

Wigan Adult and Community Learning, Worsley Terrace, Standishgate, Wigan WN1 1XW Telephone: 01942 828912

P2
NEW
COURSES AT
LOWTON
HIGH



P3
SURE
START
SUCCESS



P4
TYLDESLEY
TALENT



Wigan's Early Start impresses Minister

Government Minister Margaret Hodge MP has visited the Early Start programme designed for parents and very young children.

She was so impressed that she joined in the activities, getting hands-on experience with the babies, during her visit to the Sure Start building in Hindley.

The MP is Minister of State for Children and Young People. She was keen to learn about the new Basic Skills Agency programme from Wigan LEA Family Learning Co-ordinator Justine Silcock, on secondment from Wigan and Leigh College, together with tutors Sue Williams and Dionne Blower.

The programme is for parents and babies under one year in the Hindley area. The content has been devised by Family Learning tutors from Wigan and Leigh College, in conjunction with Wigan Sure Start and a Sure Start speech therapist.

The 12 week pilot programme was run in the Sure Start building in Hindley. It has been successful in enabling parents of very young children to make new friends whilst helping their children to learn new skills.

Sure Start and Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council have funded this local parenting and family learning development. For more Early Start pictures please see page 3.



Minister is "caught holding the baby", by Justine Silcock



Minister Margaret Hodge visits Early Start with Wigan Sure Start manager Dominique Wright

Grandmother receives Working Wonders Learner of the Year Award.

You're never too old to learn!

Lily is a 72 year old grandmother who symbolises the benefits to be gained from Life Long Learning. All her family - husband, sisters, children, grandchildren, have achieved academically.

Lily never gained any qualifications at school and she seriously lacked confidence in her ability to learn since she became a grandmother. However, despite her initial fears, she started attending literacy sessions at All Saints Parish Hall in Hindley, which is near to where she lives.

She found that the sessions were informal and fun - not a bit like she remembered school! Lily enjoyed learning and successfully gained a Level 1 Adult Literacy qualification.

She says she's really enjoyed attending the sessions and, as well as gaining skills and knowledge, she has made new friends.

Lily now believes you're never too old to learn and this has added considerably to her quality of life as she happily takes on new challenges.

Learning Champion Award

Working Wonders Learning Champion Award has been presented to Ronald Nightingale, 59, who works as a volunteer at the Key Project which is now based at Caroline Street in Wigan. The project offers practical help and advice to rough sleepers and people who find themselves homeless. In addition to this work, Ronnie will soon be able to support service users to gain nationally recognised qualifications,

brush up their literacy and numeracy skills or get started with reading, writing and numbers. The aim is to help homeless people have the same life chances as others, enabling them to re-take their place in the mainstream of society.



Lily Margaret Shinks receives the Learner of the Year award from Government Minister and local MP Ian McCartney



Ronald Nightingale receives the Learning Champion award from Ian McCartney

Opening new doors at Lowton Community Sports College

Lowton Community Sports College has received its specialist status from the Department for Education and Skills

Awarded in September 2003, it is in recognition of the school's ability and determination to raise further the quantity and quality of the opportunities it provides both to young people and the wider community.

The question of how to attract the wider community through the doors of a traditional high school has been answered with the introduction of an adult community learning programme delivered in partnership with Wigan Local Education Authority.

The flexibility of a programme designed to attract, encourage and support adults back into a structured learning programme has brought immediate results for the school. During the first ten weeks of its programme the school has thrown open its doors to almost 100 adults keen to explore the variety of opportunities available to them.

The initial programme has been dominated by leisure and health related activities in a conscious attempt to introduce learning in a non-threatening and enjoyable manner. The adults have been involved in a range of activities as diverse as floral art and fit for life a lifestyle support programme.

Director of Community at Lowton Community Sports College, Stephen Toole, says, "The Adult Community Learning (ACL) programme has had a dramatic and immediate impact within the school. The number of adults attending the school as a direct result of the ACL programme has been beyond all expectations. The willingness of the adults to learn and challenge previously held views surrounding their education has been a joy to behold."

The school's ACL programme is currently developing and expanding into new areas. Family Learning in sport, literacy and numeracy will be added to the range of opportunities available during 2005 in a bid to strengthen family unity and as a result of local community cohesion.



Course tutor Alana Clough



Putting the final touches to decorative arrangements



High quality work produced in the floral art class

Creative Crafts at Westleigh High

Watch out Clintons! The 17 members of the ACL Creative Arts class have been making cards for birthdays and Christmas alongside gift tags, boxes and much more.

The group have shown a real commitment to learning a new skill. Their cards are so impressive that they have been sold at the Friends of Westleigh High car boot sale, which raises money for the school, and cards have also been presented to senior citizens at their party.

The learners acquire skills such as embossing and stamping which gives them new ideas, leads to more creativity and increases their confidence. Many of the group now realise they have the ability to make their own personalised cards for friends and family.

Community Development Manager at Westleigh High, Jayne Kumah, says, "I am totally impressed with how professional their cards and boxes are. The group have worked really hard and been totally devoted to learning new skills. Their cards have sold very well on the stall and many staff members have bought them. Lyndsey Ward has even progressed into commercial activity, selling her cards on Ebay. The learner feedback we received showed that the group have developed new skills and self-confidence."



Successful outcomes at Hesketh Fletcher

Centre Manager Ian Wright describes two worthy winners

Following my nomination, two Hesketh Fletcher students, Kath and Lynn, have been presented with a Community Learner award from Wigan and Leigh College. They each received a cup, medal, certificate and gift voucher.

The nomination read as follows:-

I would like to nominate a joint pair of students, Lynn Gregory and Kath Robinson. They both work in the school and also have other commitments outside of school. They were interested in the range of ACL taster courses that Hesketh Fletcher were offering.

They took part in courses on Line Dancing, Making Holly Wreaths, Christmas Card Craft, Campfire Cooking, a St Valentine's Day feast including Origami and Poetry reading, and several others.

They joined the Sing Along course, the Concert course, and showed they could take part in a singing group.

Kath and Lynn followed the tasters with a Wigan and Leigh College in the Community City and Guilds in Computing, the New CLAIT course and Kath is also part way through a Teaching Assistant's course.

This year both are studying for a European Computer Driving Licence together with a Skills for Life course to improve their numeracy.

These are not your high flying students who find everything comes easy. They are hardworking part-time students who have a great desire to learn, a determination to succeed, and have shown they can adapt to a range of interests.

I am proud to know them and nominate them as a joint award.

Cenotaph Project at Hesketh Fletcher College in the Community

Local developments in Atherton have inspired ACL tutors to create a course that really involves the local community.

The local Cenotaph committee has been proposing to enhance the area around the Cenotaph, and the tutors have created a Cenotaph Project course.

Participants are invited to take a trip down memory lane, taking the following format:-

- The Cenotaph - new developments
- War-time supper - a traditional Lancashire meal
- Christmas remembered
- Sing-a-long
- Christmas Crafts - making a gift for a special person.

This course has been tailored to the needs of the local community and has been a true reflection of their requirements. Historical information, traditions and recollections are all combined to give an informative and enjoyable learning experience.

Reading Circle

A new course for this year has been the Reading Circle. To follow the drive to enhance Key Skills, a course has been created to encourage reading and literacy. The first book to be read was *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* by Mark Haddon. Learners were each loaned a copy of the book to read at home and when the Circle met, there were discussions about the book, plot and author. Overall an imaginative way of involving people in literacy.

Festive family fun

Tyldesley Co-Centre Manager Sue Hanson reports on a seasonal success story

We advertised the Handmade Christmas Cards course during the Family Learning Week promotion, expecting to get approximately 10-12 enrolments which would include a parent and child or grandparent and grandchild.

The response was phenomenal so we had to put 2 classes on, both of which included 20 students. We arranged the classes on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, from 6.30-8.30, over 5 weeks. All the materials were provided through ACL funding.

Our aim with this course was to get families involved in a group activity, where they can come and learn a new skill with their children, interact with other families socially, and generally have fun in producing lovely cards using various techniques. We had children from one-parent families

and grandparents, who are the main carers for their grandchildren, come along and join the group.

At the end of each course we held a competition between the 2 classes and had an independent judge to pick the best card. We also gave the children a present for winning the competition.

Our tutor, Hazel Foster Whyte, approached the local McDonalds to ask if we could display the competition winners in the restaurant. This was a good promotion for Community Learning. We also organised for the local press to come along and report on the event for the local community section of the newspaper.

Pictured right.
Tutor Hazel Foster Whyte
with her young learners



Working Wonders Manager Joyce Hanlon reports on a super student

Colin is Working Wonders

Colin is a 38 year old single man who didn't particularly enjoy his final years at school.

He started work on a YOP scheme repairing bodywork on cars and had a succession of manual jobs. By the age of 21 he had passed his HGV driving test and worked for Formula One as a rigger. During this time he developed an interest in filming the races as a hobby but he later left motor racing to return to lorry driving.

Following the provision of 5 internet-connected computers at the Leigh centre of ADS, purchased with funding from Adult and Community Learning, Working Wonders started to run informal IT skills sessions in Leigh. Colin enrolled as an absolute beginner on the computer and he also wanted to improve his literacy skills.

At a meeting of interested parties the Poster Project was suggested.



This involved Colin's group designing 7 posters for JobcentrePlus and a poster each for Alcohol and Drugs Services, Working Wonders, Wigan and Leigh Street Based Services, Progress 2 Work and Training Network Group.

On completion of the project the Wigan and Leigh Drug Action Team offered a prize of £100 for the group to spend on an educational visit.

Although eight clients enrolled on the project, Colin took responsibility for its completion. He took up the challenge and engaged completely with it, despite working nights. His IT skills had been non-existent before the Project and he can now, with very little help, produce posters that are truly professional in appearance.

The Poster Project has required Colin to use a range of skills. He has had to contact clients to establish their requirements, collate information, plan the overall work and individual poster layouts, use the internet, find information and designs, send emails, use a digital camera, download pictures and use high level computer skills.

His work has generated interest from other organisations who have requested his services. He has produced a poster for Kids First and has produced a poster highlighting homelessness.

Colin has designed an angel logo for all his posters with the acronym HALO (Helping Access Learning Opportunities), which he hopes to copyright.

He reports that the Project has given, and continues to give him an enjoyable and rewarding focus and purpose to his day. It is having a very positive effect on him and he is justifiably proud of his achievements and the progress that he has made. Colin is truly "Working Wonders".

Early Start

Early Start is a Basic Skills Agency family programme for parents and very young children, delivered by Adult and Community Learning in partnership with Sure Start.

New skills which the children learn include:

- Talking and writing
- Reading
- Shape, pattern, texture
- Moving

Early Start is based in the Sure Start building in Hindley.

Pictured right:
Sylvia Willis, a visiting tutor from
SMILE, contributes to the
Early Start programme



Learner Vicky Withington has attended a course at the new Sure Start building in Hindley. Here she tells her story to tutors Sue Williams and Dionne Blower.

Sure Start success story

I've always been shy and worried about joining new groups. A friend told me about Sure Start and after a few weeks I plucked up the courage to visit the new building (Sure Start) in Hindley. I felt very nervous but was made to feel very welcome. Everyone was very friendly and I soon began to relax. The Early Start baby course was on that day and Debbie, a Sure Start volunteer, took me to meet Sue and Dionne from Wigan and Leigh College, who were running the ACL course, and other mums. Everyone welcomed me and I began to relax. The next week I went along to the Early Start course and

felt very happy each week as I completed the rest of the course. One of the sessions was run by Andrea Garcon, the Sure Start speech therapist, and by meeting her in the Early Start setting I went on to do the Chatterbox course at the Sure Start building. Sue rang me to do the Foundation Literacy and Numeracy course and I am just finishing those 2 courses now. I am looking forward to going to a baby signing course next and going to the Monaco playgroup. I feel much more confident about attending any group in the Sure Start building as I'm familiar and comfortable there now.



Vicky enjoys the Early Start baby course