

Adult and Community Learning

NEWS

Summer 2004



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P2 Mop to Pop



P3 Picture of Success



P4 Working Wonders



Adult and Community Learning Managers Bernard Murphy and Beryl Colvin set out the aims of ACL

Our Mission

THE MISSION of Wigan LEA Adult and Community Learning Service is:

"To work in partnership to provide high quality, innovative accessible and relevant first steps/skills for life learning and progression opportunities which stimulate a culture of lifelong learning."

Four key principles underpin our Adult and Community Learning Mission:

1. To develop, co-ordinate, fund, and quality assure, curriculum provision delivered within our schools and external partner organisations.
2. To concentrate solely on non-accredited 'first steps' learning to engage, enthuse and enable 'hard to reach' learners.
3. To contract for core delivery with partners - such as 'Community' High Schools - who have a track record of quality delivery and have the ability and willingness to facilitate learner progression onto accredited provision.
4. To develop a network of additional partners via intermediaries in the community/voluntary/charity sector, who are already engaged with disadvantaged groups and individuals.

The vision informing the strategic management of Wigan Council's Adult and Community Learning Service is to:

1. Contribute to the renewal of disadvantaged neighbourhood communities throughout the Borough.
2. Value the diversity of, facilitate the inclusion of, and create equality of opportunity for marginalized groups of individuals
3. Support the 'first steps' on a lifelong learning journey allowing every individual to explore, exploit and fulfil their potential and to participate effectively within their community and/or the workplace.

The vision for Adult and Community Learning is to build a bridge between 'hard to reach' learners in disadvantaged communities and the ladders of accredited learning progression within its local Sixth Form, FE and HE institutions by developing non-accredited 'first steps' learning opportunities which:

- * Respond to the needs and aspirations of our learners offering a transition, for example, from leisure to learning
- * Are flexible - delivered at a time, place and pace to meet the learners' particular circumstances
- * Are delivered in a supportive, non-threatening environment - often in an informal, small group, family or intergenerational context - without the pressure of accreditation.
- * Provide enjoyment, entertainment, interest, inspiration and stimulation.

WIGAN'S WENDY IS A WINNER



Wendy and some of her students

Wendy also visits Wigan Infirmary as a volunteer Aromatherapist in the Oncology department. She plans to do a foundation degree in Complimentary Medicine.

Westleigh's Community Development Manager, Jayne Kumah says: "I nominated Wendy as her learning journey, from an Introduction course to now teaching, has been an inspiration. We are fortunate here at the school that she continues to pass on her knowledge of Holistic Therapy to our adult learners. She continues to develop her own skills which is brilliant. There is no stopping her now! Well done Wendy!"

Delighted

Headteacher at Westleigh High, John Pout, says, "A few years ago we had 20 adults a year using the school for Adult Education. Now it's over 400 per week. I am delighted for Wendy for winning this award. She fully deserves the praise."

A final word from Wendy: "The school and staff I have been involved with have inspired and nurtured me through my learning adventure. Without them I would not have entered into any of this. Going back into education has been the best thing I have done, but without the support of these people and most importantly my husband David and my family, I couldn't have managed - thank you everyone."



A Wigan ACL student, who is now teaching, has won North West Adult Learner of the Year.

Wendy Lewis picked up her award at the URBIS Centre in Manchester and later headed for London to attend the national award ceremony at the Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre in Westminster. The award is organised by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE).

Wendy's progress includes being one of Westleigh High School's first adult learners attending a computer course so she could help her son use a laptop. This was followed by Aromatherapy lessons at the Image Centre in Leigh under tutors Carol Hopkins and Bev Higham.

Teaching

At Westleigh High the former community development manager, Pat Morgan, encouraged Wendy to take an Adult Teaching qualification and she now teaches Aromatherapy at Night School.

Students are full of praise for their teacher. "Wendy made the course not only educational but also fun - she demonstrated well and encouraged us to try different techniques."

From mop to pop thanks to ACL!

Community Enterprise Manager Patsy Hodson looks at Hesketh Fletcher High School's ACL success stories

AFTER a hard day's work, the cleaning and kitchen staff of Hesketh Fletcher High School don't want to go home. In fact after they finish, several members of their families and friends join them for evenings packed with exciting activities.

The taster programme designed for families has been paid for by the Adult and Community Learning Fund and is a roaring success!

The courses have included:

Survival, Origami, E-mail, Christmas cooking, Winter Hanging Baskets, World War 2, Local History, Star-gazing, Trampolining, Pilates
And many more.....

The staff and their friends enjoy themselves so much that many of them have now booked in for longer courses. Adult student Lynne Gregory is now taking a CLAIT course. Catering Manager Trudy Hodgkinson started as an ACL student and is now a qualified tutor for some of the courses.

If you want to see them with your own eyes, why not come along to "Showcase", the school's summer talent extravaganza, where they have been selected to perform on stage the Beatles number "Let it be!", after a crash course in Performing Arts with Gareth Daniels, one of the school's talented young teachers.



DT technician Denis Hancock, introducing a student to IT



Trudy Hodgkinson, Catering Manager at the school, on a taster day for adult learning courses



Learning safety issues before trampolining

Success for ACL provision at Orrell Community Education Centre, Abraham Guest High School

Students progress leads to exhibition

The Wigan LEA Adult and Community Learning courses offered at Orrell CEC have met with outstanding success. During the year 2003/04, 562 adults attended courses ranging from Tai Chi to Chinese cooking.

Many of the adults returning to learning at Orrell CEC have enjoyed their experience so much that they have progressed onto further, accredited provision offered by Wigan and Leigh College in the Community at the Centre.

Many others have formed affiliated groups in Painting, Bridge, Badminton, Gift Card Design, Yoga and Tai Chi. In Pottery the group have progressed so much that the tutor has organised an exhibition of their work, over the coming months, at Wigan Investment Centre.



The L2 Certificate group

Egyptology at Abraham Guest Adult Centre

David Poyntz first became interested in Egyptology after visiting Egypt in 1993 and on nine other occasions since. Together with fifteen other students he recently enrolled on an Adult and Community Learning course in Egyptology at Abraham Guest Adult Centre.

Tutor John Johnson recognised the ability and enthusiasm within the group and worked with Dr Joanne Fletcher, world-renowned Egyptologist, to write a progression course for the adults to continue their learning.

This ABC Level 2 Certificate in Egyptology - equivalent to a short course GCSE - was the first officially recognised national Egyptology course below degree level. The development of a Level 3 Certificate - equivalent to A Level - is now underway.

David and his fellow ACL students - together with six other recruits - successfully completed the Level 2 certificate in 2003 and David obtained a Distinction. They were recently presented with their certificates by Alan Fildes, a well known Egyptologist and author, at a dinner at the NUPRO Centre in Ashton.

Many of the students have joined "Horus", the Wigan Egyptology Society, which meets every two months at the NUPRO Centre with different guest speakers.

In September, David - together with another student from the group, Linda Clarke - will be starting a full-time BA course in Egyptian Archaeology at Liverpool University.



David Poyntz and Linda Clarke with Alan Fildes (centre)

Sue Hanson manages the Tyldesley Community Education Centre with Joyce Houghton. Here she reports on a major success story.

A picture of success

ART TUTOR Christina Martin, who exhibits her work throughout the country, suggested offering an oil painting course at our Tyldesley Community Education Centre.

Following a huge response to our advertisement we put on 2 beginners' courses each Monday for 10 weeks, funded by ACL.

Skills taught include how to mix and thin colours, the use of different brushes and the palette knife, applying oils to canvas. The students completed 4 paintings each, all of different subjects.

Advanced oil painting courses, covering techniques in more depth, are now offered alongside the successful beginners' courses.

In the coming academic year we have applied to run a Wigan and Leigh College in the Community vocational course on oil painting, leading to qualifications.

We also hope to offer 2 courses on portrait painting for beginners and advanced students.

Our students are new to the specialised art of oil painting although some have previously worked on watercolours and painting and drawing. Some are retired and want to learn a new hobby or to expand their knowledge of art. Others have not been in education for many years, finding it difficult to get involved in learning new things. They have been encouraged to take part in the art course, enjoying it so much that they are now enrolling on other courses.

Art tutor Christina Martin is absolutely thrilled with the response she has received from all the students and is very pleased with the standard of work they have produced as they were all beginners and new to the subject. She has been delighted with the support from ACL and Wigan and Leigh College and the range of innovative courses on offer to the students.

Student John Bullen says, "I have not enjoyed a course as much as this and I am looking forward to starting the vocational oil painting course in September."



John Bullen is looking for new subjects to paint



Vicky Baston is enrolling on next year's portrait painting and colour mixing course



Art tutor Christina Martin



Tyldesley students are proud of their work

Learning in the high street



Students in Hindley are learning life skills through running their own high street shop.

Amberswood Charity Shop, which was established following the success of their market stall, sells clothes and bric-a-brac and enables students with special needs and learning difficulties to play a more active role in the community.

The adult students also gain qualifications to National Skill Profiles standards which are targeted specifically at the special needs sector and are a precursor to NVQs.

Initially Amberswood Environmental Services was set up to provide basic employment opportunities for people with special needs and learning difficulties. A day centre was used for recycling aluminium and steel cans. This progressed into a works unit, taking on contracts which included paper and eventually clothing collections.

When funding ran out other ways were needed to help the charity survive leading to the provision of educational opportunities.

Amberswood Centre managers Dave Latham and Fred Gleaves acknowledge the support of Wigan Council's ACL managers Bernard Murphy and Beryl Colvin who have provided support for the centre. This has led to opportunities for 35 new students to work, train and gain qualifications.



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Students' success at Marsh Green Community Centre

Life long Learning is for everyone reports Working Wonders Manager Joyce Hanlon

Two of our adult learners gaining qualifications in literacy and numeracy are Susan and Linda. They have overcome numerous barriers to show that it's never too late to learn.

Susan is back at school learning to be a Classroom Assistant. She didn't realise the importance of qualifications when she was a pupil. She left school with few qualifications and later worked at GUS for 22 years, taking early retirement through ill health.

Linda can now help her children with their homework through gaining new qualifications. She left school with low CSE grades and worked on a couple of YTS schemes. Later she spent 4 years in a factory followed by work as a sewing machinist. Both students thought they were too old to learn but are now taking Basic Skills Awareness training which will make them Learning Champions. This means they will have the skills to encourage other reluctant learners to follow their example.



Susan and Linda with their certificates

FAMILY LEARNING Success stories

Sonia Hughes

A young mum with 2 children, who left school at 16, has qualified as a Teaching Assistant.

Sonia Hughes has gained full time employment at St James', Worsley Mesnes, having passed the NCFE Level 2 Teaching Assistant course.

She is looking forward to further training so that she can become a Higher Level Teaching Assistant and, when the time is right, go to Teacher Training College.

Sonia started with Family Learning Maths, then completed Family Numeracy and KS2 maths courses.

She has passed City and Guilds Level 2 Adult Numeracy and completed the Family Learning History course, and the Family Literacy course. When her youngest child started school she started as a parent helper.

Sonia says: "ACL Family Learning got me started and the College in the Community kept me in. I would never have gone to college because I would have found it too intimidating but now I know I can do it."

Sonia is an inspiration and potential role-model for young mums who leave school with few qualifications and no goal in mind. Her awakened self-belief is a pleasure to see. All her tutors and the Headteacher of her new school are pleased to witness it and are themselves motivated by her success."

Stephen Nicholas

Stephen Nicholas, a father of four, left school in 1982 when he was sixteen.

However he is now back in school quite often in order to take part in the regular Family Learning courses held at St Philip's, Castle Hill. When the opportunity first came along, Stephen felt he would like to catch up on the learning he had previously missed and better equip himself to support his children in school.



Parent Co-ordinator Stephen Nicholas

He attended his first course, Steps into School, when his young son was four. Since then he has attended courses in Literacy, Science and History and he is right now working towards a City and Guilds Level 1 Literacy qualification.

His targets for the future are to study more History and to achieve a Level 2 qualification in Literacy.

Stephen is a keen Wigan Rugby League supporter and he has a great sense of humour, but there is no doubting the seriousness of his desire to learn. As Parent co-ordinator for Family Learning at St Philip's, he gathers together a group of like-minded parents for the beginning of each new course.

We wish them well. Long may their enthusiasm for learning continue!

Karen Mitchell

Karen Mitchell passed Foundation Family Literacy and Numeracy courses at Woodfold School in 2002/03.

She also achieved KS1 English, Maths and Science.

Karen worked as a dinner lady in the school and joined the Better Reading Partnership, helping on a one-to-one basis with individual children who needed reading support. She has helped out in the Reception class and is now working as a Learning Support Assistant doing Special Needs at Standish High School.



Learning Support Assistant Karen Mitchell

Responses from Schools

"Parents have gained in confidence themselves and in their ability to help their children.....The children's literacy and numeracy have greatly improved.....The children continue to benefit from parental support. Two parents now run our Maths Games Library"

Suzanne Turner, St Thomas' CE Primary, Golborne

"Children looked forward to coming to school, enjoyed bringing homework in and brought things in from home which they had made/done at home....."

Several of our parents felt motivated to pursue their own learning on additional courses held in school or signing up for courses at Wigan and Leigh College"

Ann Roughley, St James' CE Primary, Worsley Mesnes

ACL Wigan and Leigh College First Steps Learning in Disadvantaged Communities

Since recently obtaining funding from Wigan LEA Adult and Community Learning, Wigan and Leigh College have been able to offer taster courses with progression routes onto College in the Community courses.

The taster courses are offered at various venues with progression to the Neighbourhood Learning Centres which are based in Dorset Road Enterprise Centre, Atherton; Platt Bridge Community Zone; and Norley Hall Community Centre in Wigan. The centres are offering the opportunity for residents in these disadvantaged communities to take the first step in returning to education and improving their employment prospects.

IT courses have taken place in Shevington, Hindley, Golborne and Atherton Libraries and the Ethnic Centre at Leigh with a total of 28 students. Seven of these students will be progressing onto New Start Computers Made Easy courses.

At Formby Avenue Family Centre in Atherton, a cake decoration course has taken place where 10 students, who are mostly single parents, completed the course and are now able to create novelty party cakes for their children's birthdays and special occasions.

A short, taster confidence building course took place at the Family Centre with 7 students attending who have all now progressed onto a New Start course held at Dorset Road Enterprise Centre.

Also at Dorset Road Enterprise Centre, 13 students from the Hag Fold Estate completed a taster Spanish course and 10 have now progressed onto a New Start Spanish course.

An Interior Design course is scheduled to start with a tutor who herself has attended a New Start Greetings Cards course. She came to this country with her husband as an asylum seeker and has just been granted permission to work.

A group of students have completed an Introduction to Beauty Therapy course at Platt Bridge and 2 are now waiting to begin a New Start course and have been to visit the Image Centre at Wigan and Leigh College to enquire about certified courses. Also at Platt Bridge a Mediterranean cookery course has just started with 7 students. Introduction to Spanish and Introduction to Confidence Building courses are due to commence soon.

The ACL taster courses are proving successful in attracting students and providing a stepping stone to moving on.