



## **Family Learning Case Studies in England -**

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## Adult Education Wolverhampton

### Introduction

The family learning provision in Wolverhampton is delivered in the nine areas of social and economic deprivation by Adult Education Wolverhampton (AEW) the adult learning service in Wolverhampton City Council. It is funded through its Adult Education Budget allocation and learner fees are not charged.

The research into family learning outcomes is focussed on the Wider Family Learning (WFL) and Family English, Maths and Language (FEML) programmes at Goldthorn Park Primary School, Wolverhampton. Many of the families who take part in the programmes are of Asian heritage. AES enrolled sixty families who were new arrivals to the UK in 2017/18. Progression and impact data about children and adults have been collected over a six year period.

### Outcomes and Progression

As the provision is funded through the Adult Education Budget, the standard data requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency apply for adult learners: recruitment, attendance, achievement and intended progression. The schools record the required data for the children's attainment including measures of distance travelled.

For adult learners, in addition to literacy, language and numeracy levels initial assessment includes assessment of softer skills such as confidence, communication and connection with the school. During the course RARPA is used to record progression. The learner's Unique Learner Number (ULN) is used to track progression from WFL into FEML and then on to accredited community learning courses. Some of the adults also join Talk English courses. Tracking outside of the organisation, such as to FE colleges is not done in a structured way currently but anecdotal evidence is collected through learner feedback. There are case studies of learners who started in WFL and have progressed through the range of AEW's programmes to Access to HE.

The data shows that in 2016/17, 50% of adults progressed from WFL to FEML and 18% progressed on to mainstream accredited programmes in the following year.

Records about children and families are kept by school staff to monitor families who engage in family learning and the number of courses they attend. Families often engage in a range of courses as their children progress through the school or as siblings start school. As well as the children's academic progress they also record



children's enjoyment of school life and confidence in taking part in activities. School data has shown that 70% of the families who take part in family learning programmes are above their Multi Agency Trust's (MAT) benchmark for engagement.

## Implications

The impact data over the years has been used to design and plan the programme. It has been found that the nursery and foundation stages are pivotal. The structure is that there is a deep focus at nursery and foundation stage including one-to-one support given to whole families if required (particularly regarding language support). School support continues in Key stage 1 and 2 but to a lesser extent. The traditional model of family learning classes is that they are led by a family learning tutor supported by a teaching assistant from the school staff. The curriculum content is closely matched to the school's curriculum, e.g. foundations for writing, fun with numbers.

AEW is now considering whether the impact on families who join the programme at the FEML level achieve the same levels of progression and achievement as those who join the programme at the nursery/foundation stage WFL. This is being considered using the current year's data.

## Challenges

The partnership relationship with the school is vital to ensure that data is collected and shared. This is challenged whenever there are changes at the school. Goldthorn Park Primary has recently joined an academy trust and has had two changes of headteacher. The value of the data is that it has been collected over a long period. AES are now delivering the same model in six other schools. A strong partnership and shared understanding with the school is needed to ensure practical support. For example, a teaching assistant is required to work with the children during the WFL sessions.

AEW has noticed a difference in the numbers of learners participating and the accurate collection of outcomes when they have staff dedicated to family learning. A few years ago, there wasn't a dedicated role for this curriculum area and numbers declined. However last year with the required staff in place the enrolments increased from 200 to more than 400 in one year. This was manageable in that there were more enrolments per course and new short Mini- Medics (family first aid) were added to the programme.

## Reporting

The data (quantitative and qualitative) is used for the annual self-assessment report. Celebrations are held in schools with certificate presentations at assemblies.



Enrichment trips (e.g. to Dudley Zoo) are seen as celebrations at the end of a course.

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## Community Learning West, Bristol

### Introduction

Community Learning West (CLW) is part of Bristol City Council working in partnership with Gloucester and North West Somerset to deliver adult community learning. From August 2019 it will become part of the West of England Combined Authority. In Bristol there are 2400 enrolments (1800 learners) per year on community learning pre-employability courses. 15% of the provision is family learning. This includes FEML, WFL and engagement activities such as first aid and arts and crafts. Accredited English and maths and vocational programmes such as customer care are delivered through a formula funded AEB programme. The traditional Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) leisure courses are delivered separately and are self-financing. In 2005 the LSC contract with Bristol City Council was reorganised so that it is highly targeted on engagement and progression of learners with qualifications below Level 2. Progression to other providers including three local FE colleges is a priority. This is linked to Bristol's status as a Learning City although it was in place beforehand.

Courses are delivered in 100 community venues including schools. The systems for tracking and recording of progression and outcomes are used across all provision and is not specific to family learning.

Family learning is delivered through partnerships with children's centres and schools. The partnerships with children's centres are strong with shared costs (e.g. creche) joint planning, data reports and reinforced with service level agreements. The priorities for both organisations are linked. For example, to tackle issues about poverty the children's centres distribute weekly food bags and the family learning team deliver courses about healthy eating on a budget.

### Progression outcomes

For ESFA the required fields on the ILR are completed. Progression is recorded as intended destination at the end of the course but through a data sharing agreement



to data match using Unique Learner Numbers (ULN) with FE colleges, CLW can accurately record the progression onto FE, usually in the following academic year.

CLW also collects wider outcomes and reports to Bristol City Council and South West Skills and Learning. There are council KPIs relating to recruitment, progression rates, income generated and digital engagement.

CLW does not routinely collect data relating to children. For some family learning projects children's ILRs have been completed but they are not analysed. Schools are surveyed occasionally to find out about parent's engagement in schools after family learning courses but this is not systematic.

### Additional data and intelligence

CLW collect wider impact data through an additional questionnaire. This includes questions related to poverty e.g. Has your income increased since you joined a course?

The questions include:

- Ambition
- Social skills/ friendship
- Healthy lifestyle
- Problem solving
- Using IT
- Community involvement
- Housing (particularly for specific programmes for those who are vulnerably housed)

The data is collected approximately six weeks after the end of the course through email and post. The response rate is 22%. Recently a fast SMS message has been used. This resulted in a 79% response rate, but the amount of data is very limited because it is single line text message.

Recently CLW has changed the way the data is reported, separating out those who do not respond. In 2017/18 60% of those who responded had a positive progression to further learning. Case studies are also collected.

Data is shared with South West Skills and Learning.

### The implications of collecting additional material

#### Management:

The data is used extensively by management to plan and review provision. Comparisons are made between courses to consider the progression rates. The impact on target groups is a priority. Data is benchmarked through South West Skills and Learning (12 providers)

#### Staff time:



Development workers (6 FTE) work in their own geographical area and have targets to reach for progression as well as recruitment are very active in collecting progression and outcomes information from learners. They take personal pride in achieving high rates of progression from their provision. (These staff members have a lot of autonomy and allocated budgets). Tutors are also active in collecting outcome evidence through ILPs and promoting access to IAG services.

Administration staff are responsible for the follow up surveys

**Cost:**

The collection of data is considered as part of the quality system and is a responsibility for all staff therefore the staff time involved in collection and input is seen as a necessity and not as an additional cost.

## The challenges of collecting information

Whilst having data sharing protocols with other providers are advantageous in collecting information, there are challenges in getting the protocols in places with all providers. Some providers are very competitive and can be predatory. Partnership agreements can help to alleviate this and need to be reinforced by funders.

CLW would like to do a longitudinal study of family learning learners because they know that some of the progression outcomes such as employment take several years to achieve. Progression isn't always linear. This was done for the FLIF programmes several years ago but there isn't the capacity (or obligation) to do this now.

There was a suggestion/question about whether ULN data could be used by ESFA or government departments to evidence progression into employment.

## Sharing outcomes

The data is used for the self-assessment report and the Bristol City annual report. This includes infographics. There are annual celebration events and awards given to groups. Schools hold their own celebration events. Outcomes are also celebrated on Facebook and on the service's website.

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## Inspire Culture Nottinghamshire

### Introduction

Inspire Culture delivers Nottinghamshire County Council's adult community learning provision as part of a wider "arms-length" organisation that provides library, archives, arts and youth culture across the county. Family Learning is an integral part of its community learning strand and is delivered in schools, libraries, children's centres and other community venues. Courses are offered in family maths and English as well as wider family learning including first aid, crafts, internet safety and music making. Over the last three years the service has redesigned its provision moving from a fully sub-contracted model to a position in 2019/20 where 80% of the provision will be directly delivered and 20% will be sub-contracted to colleges and third sector providers.

In 2017 the service achieved a "Good" rating in its Ofsted inspection. Systems for collecting learner feedback are well established. In 2018 96% of their learners stated that they would recommend Inspire Culture as an education provider.

### What is currently required to be captured on progression outcomes for family learning?

ESFA require intended destination data for all learners including those on family learning courses. This data is collected at the end of the course. The Individualised Learner Record (ILR) still requires learners to be allocated to Family English, Maths and Language (FEML) and Wider Family Learning (WFL) even though funding has not been specifically allocated to these specific activities. The same data is collected about all learners on community learning provision.

Inspire Culture does not collect any outcomes data for children on family learning courses.

### What additional data and intelligence do you collect?

A paper based learner survey has been used for evaluation purposes. This is focussed on the quality of teaching, accommodation, information, advice and guidance rather than progression after the course but indirectly it does capture some destination data. In 2019/20 there are plans to replace this survey with an online survey (such as Survey Monkey) which learners will be able to complete on their mobile phones, tablets or computers. This will include questions about impact and progression.

Since the 2015/2016 academic year, Inspire Culture have commissioned J2 Research to conduct a post course survey of learners in the period November to



February in the following academic year. This records actual destination and learners' views on the impact of the course on their progression. This survey has

been done for three consecutive years using the same questions. The sample size is one thousand learners (10% of the total learner population) and so the evidence is substantial. Learners on family learning courses are included in the sample and their data can be isolated from the complete data set.

Inspire Culture take part in a local authority adult community learning data benchmarking exercise which is led by Lincolnshire County Council. In 2017/18 there were 38 providers included. The data relating to family learning can be isolated but whilst it captures success rates it does not include progression outcomes.

Case studies of individual learners are collected but they are used mostly for marketing and promotion.

### **What are the implications of collecting additional material?**

**Leadership** – It is important to get commitment from tutors to collect the information as they have the most influence with learners. Inspire Culture have been encouraging tutors by demonstrating the benefits. When the new online end of course survey is implemented the lead tutors will be asked to do the analysis of the responses so that they can access and use the data to inform their own practice. They will be able to use the data to inform their reports to the council's Star Chamber (performance review) and the annual Self-Assessment Report.

**Staff time** – The commissioning of J2 Research to do the post course survey reduces amount of time required by Inspire Culture staff. The MIS team create the sample of learners for J2 to contact but this is not an onerous task.

**IT support** – the service's IT team will set up and implement the new online survey which will reduce the amount of administration staff time required to produce paper based surveys and inputting the responses.

### **What are the challenges of collecting information?**

**Follow up and time lag** – Inspire Culture has arrangements in place for follow up by using J2 Research to contact learners by telephone approximately six months after the end of the academic year. The challenge is to justify the cost involved as any funding spent on creating evidence is not spent on teaching and learning. Inspire Culture feel that the amount they spend is reasonable proportion of their total funding.

The intended destination data is compared with the post course survey data as it is acknowledged that many of the outcomes for learners (e.g. employment, promotion at work) may not be achieved immediately.



## How do you publish, share, celebrate the outcomes?

The summaries of the data reports are used by the management team to inform the annual Self- Assessment Report. Individual case studies are used to nominate learners for the Inspire Awards (e.g. learner of the year) that are presented at an Awards Evening event annually. They have also been used to support the organisation's entries for awards such as the national FE awards.

Case studies and photographs of learners are used in marketing and publicity material.

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Report taken from interview Ian Bond and Andy Ashley at Eastbourne House, Notts

## Northamptonshire County Council

### Introduction

The adult learning team at Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) offer a wide variety of ESFA funded courses. Family Learning is part of an extensive community learning programme. Most of the provision is non-accredited but some learners achieve accreditation in maths and English. Courses are offered in schools, children's centres and community venues and are targeted towards adults without level 2 qualifications.

### Achievement and Progression

As the provision is funded by ESFA, a learner's achievement (usually evidenced through RARPA) and intended destination is recorded on the Individualised Learner Record. Accreditation in maths and English are also recorded for those learners on Family English, Maths and Language (FEML) courses.

NCC is required to provide reports for its Board of Governors. The board was established in 2017. The members are local councillors, a public health consultant and other council officers. Reports include recruitment, retention and achievement in

addition to progress and outcomes. Data is also recorded about the number of learners who receive information, advice and guidance from the National Careers Service.

NCC participate in the FLLAG outcomes survey, including the 2018/19 pilot wider outcomes survey. An external company is used to collect outcomes and destination data from 1200 learners annually (including 200 family learning learners) Two



companies, J2 Research and Welfare Call, have been procured to do this task. The questions asked are not consistent so it is difficult to make comparisons between years. The questions are mostly focussed on employment and so the family learning team need to do their own survey in order to capture other outcomes. The data is used for the annual Self-Assessment Report and the reports to governors. NCC also collect learner reviews, tutor reviews and case studies. Data about the children on family learning courses is not collected.

### Implications

The information gathered is used to inform staff development and programme planning. For example, as part of the digital skills strategy the progression from family learning into digital skills courses is recorded. This in turn informs curriculum development. In 2018/19 the family learning programme has included Social Media for Families, E-Safety, and Essential Digital Skills. PCDL funding has been ring-fenced to provide free progression courses for those who have been on family learning courses. The council's e-safety officer assists with staff development in schools to support this area of development. The data is shared as appropriate with other professional staff including schools and social services staff who refer parents from families at risk to family learning.

### Challenges

Time and cost are the major considerations. In addition to cost of procuring the external company, NCC staff are paid to make phone calls and tutors are paid additional hours to complete the FLLAG survey. The Management Information System team are allocated additional time to input data and create the required fields within the system to record the data collected.

IT support is essential to carry out the surveys online. This can be difficult in community venues where there isn't easy access to wi-fi. The use of paper based surveys is slow and inputting is time consuming.

Collecting data after the end of the course can be problematic as learners don't respond, change their address and/or contact information.

### Celebration

NCC holds certificate presentation events. Case studies and data are included in staff bulletins to share good practice. Quotes from learners are used in marketing material.

### Additional comments

NCC know that family learning has a positive impact on adults and children but find it hard to get the evidence to prove it. They would like to persuade schools to share their evidence about the impact family learning has on the progression of the



children who take part. The closure of some children's centres has had a negative impact on the amount of family learning that is offered.

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## Surrey County Council Family Learning

### Summary

Surrey County Council run a range of family learning provision across the county through Surrey Adult Learning. Course delivery varies from courses where adults learn skills that can be transferred into the family home, where adults and children learn together, or where adults and children learn in parallel with separate tutors. Most courses are informal, but there is also a small range of accredited provision. The majority of courses are 'short' and run for 5 weeks (10 hours). All courses are delivered locally, either in children's centres, schools or community centres. Courses include parenting programmes; 'Getting ready for Nursery or Primary School'; 'Story and Craft Sessions'; 'Keeping up with the children in English'; 'Keeping up with the children in Maths'; 'English as an Additional Language (EAL) for families'. They are funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

### About the Provision

**Strong referral mechanisms and targeted provision:** Adult learners are usually referred through local children's centres and schools, or less commonly through early help services. These local partnerships allow Surrey County Council to capture the attention of potential learners, who would be unlikely to directly approach the adult learning centre directly – for example those with low confidence, negative experiences of learning or those who don't live near an adult learning centre.

**Ensuring targeted, relevant provision:** Working in partnership with children's centres, schools and community centres, ensures that local knowledge about learner needs and skills gaps can be shared with Surrey County Council, as well as targeted marketing and referrals to specific courses. There have been some instances where children's centres have requested a particular course to be run, and Surrey County Council have provided the specific provision or, if necessary, created a new course.

**Engagement and progression programmes:** Surrey County Council run two types of programmes – wider family learning courses, and English, maths and EAL courses. The wider family learning courses act as engagement programmes or 'hooks' to engage parents in learning and encourage progression to English, maths



and language courses. In 2017/18, the most popular programmes among delivery partners were 'Early Years' (including parenting), maths and English.

## Impact

As well as skills developed directly through the learning provision, all of the courses produce wider outcomes such as improvements in employability skills, wellbeing and family relationships.

Surrey County Council collect data on wider outcomes, including employment, social participation, skills for work, and soft skills such as confidence and problem solving. Data on these are collected via a 'wider outcomes survey'. The survey was developed through a seminar with NIACE, using their [wider outcomes planning and capturing tool](#)<sup>1</sup>, and is disseminated to everyone who has attended more than 11+ hours of learning.

The survey was first launched in 2015. To date, it has used a full 5-point Likert scale, but tutor feedback suggests that this is too confusing, particularly for those with ESOL needs. As a result, this will be changed going forwards to a three-point scale, using agree, disagree and not sure. To increase the sample size in 2018/19, the survey will be included in the Individual Learning Plan and collected for all learners attending a 10 hours + course.

In 2017/18, 30 learners completed the survey. All 30 learners reported that they felt more positive as a parent, and the majority felt they did more with their family because of the course. Learners also reported gaining a sense of community from the course, and 93% reported making friends through it. One learner explained how the parent learners had begun to socialise outside of the course:

*"Now we know a little bit more each other - other mums that have children at the same nursery, similar age - and we can talk, meet and go [out] with our children together. We formed a lovely group."*

Additionally, 90% of learners felt more motivated to get a job or to volunteer, and all learners felt motivated to participate in further learning.

Surrey County Council also collect data on destinations and progression. In 2017/18, 17.5% of their 1,060 learners progressed from wider family learning into family English, maths and EAL. Destination data, collected from 823 learners in 2017/18,

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/NIACE\\_Wider\\_outcomes\\_guidance\\_doc.pdf](https://www.learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/NIACE_Wider_outcomes_guidance_doc.pdf)

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 Scotland's Learning Partnership

shows that 20% of learners continued in education after the course – either through a course with another provider, continuing learning with Surrey Adult Learning, or entering full time education. A further 3% progressed at work or found employment.

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