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30<sup>th</sup> September 2008

Beryl Bateson  
Birmingham City Council

Dear Beryl

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 29th of September 2008. I am particularly grateful to you and all your staff 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. It was particularly interesting to see provision that introduced parents and their children to the free library services that are available to them, and promoted their enjoyment of reading.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made on this one day visit included: interviews with staff, partners and learners; scrutiny of the examples of good practice provided including a visit to a family learning activity. A range of documents was reviewed.

Overall, the family learning provision I sampled at Birmingham City Council was 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 the:

- good progress made by parents and children in their learning, confidence and interpersonal skills
- responsive and creative curriculum to meet the needs of parents, and children from foundation stage 1 to key stage 3
- particularly effective partnership working that supports the recruitment of targeted families and continuous professional development of staff
- strong focus on continuous improvement

Area for further development

- improved arrangements to accredit parents' 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

Susan Bain  
Her Majesty's Inspector