

June Cramman HMI
Ofsted North Region
3rd Floor, Royal
Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

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

MOBILE: 0780 1768257
EMAIL: june.cramman@ofsted.gov.uk



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Karen Milne
Family Learning Development Officer
Adult Learning and Skills
Dryden Professional Development Centre
Everstone Road
Gateshead
NE9 5UR

Dear Karen

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 28th November 2008. I am particularly grateful to you, all your staff and learners for the hard work involved in preparing for the visit and for giving up a great deal of time during the visit to meet with me. Please pass on my thanks to all those concerned.

The visit provided much useful evidence, which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting for the family learning survey. I was particularly pleased to meet learners at Lobley Hill Primary School, and to hear how their learning had helped them to become more self aware, promote positive family relationships and how their children's confidence, and enjoyment of learning, had improved.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made on this one-day visit included: interviews with staff, learners and observations of family learning sessions. A range of documentation and reports were reviewed.

The family learning provision I sampled during my one-day visit at Gateshead is very 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:

- Very good development of learner skills, confidence and parenting attitudes
- Good variety of methods and activities in teaching and learning to engage both parents and children
- Good assessment methodologies in FLLN
- Good range of provision to meet community needs and to reach "hard to reach" learners
- Good partnership working
- Well-managed curriculum

Areas for further development

- Insufficiently systematic information advice and guidance
- Insufficient use of target-setting in action plans and appraisals

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

June Cramman
Her Majesty's Inspector