

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 19 October 2016**

**Subject: The Leeds Adult Learning Programme**

Are specific electoral wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. Through the Adult Learning Programme the Council provides a broad range of learning to over 7,000 adults each year that brings together adults, often of different ages and backgrounds to address a learning need, acquire a new skill, become healthier, pursue an interest or learn how to support their children. The programme aims to widen participation, build stronger communities and challenge disadvantage through learning.
2. The programme activity set out in this report contributes to the Best Council Plan 2016-17 priorities around supporting economic growth and access to economic opportunities, supporting communities and raising aspirations, providing skills programmes and access to employment opportunities. The programme also supports the achievement of the Council's ambitions to build a Child Friendly City by helping to improve the progression and achievement of children at school.
3. Government plans to devolve the Adult Education Budget to local areas from 2018/19 provides the opportunity to work collaboratively with stakeholders to further review and develop the city's Adult Learning offer to more effectively re-engage adults on the margins of the labour market and develop skills progression pathways.

**Recommendation**

- 4 Executive Board is asked to
  - i) note the current programme offer and its contribution to the achievement of Council objectives
  - ii) support the planned approach to developing a placed based approach to adult skills with local stakeholders under the proposed devolved funding arrangements.

iii) note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Project and Programmes, Employment and Skills.

## **1. Purpose of this report**

1.1 This report outlines the delivery plans for the Council's Adult Learning programme for the 2016/17 academic year and summarises the achievements to date. The report also sets out the potential future changes as part of the proposals to devolve the Adult Education Budget to local areas and the planned work to respond to this to ensure that all citizens can continue to access provision and achieve positive outcomes.

## **2. Background information**

2.1 Learning and skills are essential to building a sustainable and inclusive economy and society. Learning can help build stronger families and communities by bringing people together to foster tolerance; overcome isolation and increase resilience; and support participation in volunteering and social action. Learning supports a stronger economy by enabling people to enter the labour market and retain employment as the nature of work changes.

2.2 The proportion of the resident population aged 16-64 in Leeds qualified to NVQ level 4 is 33%, 4 percentage points behind the national average. The proportion of residents qualified at levels 1, 2 and 3 has improved and reads across to the national average but those with no qualifications has increased to 8.8% and is above the national average of 8.6% (ONS Annual Population survey January-December 2015). Those residents with the lowest or no qualifications live in those localities in the city that have long-standing challenges of disadvantage and deprivation. Many of them face a complex and inter-related set of barriers to labour market entry – such as poor housing, language and literacy skills, ill-health, care responsibilities.

2.3 The City Council is contracted as the local fund manager by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to deliver a broad and balanced programme of adult learning in Leeds, previously known as the Community Learning Programme. Adult Learning is primarily aimed at the re-engagement of adults aged 19 years plus (25 years plus for those learners with a Learning Difficulty or Disability LLDD) with learning in an informal and safe environment to acquire new learning, skills and interests for the benefit of the individual, their family and their wider community networks. Adult Learning aims to provide a progression gateway to more formal adult learning, social mobility and longer term employability opportunities.

2.4 The Council's programme of adult learning aims to:-

- Re-engage people who are marginalised and least likely to participate in learning, including workless adults, people on low incomes with low skills and those who did not achieve at school or disengaged from learning at school
- Provide a broad range of learning that brings together adults, often of different ages and backgrounds to address a need, acquire a new skill, become healthier, pursue an interest or learn how to support their children
- Maximise access to entry level learning for adults, bringing new opportunities to improve lives, whatever people's circumstances

- Promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement and
- Maximise the positive impact on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities.

### 3. Main issues

#### 3.1 Current provision

- 3.1.1 The SFA awarded £2.1m to Leeds for delivery in the 2016-17 academic year and the programme is expected to support up to 8,000 learners at over 200 venues across Leeds including community centres and Community Hubs.
- 3.1.2 The 2016/17 Adult Learning Programme will offer a range of activities delivered under the following themes:
- **Personal and Community Development Learning** – for personal and community development, cultural enrichment, intellectual or creative stimulation and enjoyment. This does not usually involve any formal qualifications. This provision will have a stronger focus on digital inclusion in line with Council priorities.
  - **Family English, Maths and Language** – aimed at mothers, fathers and carers and designed to improve English, Maths and language skills in families.
  - **Wider Family Learning** – supports different generations of family members to learn together to support children’s learning and development.
  - **Skills for Jobs** – aimed at adults aged 19 and over, with low skills levels, who are not currently in employment but want to work. It offers tailored support and where possible, will be aligned with other services and programmes to support progression to employment.
  - **Targeted Learning Projects** - for learners who have multiple and or complex needs and barriers to engagement e.g. recovering from drug abuse, at risk of offending, socially isolated etc. This provision also supports activities that are innovative and delivers added value to the wider programme e.g. includes a work placement or residential element and or delivers high levels of individual support.
  - **Mental Health** – this year will focus on embedding the pilot that began in 2015-16 as a Targeted Learning Project. This includes facilitating greater collaboration between mental health treatment organisations and learning providers and establishing referral pathways for learners with mild to moderate mental health conditions such as anxiety or depression.
  - **Accredited Learning** –supporting learners to achieve eligible qualifications as defined by the Skills Funding Agency e.g. level 1 and level 2 ICT, English and Maths courses and create opportunities for individuals to progress into employment including Apprenticeships.
- 3.1.3 Courses are offered across a range of subject areas primarily at entry level and level 1 and include English; English as a second or other language (ESOL); Maths and Science; Employability Skills, Computing and Digital; Arts and Design; Health and Well-being; Childcare and Family Learning; Business and Administration; and Retail and Customer Service. The full range of courses can be viewed on the Council’s website under Learning Opportunities  
<http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/Learning-Opportunities.aspx>

- 3.1.4 The delivery of the programme is commissioned from 22 providers. The majority of providers are third sector organisations that have strong networks within local communities but also includes two of the largest providers of adult and community learning in the city, Leeds City College and Swarthmore. A proportion of Family Learning is delivered in-house and managed through the Employment and Skills Service.
- 3.1.5 Courses delivered under the programme can be accessed by all residents in Leeds over the age of 19 years. Course specifically for learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities are fee exempt and residents in receipt of income related state benefits are exempt from course fees. Reduced fees are applied to learners in receipt of state pension. Learners not eligible for exemption or reduced fees are required to pay £3.00 for each guided learning hour. Any fee income generated is reinvested in provision.

## **3.2 Performance outcomes and quality**

- 3.2.1 Programme performance is monitored and measured through data collated from individual learner records and observing sessions, speaking to learners and staff, checking tutors' planning documentation. This supports the planning of provision to ensure that the programme is effectively targeted to meet need and supports continuous improvement to the quality of teaching and outcomes for learners, that is how well learners achieve, the skills they develop, whether they progress onto further vocational training and higher level courses and employment.
- 3.2.2 The programme is targeted to both disadvantaged individuals and areas. Several providers target particular disadvantaged groups e.g. learners with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities or adults recovering from substance misuse. The majority of the programme is targeted to people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods with a focus on the 20% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). Appendix 1 shows the location of learners participating in the programme mapped against the areas with the highest levels of Jobseeker Allowance claims as a measure of deprivation.
- 3.2.3 Appendix 2 shows the numbers of learners accessing provision and completing accredited and non-accredited training by ward in the 2015/16 academic year. Providers achieved a learner retention rate of 94.8% and the achievement rate for learners completing their course was 99.5%. 68% of learners were female and 32% were male. 60% of learners were aged between 25-49 years, 30% were over the age of 50 and 10% were aged between 19 and 24 years. 47% of learners were from BAME communities and 29% of learners has a learning difficulty or disability.
- 3.2.4 Learners on the programme make good progress in achieving their personal development and learning goals and many go onto further learning. For many participants the benefits can be transformational and with positive impacts on their families and wider communities through volunteering, civic engagement and social integration. Extracts from case studies are included at Appendix 3 to highlight some of these benefits.

### **3.3 Future Provision**

- 3.3.1 Earlier this year, the SFA changed its funding model bringing together the former Community Learning and Adult Skills Budget along with other skills programmes into a single pot called the Adult Education Budget (AEB). The Council's Adult Learning Programme is funded entirely under the new AEB enabling a continued focus on supporting local residents aged 19 years plus with skills development through a broad and balanced range of activities.
- 3.3.2 For the 2016-17 academic year only, the SFA funding rules for the use of the new AEB allows a continuation of the existing delivery arrangements. However it is expected that a new per learner payment model will be introduced in 2017-18 across all AEB funded activity. This academic year, therefore provides an opportunity for the Council to fully understand the implications of and make a successful transition to, the new payment and delivery model e.g. the need to increase class sizes, fee increases for learners who are ineligible for AEB funded provision.
- 3.3.3 The government is seeking to transfer control of the AEB to local areas through devolution agreements initially and then more widely to local stakeholders, including Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and combined authorities. Transferring the AEB will enable local areas and colleges and other training organisations to reshape their local adult education provision. The SFA is working with these authorities, including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, to develop and implement arrangements that support the transition to skills commissioning and full devolution starting in 2018/19 subject to readiness conditions.
- 3.3.4 It will be important to ensure that informal and community based learning is seen as part of the continuum of local skills provision and of increasing relevance to the achievement of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership's Skills Plan priorities and outcomes. This provides an opportunity to those bodies in receipt of AEB, the Council and FE colleges in Leeds, to strengthen their collaborative working to develop a place based approach that more effectively re-engage adults on the margins of the labour market and further develop suitable skills progression pathways that respond to local labour market needs. Subject to support for this approach, initial discussions will commence to scope out these opportunities later this month.

## **4. Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 The Leeds Adult Learning Trust Board (ALTB) continues to shape adult learning programmes in community settings. The Board is made up of council services, HE, FE learning institutions and third sector stakeholders and is chaired by the Executive Member for Employment, Skills and Opportunity. The ALTB has helped to shape the refreshed Adult Learning Strategy 2016-19 and, the local offer delivered across priority localities in Leeds.
- 4.1.2 Provision has been determined by SFA requirements, Council priorities and, identified local need including intelligence obtained through Community Committees, elected member led Employment and Skills Boards and other

neighbourhood groups and local partnerships. Briefings are provided each term on the delivered and planned activity to Community Committee Champions providing them with the opportunity throughout the year to shape provision to better meet local needs. In addition, the programme is shaped by feedback received from providers and learners through the annual self-assessment reporting process, learner focus groups and classroom observations.

## **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 All programme providers are required to submit Equality Diversity and Community Cohesion information as part of their contractual reporting to demonstrate that equality issues have been considered and will be embedded in the planning, delivery and review of provision. The process for reporting and monitoring equality and diversity information is clearly defined in the Adult Learning Programme provider handbook that is updated annually.
- 4.2.2 The provision is also subject to Ofsted Common Inspection Framework requirements which are built into the contract monitoring and quality assurance processes. This includes a key focus on equality and diversity including providing quality inclusive services, identifying and removing barriers and narrowing any gaps in learner participation and achievement.
- 4.2.3 An equality screening was carried out on 21 July 2016 to inform the commissioning of the current provision. The findings from this assessment are that equality, diversity, cohesion and integration issues have been appropriately considered. Given that this is simply an update report, the Equality Impact Assessment is not appended to this report.

## **4.3 Council policies and best council plan**

- 4.3.1 The programme activity set out in this report contributes to the Best Council Plan 2016-17 priorities around supporting economic growth and access to economic opportunities, supporting communities and raising aspirations, providing skills programmes and access to employment opportunities. The programme also supports the achievement of the Council's ambitions to build a Child Friendly City by helping to improve the progression and achievement of children at school.
- 4.3.2 The objectives of the Council's Adult Learning Programme will also help to deliver outcomes under the Best Council Plan's More Jobs, Better Jobs Breakthrough Project, in particular supporting the integration of skills support and health interventions including people with mild to moderate mental ill-health.

## **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The activities detailed in the report are funded through the Adult Education Budget 2016-17 of £2.1m awarded to the Council by the SFA. Providers delivering the programme were selected from the Council's Adult Learning Framework 2014-17 contract following a robust procurement process which assessed factors such as quality of provision, learner outcomes and cost per learner to ensure the programme delivers value for money.
- 4.4.2 The set tariff rates for standard provision under the Council's Adult Learning Programme are comparable with those set by other local authority districts where

provision is externally commissioned. Payments made to providers will be subject to the submission of invoices and satisfactory evidence of delivery and learner achievement. Courses being proposed or delivered where learner numbers fall below the minimum target threshold will not normally be funded without good reasons.

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, access to information and call in**

4.5.1 There are no significant legal issues relating to the recommendations in this report. This report is eligible for Call-In.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

4.6.1 All contracts awarded are subject to robust financial and quality monitoring procedures led by officers in the Employment and Skills Service and in accordance with the Council's and the SFA's regulations.

4.6.2 Compliance with the SFA's Funding Statement and funding rules is mandatory as well as compliance with the Common Assessment Framework regulated by OFSTED. OFSTED carry out inspections at least once every three years and at the last inspection in 2013, the provision was graded as 'Good'. A Quality Improvement Plan has been developed and will continue to be monitored and refined to reflect learning and emerging issues identified through a self-assessment of the previous academic year's provision and to realise our ambition to move from 'Good' to 'Outstanding'.

4.6.3 A privacy impact assessment was undertaken on 21 July 2016 to ensure that the Council and its external providers on the Adult Learning Framework remain compliant with information governance policies and statute.

### **5. Conclusions**

5.1 Adult Learning engages adults aged 19 years plus with learning in an informal and safe environment to acquire new skills and interests through learning and, in the long term, provides a progression gateway to more formal learning, social mobility and employability opportunities. The Council continues to deliver a broad and balanced programme of adult learning across Leeds, targeting priority learner groups and those living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with provision delivered by a range of public, voluntary and specialist sector organisations. They play a key role in the Council fulfilling its contractual obligations to the Skills Funding Agency.

5.2 The Council is responsible for the contract management and quality assurance of the provision. The programme is subject to OFSTED inspection, SFA requirements and developed in line with council priorities and, any specific needs identified in each locality. Feedback from the Adult Learning Trust Board, Members, providers and learners is also used to inform on-going and future provision.

5.3 The Adult Learning Programme is effectively targeted to need and supports widening participation in learning with positive outcomes for individuals and communities from improved confidence and willingness to engage in learning; the acquisition of skills that prepare people for training, employment or self-

employment; improved digital, financial literacy and communication skills; parents and carers better equipped to support and encourage their children's learning; and improving health and well-being. It also contributes to the development of stronger communities through increased volunteering, civic engagement and social integration and in the longer term reduces the costs of welfare, health and anti-social behaviour.

- 5.4 The Government's plans to devolve the Adult Education Budget to local areas will provide new opportunities and challenges to better shape local adult skills provision and build new progression pathways with local stakeholders within a placed based approach to better meet local needs and to continue to support the Council's inclusion and growth objectives.

## **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 Executive Board is asked to:-

i) note the current programme offer and its contribution to the achievement of Council objectives

ii) support the planned approach to developing a placed based approach to adult skills with local stakeholders under the proposed devolved funding arrangements.

- 6.2 Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Project and Programmes, Employment and Skills.

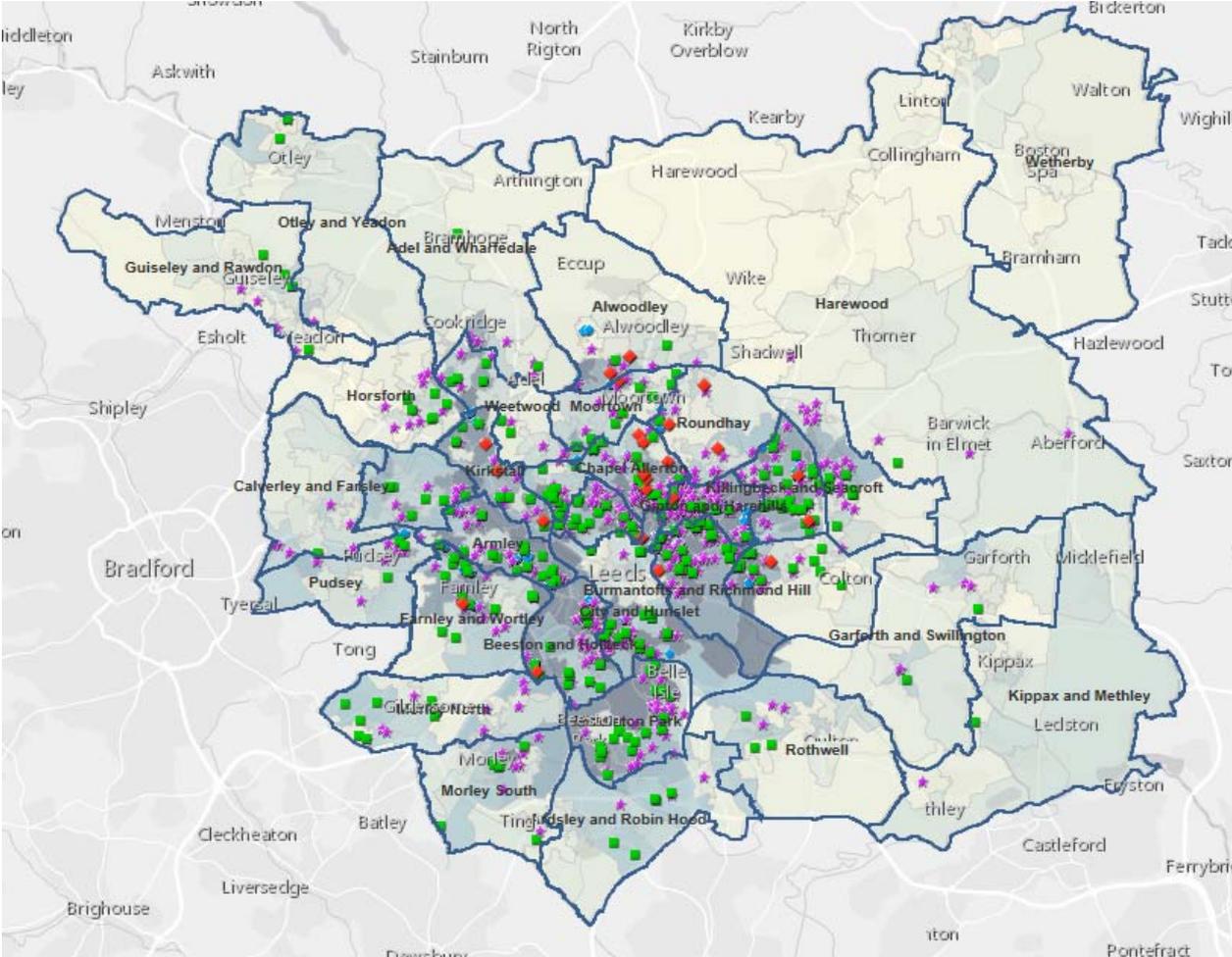
## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 There are no background documents.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

### Participation in the Adult Learning Programme



**Key**

   Program participants

 > 60  
30.5  
< 1  
Jobseeker Allowance claimants by LSOA

## Adult Learning Participation by ward April 2015–March 2016

Ward	People accessing provision	People gaining Qualifications (Accredited)	People with Improved Skills (Non Accredited)
Adel & Wharfedale	104	8	93
Alwoodley	158	3	152
Ardsley & Robin Hood	76	9	63
Armley	354	27	319
Beeston & Holbeck	373	32	327
Bramley & Stanningley	196	8	180
Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	501	30	444
Calverley & Farsley	118	21	103
Chapel Allerton	337	1	313
City & Hunslet	415	27	366
Cross Gates & Whinmoor	215	17	193
Farnley & Wortley	178	30	140
Garforth & Swillington	109	10	93
Gipton & Harehills	666	25	614
Guiselley & Rawdon	60	11	47
Harewood	65	0	63
Headingley	219	13	199
Horsforth	102	17	95
Hyde Park & Woodhouse	394	37	347
Killingbeck & Seacroft	282	44	254
Kippax & Methley	73	13	59
Kirkstall	269	21	246
Middleton Park	232	29	198
Moortown	212	7	199
Morley North	78	7	66
Morley South	97	8	84
Otley & Yeadon	51	2	47
Pudsey	136	12	124
Rothwell	73	2	68
Roundhay	207	15	188
Temple Newsam	257	4	242
Weetwood	157	4	147
Wetherby	27	0	25
Not Leeds	127	5	131
Not Known	163	12	126
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,081</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>6,355</b>

## Adult Learning Case Studies

### Supporting Progression - A first for two generations

A parent can feel justifiably proud when a child gets accepted to university especially if they are the first in the family to do so, but it's quite something when a parent gets accepted to start at the same time. This is exactly what has happened for a single mum from a Crossgates.

#### Quiet and withdrawn

Local resident, Denise, had been feeling down for some time. Being a carer for her youngest daughter who had additional needs, she was unsure of what she wanted to do and was unable to find work. Denise was a regular attendee at Swarcliffe Children's Centre and it was here that she was first persuaded to attend a Family Learning course.

**'Denise was quiet and withdrawn' commented her tutor, 'but I've seen a real change'.**

#### Denise's Journey

- Denise enrolled on her first Family Learning course and was inspired after completion to volunteer at the centre
- Along with a cohort of other local mums, she signed up for an Introduction to Volunteering course arranged by the Family Learning team in partnership with Swarcliffe Children's Centre.
- As part of the course, Denise attended a 'next steps' event at Leeds University's Centre for Lifelong Learning. After a tour of the campus and talking to staff and other students, she decided that going to university was something that she too could achieve.
- Denise attended the Lifelong Learning Centre's Kickstart programme to demonstrate her commitment and suitability over the summer.
- After a short wait she received a letter telling her that she has been given an unconditional offer to start a 3 year Professional Studies degree in September.

Denise was over the delighted. **'I can't believe I'm starting university at the same time as my eldest son. I really thought my time had come and gone. My life has turned round 180 degrees. I really feel I can hold my head high'.**

### Building confidence to re-engage

A new job brings a ray of hope for a Belle Isle man whose prospects were looking pretty gloomy until recently.

#### Things were looking bleak

D had a background in manufacturing but had been unemployed for three years due to a combination of personal and physical problems and poor literacy skills. Work prospects were looking fairly bleak.

He had been a regular attendee at Belle Isle Tenant Management Organisation for about a year and to his credit had undertaken several voluntary positions in the Belle Isle area. The staff at BITMO had been working closely with him but realised his reading and writing skills were a real barrier to gaining work and suggested he join the English for Employment course they had arranged through the Community Learning Programme.

#### Motivation pays off

- Following advice from staff he attended the English for Employment class.
- D took an active part in class sessions and his motivation increased. He began approaching local companies to seek work.
- D also undertook voluntary work to gain some experience. This boosted his confidence.
- D's approach paid off and he was offered a full time, permant 'production operative' post at Pickersgills in Leeds 10.

#### Double celebration

The Centre Manager said **'Eveyone at BITMO is really proud of D and his achievement. He is a great example of what can be achieved when someone is motivated and everyone works together. D timed this really well as he got the news of his job on his birthday. We threw a small party for him here at BITMO so that everyone could share in his success'.**

### **Active Families supporting inclusion**

The Adult Learning programme's Family Learning team worked with RETAS to host an event with a group of newly arrived Syrian refugee families in the Gipton and Harehills ward.

The families had escaped worn-torn Syria and had been based in camps before arriving in Leeds. Held over 2 days the event offered a warm Yorkshire welcome and raised the families' awareness of the services available in the local area and the value of inter-generational learning.

Working with staff from RETAS, the Family Learning team arranged a number of activities for the families to get involved in. These included:

- Discussion about the education system in the UK with the children giving their perspective on school in Syria.
- Basic ESOL 'taster' session
- Designing and building motorized robots to be raced in an 'Olympic' themed event.
- A 'blind ballot' voting exercise to determine a winner in a competition.

#### **What difference has this made?**

The feedback from parents and children alike was very positive with children looking forward to starting or resuming their education in September and parents signing up for ESOL classes and volunteering opportunities.

**'Thanks for all your hard work this week. It was great fun and a great experience for the families'**

### **Retraining - A Change of Direction**

Greg was suffering from anxiety and depression after being unemployed for some years and at a loss about what to do next. He excelled on an Adult Learning course and gained a job as a Teaching Assistant at Middleton Primary.

#### **Initial Contact**

Whilst dropping his children off at school one morning, another parent suggested coming along to a Supporting Children's Learning course that had just started at the school. Although initially apprehensive, Greg decided to try it and enrolled the following week. His previous work experience had involved manufacturing and driving a bus but Greg soon realised he had a real passion for supporting children.....and not just his own.

#### **Pathway back to work**

- Greg excelled on the Family Learning course and took a keen interest in child development
- Through the encouragement and support of his tutor and other learners he enrolled on a Level 2 Teaching Assistant course.
- After successfully completing the Level 2 course, he immediately started and completed Level 3.
- As part of the course Greg undertook a placement as a teaching assistant at Middleton Primary School. He so impressed the other staff with his ability and commitment that he was encouraged to apply for a full time opening at the school.
- Greg was successful at interview and is now a member of the team at Middleton Primary.

#### **Confidence to try something different**

Attending the Family Learning course opened Greg's eyes and made him realise that there were other lines of work he could go into that he had never previously considered.

**'The course gave me the confidence to try something different and as a result I gained employment at my daughter's school. My health is much improved and we do much more together now as a family. I'm looking forward now to carrying on with my learning and hoping to undertake a foundation degree next.'**