

T 08456 40 40 40
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Judith Arkwright
Family Learning Coordinator
London Borough of Wandsworth
Professional Centre
Franciscan Road
London
SW17 8HE

Dear Judith

Ofsted Good Practice Survey Programme 2008/09

An evaluation of the benefits of family learning for individuals, families and communities

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation during my visit on the 12 February 2009. I am particularly grateful to you, and your staff for all the work involved in preparing for the visit and for giving up a great deal of time to meet with me. Please pass on my thanks to those concerned.

The visit provided much useful evidence, which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting for the family learning survey. It was interesting to see provision in both the Sacred Heart and Eardley Primary Schools and to talk to parents and tutors about their courses. I was particularly interested to talk to parents at the Sacred Heart Primary School about the impact family learning has had on their development and progression to further learning and how much progress their children are making in their literacy skills. At Eardley School, it was heartening to see the adult learners, for whom English was an additional language, enthusiastically talk about their own experiences of learning to read and how different this was to their children's experiences at Eardley.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made on this one day visit included: discussions with senior managers within the local authority, family learning staff and parents, a meeting with the head teacher of Sacred Heart Primary School, a brief meeting with the deputy head teacher of Eardley Primary School, scrutiny of examples of learners work, a range of documentation and a visit to two school family

learning activities. Thank you for emailing background information to me in advance of my visit.

Overall, the family learning provision I sampled during my one day visit to the **Adult and Community Learning and Children's Services, at Wandsworth Borough Council** is good. I agreed to provide a summary of the good practice seen and to identify some areas for development, and I outline the main findings as bulleted points below.

The main strengths are:

- Improving success rates in family literacy, numeracy and language programmes. Success rates have risen from 29% in 2006/07 to 87% in 2007/08
- Good teaching and learning where parents are enthused and excited by their lessons and children are interested and engaged in purposeful activity
- Good range of information collected and used to plan family learning provision
- Very useful family learning handbook produced for parents, encouraging them to reflect on their learning and to prompt further activities for them to share with their children at home or in the community and an increased focus on outcomes for children through the development of a children's individual learning plan which is particularly helpful in recording children's progress
- Some good innovative approaches to widening the participation of learners including teenagers, men and older carers/family members. For example, through the 'Gospel' Choir and the filming of their performance via the Big Lottery fund project
- Well managed provision that is carefully planned and targeted; concentrating on those families in the borough's most disadvantaged wards.

Areas for further development are:

- To continue to develop methods to record children's achievements as a result of participating in family learning
- To more accurately record adult learners progression from family learning programmes to further learning.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your family learning provision. If there are any points or aspects of the visit you wish to discuss, please contact me. As we will be evaluating the survey, you may be contacted in the future to find out your views. I hope you will contribute to this evaluation.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted Website.

Yours sincerely

Rosy Belton

Her Majesty's Inspector