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8th October 2008

Glynis Briddon
Rotherham MBC

Dear Glynis

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 2nd of October 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 in 'Rowdy Robots', and its success in recruiting significant numbers of fathers and male carers into family learning.

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 visits to family learning activities. A range of documents was reviewed.

Overall, the family learning provision I sampled during my one-day visit at Rotherham MBC is 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 good progress made by parents and children in learning and their development of personal and interpersonal skills
- Good teaching
- Very effective partnership work to support recruitment of targeted families and staff development to sustain provision
- Good curriculum management to promote a well balanced curriculum that maximises the impact of family learning on target areas
- Particularly successful initiative that engages significant numbers of men into family learning with their children
- Clear strategic direction that links family learning into the council's mainstream planning for children and young people.

Area for further development

- The extension of family learning provision for children at key stage 3

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