



Winter 2009

Family Learning Newsletter

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Contact Us

Catriona Kelly
Family Learning Manager
☎0116 252 6622/07989 018846
✉ Catriona.Kelly@Leicester.gov.uk

Alison Greet
Family Learning Co-ordinator
☎0116 229 4353/07817 545384
✉ Alison.Greet@Leicester.gov.uk

Bubbly Chana - 07976 348 204
Kerry Mattock - 07976 347 341
Melissa Frater - 07976 347 342
Family Learning Lead Tutors
☎0116 229 4304/4303
✉ Sukhdeep.Chana@Leicester.gov.uk
✉ Kerry.Mattock@Leicester.gov.uk
✉ Melissa.Frater@Leicester.gov.uk

Shaaeda Qureshi
Family Learning Data, Finance Admin
Assistant
☎0116 252 6570
✉ Shaaeda.Qureshi@Leicester.gov.uk

✉ **Family Learning Team**
Adult Skills & Learning Service
Leicester City Council
New Walk Centre - A1
Welford Road
Leicester
LE1 6ZG

Dear All

Family Learning Local Authority Group - Leicester Conference

This month Leicester hosted a conference of Family Learning Managers from across the country. Twice a year managers gather to learn from the success of others, share innovative practice and discuss new developments. High on our agenda this year was meeting the requirements of the new OfSTED framework and sustainability.

The outcome of such conferences is always an exciting injection of new ideas and different ways of working. We showcased some of the work we do locally and will develop some new approaches to delivering Family Learning in the New Year.

Catriona Kelly



OfSTED

The new OfSTED framework is in place, as we are all aware. We are working hard to make sure that our activity contributes to your organisation's strategic aims. We will ensure that we are recording your partnership working with us and share our results with you.

Introducing our new team members ...

As part of the growth in Family Learning we have a new management team. Alison Greet is still Family Learning Co-ordinator, and she is now assisted by three Lead Tutors, Bubbly Chana, Melissa Frater and our newest member Kerry Mattock. Each has their own specialist expertise - we make a very strong team! Please do not hesitate to contact one of the team if you would like to discuss putting on courses in your school/setting.

← Please note our new address!

Learn
Together



Achieve
Together



Leicester
City Council

Family Learning Festival 2009

This year's Family Learning Festival was a great success. We chose two topics to focus on and organised a range of family activities for each with over a hundred families trying out new learning ideas. We are hoping that some of them may decide to take up the challenge and join a longer Family Learning course soon.



Joining forces with the Library Service, we decided to tackle the final frontier - Space!

- Workshops were held in libraries across the city during the half term week, where families made models of space ships and listened to some great 'alien' and 'space' stories told by professional storytellers.
- Two schools took this further, by inviting families to come into school to build models of spacecraft. At the end of this event, we invited the families to come to the National Space Centre for an afternoon, where they had the chance to attend a production in the space theatre, attend a rocket making workshop and spend some time exploring the many areas of the Space Centre.



Groundworks were our other partner for the Family Learning Festival period. Working in Children's Centres, we ran a series of workshops on growing food, teaching children and their parents how to grow cress and a variety of sprouting vegetables. Groundworks are a new partner for us; we hope that this relationship will develop and we will be able to work together with them on more sustainability projects in the future.

The Family Learning Festival was first started by the Campaign for Learning. They are now championing more informal learning, and this year promoted the Government's Festival of Learning. Of course we took part! Some interesting adult only events took place - watch out for more informal learning opportunities.

Family Science

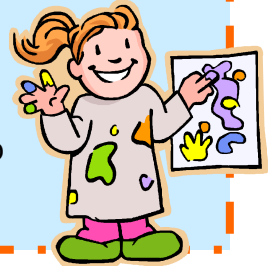
We are always keen to try out new ideas and extend our repertoire of Family Learning courses. I hope that you all received your copy of our new Curriculum Manual in September (and if you didn't, please let us know - we'll send you a new copy). To add to this we are now offering a Family Science course. This will be tailored to meet the needs of children of all key stages, and will include activities that stimulate interest in science in both children and their 'adults'. The session will involve a range of activities, experiments and kinaesthetic learning, and we are keen to take families outside to explore the science of their local environment.



New Family Arts Courses

We have recently recruited a number of new tutors who are specialists in the arts. They will be able to offer a wide range of family arts including ceramics, textiles and water colours. We are confident that these will appeal to older children, and will provide a new edge to the Family Learning curriculum. Arts projects increase confidence and self-esteem, and can be very effective as part of a broader strategy to cement social cohesion.

Do you have a project that you would like to pursue involving your families in a creative process? Let us know - we will try our hardest to work with you to make it happen.



Sustainable Schools

Family Health - Some courses to choose from:

Grow your own Grub

A short course looking at container growing, potatoes in a sack, salad leaves on the window sill, herbs and how to cook the food when it's grown. This course will also consider some of the savings that can be made by using home grown ingredients.



Feed your Family for a Fiver

A challenge! In this new course we will be exploring cheap ways to provide a healthy diet for the whole family. It will delve into some of the pitfalls to avoid when doing the family shop, and help families to maximise their resources without cutting back on the essentials children need to grow and develop well.



Paediatric First Aid

This course is extremely popular and can be delivered just for adults, or for adults alongside their older children. The first aid certificate is delivered by an expert and the rest of the course can consider safety in the home, safe Internet usage, smoke alarms, stress management or any other aspects of family health.



These health related courses are free, adapted to the needs of the families involved and are a lot of fun (imagine applying fake wounds, complete with ketchup, for another learner to bandage appropriately!). If you think your families would be interested, please give us a call.

The Family Learning Portfolio

We have 3 strands of funding:

Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy - courses for parents and carers to learn about how their children are being taught in school, and learning how to support their children's learning, while developing their own skills. These courses are targeted at families where the adults do not have formal qualifications.

Courses include:

- Early Start
- Playing with Language
- Family Literacy
- Family Numeracy
- Family ESOL
- Keeping up with the Children

Wider Family Learning - courses that are about mothers and fathers learning new skills alongside their children. These courses cover a wide spectrum - anything from cooking, gardening, arts, sports, languages, IT and health - the possibilities are endless! These courses are mostly delivered in disadvantaged communities.

Family Learning Impact Funding - courses for families at risk; those experiencing complex or multiple problems. These courses are targeted at families where the adults do not have formal qualifications or are particularly vulnerable.

Courses include:

- Early Years in the Foundation Stage
- Magic Maths
- Manage your Money
- Family Health
- Living with Teenagers

In addition to the above, we also run a project that aims to support parents who are struggling to manage their children's behaviour. The **Respect Parenting Project** identifies and trains parents who have learnt to overcome difficulty and have first hand experience of managing their children in difficult circumstances. These volunteers are then matched with a family that needs some 1:1 buddying support. This is a great 'befriending' process and provides an excellent stepping stone for parents who are growing in confidence. Previous volunteers have successfully supported a number of families and have gone on to become TAs in school, become workers in children's centres and have gone into further/higher education.