

**Skills for Independent Living
5.30pm to 7pm Monday 2 April 2007
Boughton Pumping Station**

Present were:

Karen Meeks
Eve Edwards
Paulette Billson-West
Maggie Hall
Liz Barrett
Teresa Randon
Sandra Bonser
Barbara Ward
Ken Mead
Charlotte Hillier
Susie Chambers
Elaine Parry-Crick

Apologies:

Jill Bewick
Frances McLoughlin
Jane Davey
Elaine Clarke
Judy Fearn
Louise Ashley
Nikki Potts
Sarah Hampton
Andrew Bruce
Matt Keeling
Andy Ashley

1. Welcome

Elaine welcomed all to the meeting. All tutors reminded to sign in. All of the group introduced themselves.

Minutes from December meeting

Were circulated to the group and would be addressed throughout the meeting. Elaine apologised for not sharing them prior to the meeting.

Elaine thanked all for attending and distributed quiz sheets to the group explaining that the answers would form the agenda for the day. All tutors completed the quiz sheet to hope that the meeting be interactive rather than EPC led!

Liz fed back to the group that a tutor at Sutton Centre had commented on the OTL form – that it did not have apostrophes in the correct place. **Action: EPC to feed to AA**

- a. **Housekeeping** – completed for the session
- b. All tutors **signed** in on the form to update changes of circumstances

2. Curriculum strategy – contributions offered from tutors for the answers. It was acknowledged that learners, tutors, ACLS including curriculum leaders set the curriculum strategy. Tutors were asked to let EPC have ideas for the strategy by end of May as estimated time Andy Ashley needs the comments in for.

Action: EPC and Susie will double check timescales and feedback to group.

EPC informed the tutors about the ACLS newsletter and distributed them to the group. Karen, Charlotte and Sandra have not received it through email. (Sandra is not on email).

Action: Elaine with check with AA or Alan Clark to see if ACLS has the details of the group.

3. Tracking Progress and Development

EPC asked about tracking progress and achievements of learners. How is it done? Charlotte spoke about the progress of her learners who are tracked week by week during the course.

Paulette spoke about an example where the progression route had been put into place to respond to interests identified during a course. An example was given from a cookery course where the learners' needs and interests had informed progression routes identifying a passion for a pastry and or oriental cooking. In this way learners owned the process.

Another example was given from the sugar craft course at Sutton Centre where learners are encouraged to express what courses they would and wouldn't like to do next.

Following a learner completing a programme Barbara spoke about an OCN progression route being available for sugar craft and acknowledged some people do not want a qualification from courses that they attend.

Charlotte explained about the value of tutor's ability to spot a learner's flair and potential. Liz expressed her views about how valuable an overview and longer term view of 'progression options' will be for Skills for Independent Living learners. Barbara expressed concerns about this lack of overview in terms of investing in resources for progression routes.

Charlotte suggested longer courses may help alleviate this problem. Liz explained that she is still waiting for further details of funding in order to assist planning for Skills for Independent Living provision. Liz explained funding for fifty weeks of the year would be helpful and about the drop in 'learning curve' through the breaks in the course. Eve asserted that this is particularly problematic in the case of physical activity exercises. An issue was also raised about breaks in provision in venues such as Sherwood House where learners do not necessarily have patterns of learning hours (e.g. Easter holidays etc) the same as other providers.

Andy and other tutors confirmed they had completed Joint Working following the previous curriculum team meeting which had worked well.

4. Events

a) Elaine reminded the group to let ACLS and all other tutors where possible about events that might be happening to celebrate achievements

b) Elaine reminded people of the Learner nominations for 24th May.

A tutor confirmed from Sutton Centre that she had nominated a learner for Adult Learner Week Award. Elaine told the group that the deadline for the nominations was 5pm that day but encouraged tutors to submit a nomination as if they had not known about the deadline.

Liz confirmed that they had completed NIACE Adult Learner Week nominations but was disappointed to hear that none were successful. LB explained that Alan Clark had suggested doing a covering letter for future nominations.

c) Elaine talked about the dates of the next tutor conference in September. Tutors fed back that the conferences last time held at Centre Parcs was a great venue and a great incentive to attend!

d) There was a discussion about sharing a good practice during the morning or afternoon to be held possibly at the Sutton Centre on Friday 8 June. It was thought by the group to be a great way of tutors getting to know each other (support) and to share good practice and to see it in action!

Action: EPC will speak with ALCS and Liz to see about the costs and approval. EPC to email the group with the decisions made.

5. Observation of teaching and learning

a) Elaine told the group about the plan to use paired observations in the future as well as individual observations.

b) Elaine reminded the group that the criteria for observations are on the ACLS website. All those expecting an ACLS observation or classroom visit could remind themselves of the standards to be met by reading the information on the site.

c) Individual Learning Plans

The draft of the ILP was circulated to tutors. Liz said that they had looked again at the ILPs and had revised the ILP for Skills for Independent Living. They had got the go ahead to use them on a trial basis with Andy Ashley. The advantages for using the new form for Skills for Ind Living were that it included spaces for photos and drawings.

Charlotte suggested learners could be consulted on the use of the ILP. EPC confirmed that there will be Learner Focus Groups for learners in Area of Learning 14 at 10.30am to 2.30pm on **Friday 22 June** at the Brownsea Centre at Kirkby and also on the **29th of June** at Ruddington Knitting Museum. EPC confirmed that learners are consulted on improvements in Learner Focus Groups. EPC suggested that 5 learners from Sutton Centre should attend to balance the views heard.

Action: Liz to nominate and feed names to EPC

Barbara confirmed learners who had previously been very negative about paperwork (including the ILPs) are much more positive!

Eve scribes for her learners on the ILP as the majority of learners do not have the writing skills to complete the form. Eve said she had tried using a dictaphone - which almost caused learners to panic, and that somebody still had to transcribe it! The same was true about the completion of the learners evaluation form. Eve confirmed that the use of the dictaphone was appropriate for an end of course evaluation.

Liz said that she had tried to access video recorders and DVDs was told that they were not available. Funding for equipment shared for skills for independent living tutors as a joint film to record achievements was desirable. Learners would enjoy watching themselves achieving on video and it was even suggested learners would prefer the video/DVD to a certificate!

Alan Clark had watched a video from Sutton Centre, it was reported by Liz that he had been very complimentary of it. It was suggested that Alan be approached to seek support for the film project. Eve explained the value of a film to demonstrate to other providers what learners can achieve with support and also encourage new providers to approach ACLS for funding to widen the learning provision.

Action: Elaine to contact Alan to ask about the possibility of making anew film about learners' achievements on courses as a promotional film. Often some learners cannot get the experience – it could replace the 'taster sessions' and could assist as a tool to reach the hard to reach learners perhaps with complex needs.

d) Information Advice and Guidance (IAG).

Elaine distributed an a2e IAG booklet to the group and all had the opportunity to comment.

Elaine told the group that she has been distributing IAG booklets to as many Skills for Independent Living tutors as possible. This is an area that all tutors could improve on in Area of Learning 14. She demonstrated how the booklets are currently used on courses run by a2e.

Elaine also explained that realistic information, advice and guidance (IAG) is important to learners and their carers as to what is achievable and available.

e) Charlotte confirmed that she found it helpful to give examples of good practice to share and to practice and to see in action. Elaine invited all tutors to share examples of good practice used or observed including assessments and ongoing assessments:-

- Liz spoke energetically and enthusiastically about Skills for Independent Living Week Celebration Event and how all learners had enjoyed it!
- Maggie spoke about the value of sharing ideas with each other.
- Paulette spoke about taking learning outside the classroom through to the community and shops at the Idlewells shopping centre. How this had taken learning into reality!

- Karen spoke of the value in asking learners what kind of session they would like to do and how they then 'own it'.
- Eve noted the synergy between learners which is an encouragement for learners to improve particularly through small group discussions and modified activities.
- Barbara agreed with Eve and added that some learners prefer to work in groups where others prefer to work with individual support. Similarly, with a 'Healthy Eating Course' Barbara was successful in encouraging learners to try new foods!
- Liz confirmed although photos had been taken learners of the Event, signatures had not been obtained from all learners for their pictures to be shared through ACLS. Therefore the pictures will be displayed instead at the Sutton Centre.
- Liz had already had their first social event at the Shires for people to get to know one another and about how they are getting on with their work.
- Ken shared that it had been a boost for learners self esteem and confidence to connect better with the tutors and other visitors. Adding, that he had worked with a group to create invitations using IT.
- Teresa explained that the learners on a2e courses had used typed sticky labels in an exercise which had been a great help to people who found it hard to write questions. The exercise had proved very enjoyable for people to peel them off the card and used them in their own work in their books/folders.
- Charlotte explained that she had used tea towels to cover items on a tray of equipment on a course. The learners had to try to recall what is under the towel and to say what the names of the pieces of equipment are. It is used with Health and Safety in mind! But works well as an opening exercise

f) Classroom rules

Elaine reminded tutors to make sure that classroom rules are clearly displayed in classrooms for learners. They also act as a good reminder for tutors of previous agreements.

g) Venues

EPC asked the group to ensure that the room that they use are DDA compliant. She also reminded the group to display the rules for the sessions on the walls in order that they could be seen and owned by the learners.

h) Risk assessments

Elaine reminded group of the need to complete tutor risk assessment forms and Health and Safety forms for courses that are delivered. The group were told that the forms are available off the website with explanations as to how to complete them. The group were reminded to keep copies of the forms in the tutor folders for inspection too.

6. Equality and Diversity

No issues arising from the group. No issues to be passed to the E and D group.

7. Quality Improvement Group

Elaine explained about the Quality Improvement Plan and confirmed that the plan is available on the ACLS website. Quality Improvement Plans and the formation of the Quality Improvement Group were also explained.

8. Any other business

Elaine showed the group an idea using pictures and dice for use as an opening exercise with people with mental health needs or learning disabilities. She talked to the group about how it could be used to bring out literacy and numeracy skills and to identify support needs. It could also act as a reminder of the ACLS induction process with fun too! All tutors were given packs of the 'game'.

All were thanked for attending and given prizes of sweets and chocolate for their quiz answers!

Date and time for next meeting: Monday 25th June at 5.30pm to 7pm at the Boughton Pumping Station (Blackburn House)

Meeting concluded: 7.15pm