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20th November 2008

Michaela Salmon  
Skills for Life Senior Curriculum Manager  
Manchester City Council

Dear Michaela

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 19th 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 Woodhouse Park Surestart Children's Centre and St Mary's CE Primary School, and to hear from them how family learning had helped them:

- become more self aware
- promote positive family relationships
- 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, learners and observations of family learning sessions. I also reviewed a range of documentation, case studies and reports. No recent data was available.

The family learning provision sampled during my one-day visit at Manchester City 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:

- Good development of personal, learning and parenting skills
- Good progression, particularly into further learning opportunities
- Effective teaching and learning strategies that promote the application of learning with families in the home
- Wide ranging and effective partnerships that support the recruitment and retention of 'hard to reach' learners
- Good development of strategic links to promote coherent action with other agencies

Areas for further development

- The extension of family learning provision beyond primary school, to support transitions into and during secondary education
- The development of measures to recognise the impact of family learning on children's progress and achievement

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