

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

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Sarah Teague
Acting Community & Family Learning Manager
Community and Family Learning
Westridge Centre, Brading Road
Ryde
Isle of Wight, PO33 1QS

Dear Sarah

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 during my visit on the 17th 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. I really appreciated the enthusiasm of all involved in sharing the practice and outcomes of family learning activities on the Isle of Wight. 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 the focus of learners and to hear how family learning had helped them:

- *gain a range of qualifications*
- *progress onto many different and varied activities*
- *improve their relationships with their children*
- *acquire long-term habits of learning together as a family*
- *support each other*
- *work with different communities on the Island*
- *improve their children's confidence, and enjoyment of learning*

The evidence used to inform the judgements made on this one-day visit included: interviews with staff, discussion with learners from a number of courses, review of

the outcomes of learning activities. I also reviewed a range of documentation, case studies and reports and recent data on participation.

The outcomes of the sample of family learning provision observed during my one-day visit on the Isle of Wight are outstanding. 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 imaginative and effective curriculum to engage children and parents/carers
- very good use of a variety of funding streams and resources to support targeted and universal provision
- very good development of learners' skills and knowledge
- very effective range of targeted provision to meet the needs of families at risk
- good approaches to ensure effective community cohesion
- good strategic links to embed family learning activity across local priority policy areas
- an extremely effective long term strategic approach to raise the aspirations of the Island's families

Areas for further development

- develop and embed methods for tracking FLIF progression outcomes
- improve the capturing and recording of the outcomes for children

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

Penny Lamb
Additional Inspector