

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



9 February 2010

Ms S Mullen
Family Learning - Service Manager
Nottingham City Council
Sandfield Road
Lenton
Nottingham
NG7 1QH

Dear Ms Mullen

Ofsted 2009-10 survey inspection programme: good practice in literacy

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 22 January 2010 to look at work in literacy at Nottingham City Council (NCC).

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included interviews with senior staff, tutors and learners, one observation of literacy teaching, and supporting documentation provided by the college.

Features of good practice

- Adult learners in deprived areas of the city are achieving well in literacy through the family learning programmes. Success rates for literacy qualifications are high and parents grow in their confidence and capacity to learn. As a result of the skills and knowledge they gain, they are better able to support their children's literacy development.
- The well-planned literacy teaching within family learning programmes has a clear focus on the development of specific language skills. It incorporates a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies that engage learners well and take good account of their individual needs.
- NCC has developed highly collaborative partnerships with subcontractors responsible for delivering family learning programmes, managing these very well in a way that supports tutors and encourages providers to share good practice.

- NCC has established very effective quality improvement arrangements with college subcontractors, making good use of performance data and sharing responsibility with partners for monitoring the quality of literacy teaching.

Areas for development

- We discussed how learner diaries might be used more effectively as a springboard for learners' further literacy development.
- We agreed that it would be helpful to review the use of the initial advice and guidance sessions built into longer courses to support literacy learners' progression.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop literacy learning in the Local Authority.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local Learning and Skills Council and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Jan Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector