 2	Diploma in Creative Digital Media Production	50%
Level 2	Diploma in Art and Design	79%
Level 2	GCSE (9-1) in English Language	50%
Level 2	GCSE (9-1) in Mathematics	70%
Level 3	Diploma in Creative Practice: Art, Design and Communication	76%

Ethnicity achievement data 2021/22:

Overall achievement rates	93.1% with 13723 enrolments
White British achievement rates	92.3% with 2879 enrolments [21% of overall cohort]
White other achievement rates	94.2% with 2991 enrolments [22% of overall cohort]
Arab achievement rates	93.0% with 1242 enrolments [9% of overall cohort]
African achievement rates	92.3% with 1397 enrolments [10% of overall cohort]

The fourth largest ethnic group of learners at WAES is African. Over the three years we have worked hard to ensure that this client group has had equal outcomes as other groups where we had a 15% difference. We started with a project called “close the gap” to “narrow the gap” to a “prevent the gap” project in 22/23 which was a cross service focused approach. We now have comparable achievement across our different groups. This work has now been mainstreamed to ensure that all learners equally achieve.

Learners with Learning Difficulty or Disability (LDD)

Within WAES the department that oversees the learners’ curriculum was renamed Diversity and Inclusion, in response to staff and learners views. 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 of 99%.

The Service had 4 learners with Education Health Care Plans both in discrete and mainstream curriculum studying different programmes.

Out of the 13723 enrolments, 2866 have a declared learning difficulty or disability which accounts for 20% of our learners. These learners are extremely well supported and achieve consistently high at 94.5% against other learners at 92.5%. 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 94%.

Gender Achievement

76% of the enrolments at WAES are female compared with 24% male due to the curriculum offer and our high female ESOL contingent. However, both gender groups perform similarly with 93.2% achievement for female and 92.9% for males.

Community Learning

Community learning attracted 2969 learners this year and is very successful provision. It enables most learners to achieve with 97.5% having a positive outcome. A comprehensive community digital offer reaching approximately 20% of all community learning enrolments., appreciating that many learners would find it difficult to engage and the proportion of community learning digital delivery increased from 4% to 20%.

Safeguarding

The Service had an increase in safeguarding cases from 24 to 43 that were considered as part of the safeguarding remit and in addition a further 110 (compared with 74) 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 at 95% and the majority of these learners also went on to achieve where their circumstances allowed them at 80%.

Progression/Destinations (2021/22 cohort)

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.

75% of the learning at WAES is level 1 and below and therefore many learners stay on their learning programmes with WAES to develop their skills. From those learners studying in 2021/22 70% have returned to WAES to continue their learning. Learners on bootcamps have 35% entry to employment.

Whilst university is not always the initial outcome that learners aspire to when they join us, through the participation in HE fairs 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.



6 Behaviours and Attitudes - Outstanding

WAES' Centres' and approach to learning is to provide a calm and welcoming environment where all learners can reach their potential in both classroom and virtual settings. A full induction (accessible online at any point) is given to learners to support their learner journey as well as a team of very proactive career development officers. Learners regularly feedback that the environment is inclusive, stimulating and helps them to be successful. Learners artistic work is displayed throughout the centres demonstrating our learner focused approach. Through the year, learner forums are conducted, and learners report back how supportive all staff are to make sure they are successful with many quotes about the "WAES family". It is clear from the learner feedback that staff care highly about their learners and regularly support learners outside of the classroom.

WAES has very clear expectations of learners and shares this 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 remain on programme. WAES works with learners so that they can be successful. Mental health support continues to affect many learners and therefore the team have a clear focus on wellbeing and promotion of this to learners and year on year deal with increased numbers effectively. Community learning provision focused heavily on this aspect. In some cases, learners are supported off site whilst they are sectioned due to the severity of their mental health.

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 learner's 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. Learners enjoy attending and even when train strikes make this difficult, they still try and find ways to attend. In all cases tutors understand their learners well and how to support them.

Learners joining WAES are highly motivated to achieve, and this is stimulated further by their teacher expectations and consistent high support provided in different ways. Staff care about their learners and consequently have high expectations on attendance and punctuality and achieving high grades, where appropriate.

Learners respect each other's views and listen carefully to each other. They encourage and support each other in their studies. They enjoy meeting people from different backgrounds and cultures and learning about each other. For example, they share food from each other's home countries at the end of term. 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.

7 Personal Development - Good

A large part of the provision is ESOL and the many different programmes we have enabled 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 are run as additionality and are very popular to support ESOL spoken language. With 48 sessions, 480 participations and 200 individual learners attending this enhances their life skills and is run by volunteers in partnership with the City Council.

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. We continue to develop this work to ensure that learners have every opportunity to enhance their understanding.

Mental health support has been offered in a variety of settings and through our community learning team where some of our main site attendees have also attended sessions to help with their current circumstances. With the current 'cost of living crisis' we used our multiply funding to upskill learners in understanding finances and money management with over 100 learners taking part.

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 (33%) of ESOL learners. There is also a good and well-established diversity and inclusion 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 'Groundworks walk and talk programmes'. WAES also celebrates many different cultural festivals.

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 and will often return to talk to current learners. 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. Development of digital skills has become a large part of the community learning development offer which assists at all different levels of learning.

120 learners engaged in our learner representative system to develop themselves and also support the experience of fellow learners. Learners engage well in online sessions from all areas of the curriculum. Training is delivered in safeguarding and equality and diversity as well as expectations of the roles. In addition, a Learner Governor was voted by learners. As a result, learners are able to put their points of view across well to both inform areas that are working well and provide suggestions on how things could be better. As a result, leaders and managers are able to make interventions to improve their experience. For example, learners raised the need for a breakout area at Amberley and, with some changes, a new room was designated allowing learners access to facilities.

WAES has a well-developed careers team to support and advise learners on their next steps as part of a wider careers strategy. WAES also gained Matrix Reaccreditation in December. Progression weeks, at key points across the year, help learners focus on their individual's 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 organised, which saw 105 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 team to look at their career and progression opportunities, including those entering University. We worked with the Westminster Employment Service to deliver sessions, which supported learners to seek employment during lockdown and adapt to the new digital recruitment methods.

Throughout my time on the floristry course, my teacher has been inspirational, supportive and very approachable. She has given me additional support and tips to enable me to accomplish the practical tasks and assignments. She has also motivated me to push forward in the floristry industry.

She is resilient, equitable, passionate about her job, and the flowers; all of which I aim to aspire to be.

Thank you, you are amazing!

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 at the forefront of all operations. Excellent commitment of all staff across the year and high levels of team working have ensured learner remain in learning and learners feel safe and enjoy attending their lessons. Centres, classrooms and equipment are invested in annually to ensure that they are current, appealing and provide a conducive learning environment – which learners and all visitors comment favourably on.

WAES has been highly effective in its financial resilience and always seeks funding opportunities to improve the variety of learning it can offer. During 2022/23 it secured funds to support more learners into work or additional employability programmes through the GLA Good Work for All funding. In addition, WAES also secured funds to open the Westminster Digital Academy as part of its new Tech Sector curriculum offer as well as bootcamp funding to offer bespoke programmes. This project has been pivotal in getting WAES to be at the forefront of skills development to meet industry need. Multiply funding allowed us to expand our maths provision and take maths to those most in need. Full cost provision has grown slowly, despite an economic downturn, to enhance WAES' financial stability

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 teaching and learning to ensure that lessons are the best they can be. Teachers have differentiated support with those in more need getting full one to one coaching.

WAES has a variety of mechanisms for listening and responding to learners. Leaders and managers lead learner focus groups to ensure that programmes are meeting their needs and support is focused at the right level. Learners speak highly of this process and the responses which impact them directly. Apprentices also report 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 milestones.

For a number of years WAES has recognised the need to support staff in their physical and mental wellbeing. A well-being committee is in operation (for the last 3 years) and is supported by trained well-being officers. Many staff have also completed the Mental Health First Aid qualification to support colleagues. WAES also works with staff to look at workload and is reviewing how technology could support. In addition, CPD sessions are organised for staff including guided walk, baking, ceramics and art programmes. In some CPD sessions, there is a focus on improving pedagogical practice, as well as supporting staff to acquire further teaching and professional qualifications, as part of succession planning and to mitigate staff recruitment challenges.

8.1 Subcontracting

WAES works with a select few for subcontracting. AEET is a long-standing partner with particular expertise in delivering short 1-2 week courses on employability for work in construction, retail and hospitality. Learners have been highly effective in attaining work. In addition, we work with the Learning Curve and the Skills Network on our ESFA provision and supports progression pathways for learners.

8.2 Governance

The governance structure is well embedded at WAES even though it has the added complexity of also reporting to the WCC cabinet member. 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 and Safety. Governors have been key in supporting with the investment and development of the centres. A link governor scheme is in place to allow governors to understand more of the business. 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.

8.3 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. Year on year more complex safeguarding cases are presented as well as those at risk. Prevent is well embedded into the processes of WAES and learners report that they know how to keep themselves safe as this is a key focus for WAES. WAES updated its induction and spent a great deal of time sharing with learners the processes for keeping themselves safe online.

Our tutor made coming into my apprenticeship very accessible. She is always very enthusiastic about my learning and the subject matter and always engages us on new information that could pertain to our course as well as opportunities we would likely find interesting.