

Service Newsletter—May 2021

Message from Joanne Hatton, Acting Head of Service



Here's to my first message for the Service Newsletter!

Since the retirement of Julie Kenrick in March, I am honoured to introduce myself as Acting Head of Service and very pleased to have been given the opportunity to step up into this role.

As we are in our final term of 20/21 and on reflection, I think we can all agree the past 12 months have been challenging for all of us. We were so disappointed not to be able to return after the Christmas break, once again our learners and staff had to adapt, be creative and resilient to ensure, (where possible), that learning could continue.



Since we were able to open our doors again in March, I was pleased to hear how eager everyone was to return to the classroom. Your feedback has confirmed the safety measures we continue to have in place provide confidence to many. Also, thank you for all those taking the steps to protect themselves and each other by taking regular Covid tests available from tutors. Keep up the good work!

We know our learners are facing difficult times and we are here to support you in any way we can. We hope our range of courses continue to meet your needs, whether you are learning because you are looking for work, upskilling for a change of career, improving your digital skills, or learning for pleasure to improve your mental health and general wellbeing.

We are now starting to plan our course offer for September 2021 and you play a big part in our plans. We would like your feedback, so if you have any requests for new courses or any suggestions on how we can ensure courses help you on your learning journey, we are keen to hear from you, so please get in touch. Please send your thoughts and suggestions for consideration to Giovanna Kerwin, g.kerwin@bury.gov.uk or call 0161 253 6867.

A big thank you to all our learners, staff, and partners for your contribution to making Bury Adult Learning Service the great place it is to learn and achieve. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all those taking exams in the coming weeks the very best of luck.

I hope you find our service news interesting and informative.

Joanne

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Mental Health Awareness Week 2021

Mental Health Awareness Week took place between 10th-16th May and it could not have been more timely.

The theme for this year was nature and we posted videos and messages on our Facebook page to mark this event.

As we all know that access to nature can be hugely beneficial not only for physical health but for mental health too. Sharon Walsh who teaches mindfulness, has put together a video which gives you handy tips for a mindful walk. Click <https://moodle.bury.gov.uk/mod/page/view.php?id=13840...>



We are running a series of FREE courses starting in June for people who are suffering from mild to moderate stress, anxiety, and low mood. Courses include: Art, Mindfulness, Improve Your Mood Through Food, Bake Yourself Happy and Getting to Know Your Tablet & Apps.

For more information, call 0161 253 5772.

The Department for Education has also put together some useful links and sources of support so that parents with children, young people, carers and people in the workplace can get the advice and help they need. For more information, click [Mental health resources for children, students, parents, carers and school/college staff - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

Maths courses with Bury Adult Learning Service add up to success!

In uncertain times, we need to be confident in our life choices. Maths skills give you the ability to solve problems and improve the quality of your life. Read Katrina and Claire's story about their learning journey at Bury Adult Learning Service...

"My experience with maths at school was not a good one, I had a difficult time at secondary school and was always haunted by my lack of qualifications. After my mum had passed away, I moved in with my sister. I started to think about my education and thought about enrolling on maths and English courses but I was too scared. I finally built up some courage and decided this was perfect timing to correct the past and move on! I enrolled on both maths and English courses at Bury Adult Learning Centre. I passed my Entry Level 3 in 2019 and have recently passed my Level 1.



During my time at Bury Adult Learning Service, I found out I had dyslexia, but that didn't stop me! There was no judgment from the tutors which I was afraid of, especially what I had experienced at school.

I can't thank the tutors enough for their dedication. They have been absolutely great at supporting other learners and myself through the process. So much so, I am going to enrol on Level 2 courses in September!"

Claire Withington

"If you are thinking about enrolling on a maths course I would definitely recommend it. I attended weekly sessions at Bury Adult Learning Centre. I am currently on an Apprenticeship and needed my maths to get my qualification. The tutor was very helpful and understanding. I have never had confidence when it comes to maths and numbers. The thought of me actually doing a maths test was putting me off signing up for classes.

At my first class, my tutor said that she would get me through my exams and nothing was too much trouble.

During lockdown, the course went online and the tutor was really supportive. I am so glad I took the course, it has given me confidence and my work has benefited."

Katrina Vaudray

PREVENT and British Values

Bury Adult Learning Service recognises that the welfare and safety of every learner and every visitor is paramount and takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare and safety of learners, visitors and staff.

Any concern relating to safety, including the presence of radicalisation and/or extremism, within any of our centres, will be addressed appropriately and without delay.

Should you notice anything that causes you concern, please tell your tutor or a member of staff.

If you need help and support for yourself because you feel unsafe in any way, do not hesitate to tell your tutor or a member of staff, even when this is not something directly linked to your course.

If you feel unsure what to do, contact our Safeguarding Officer, Nikki Naylor on 0161 253 7287 or email n.a.naylor@bury.gov.uk

The importance of British Values at Bury Adult Learning Service

What are British Values? There has been a lot of talk about 'British Values' over the past few years.

The government defines British Values as follows:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs



At Bury Adult Learning Service, British values are of extreme importance to us, so your tutors should discuss them during your course.

We see British values as underpinning what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse community.

For more information, please speak to your tutor.

Volunteering at Bury Adult Learning Service

This year, National Volunteers' Week takes place between Tuesday 1st June—Monday 7th June. It's a chance to recognise the fantastic contribution volunteers make to our communities and say thank you.

At Bury Adult Learning Service we have a group of dedicated volunteers who give up their time freely to help other learners. They make an invaluable contribution to the Service.

Tracey, one of our volunteers, has asked us to share her volunteering experience at Bury Adult Learning Service....

"I have been attending Bury Adult Learning Centre for several years on and off as a learner. I enjoy the relaxed and welcoming environment enabling learning, social interaction and enjoyment without judgement. I had previously been asked if I would like to consider volunteering but I did not feel confident or comfortable with this at the time.

All changed just prior the first lockdown when attending an art class led by the tutor, Michelle Flatley. The group was so interactive filled with positivity. Michelle encouraged us to work as a team and enhanced and empowered our hidden qualities. I felt inspired and confident to use my skills in a more active manner by sharing them as a volunteer. The tutor provided me with a reference and I met with Claire Watters, Childcare and LDD Volunteer Coordinator, to submit my application.

Unfortunately, the first lockdown was announced and my volunteering hopes were put on hold. It was not until 27th April 2021 I had the opportunity to share my learnt skills acquired from former tutors and volunteers whilst attending classes. I was emailed a small brief introduction to the person I would be supporting and the tutor taking the class.

I had butterflies on the morning of my volunteering. I met with the tutor 10 minutes prior to the class. She showed me work the learner had already achieved.

The learner I was to support arrived with her support worker. I introduced myself and we began on the project on hand. The learner was uneasy at first but it wasn't long before we were chatting about her interests and former experiences. We soon felt like old friends. The happiness and pride the learner was radiating was infectious. The tutor was extremely pleased with the learner and complimented her ability and work.

Once the class had ended and the learner had been collected, I walked home with a massive smile. I was so happy that I had the shared experience with this lady and felt extremely rewarded.

My first time as a Learning Support Volunteer and I will never look back. I stated on my Facebook page "Absolutely loved today at Bury Adult Learning Centre.....I think I have found my calling x".

I would highly recommend others considering volunteering to put that first foot forward and step onto a ladder of reward, happiness, fulfilment and fellowship."

Tracey Shaylor

Could you be a Learning Support Volunteer? Do you have 2-3 hours to spare? Could you support someone with additional learning needs to attend adult learning?

Come and join our team! For more information, call Claire on 0161 253 7833.

Let's Get Digital!

It's a digital world we live and work in - you can't afford to get left behind.....

If you are not online yet, or are online but not very confident—you're not alone! With the world around us becoming ever more digital focused, you can develop your digital skills at Bury Adult Learning Service and become more confident in your abilities with our new course, Essential Digital Skills.

You can learn how to use digital skills to connect with friends, local communities and the world around you, topics covered include:

- Manage information – using a search engine, or downloading a picture
- Communicate online – sending emails or instant messages
- Shopping and banking online
- Edit information – word documents, online forms or photographs
- Stay safe online – from scams, fraud and bullying

Don't worry if you don't feel you have the knowledge yet to start learning about those things; we'll have more courses to set you up with the essentials.

For more information on all our digital skills courses, call 0161 253 5772.



During April, we asked you to complete a short survey. We wanted to know how well we had supported learners over the last year.

93 learners completed the survey:

98% thought Bury Adult Learning staff had been extremely supportive/very supportive in helping access online courses/helping study from home.

99% of learners felt they had made progress compared with when they started their course.

95% of learners said they felt safe coming back to Bury Adult Learning Centre/face to face learning.

Thank you for completing the survey!

Learning a language can be rewarding! Why not try your hand at a new language?

We are offering 4 week courses in French and Spanish, starting in June. Immerse yourself into a whole new culture!

Find out more on our website www.bury.gov.uk/adultlearning or call 0161 253 5772.

Have you ever considered a career in Health and Social Care?



There are so many job opportunities available in this sector and with excellent opportunities to progress, it really is a career worth considering.

The Health and Social Care sector is of huge importance and impacts on virtually everyone's life as either an employer or service user. Over 100,000 make up the Greater Manchester NHS and Social Care workforce meaning it employs almost one in ten of the working population.

An industry labour market and skills study has been undertaken into the Health and Social Care sector. It found that almost 40% of jobs advertised in Greater Manchester from April to December 2020 were in the Health and Social Care sector and that the top 3 job postings for Bury between November 2020 and January 2021 were for Support Worker, Care Assistant and Staff Nurse jobs, highlighting the job opportunities available within Bury.

In response to Covid-19, a new recruitment and careers website has been developed specifically for the Health and Social Care sector in Bury called 'Caring Careers', www.jobsinbury.co.uk. The website advertises vacancies and brings numerous benefits to jobseekers, including a simple but effective job search, and the ability to upload their CV and apply for vacancies on the site. Employers and job seekers can choose to receive notifications to inform them of relevant activity. There are also stories from those working in health & social care, (including some past learners from Bury Adult Learning!), sharing their journey, successes, and the things they love about their jobs.

If you think a job in the Health and Social Care sector could be for you or if you would like to explore more about the different opportunities that are available, our Introduction to Health and Social Care Level 1 course is starting on Monday 14th June until Friday 25th June, 9.30am to 4.30pm (Monday to Friday). **Call 0161 253 5772 for more information.**

Below is a learner story from one of our past learners, Sushma, who successfully completed a course in health and social care:



"I went to Bury Job Centre in 2014 to enquire about adult learning courses. They redirected me to Bury Adult Learning Service. I enrolled on a sewing course, first aid level 2 and a course in health and social care - preparing for work.

The tutor who taught the health and social care course gave me the encouragement, confidence and showed me a path to follow. As I was already caring for my father-in-law, this was very helpful, I learnt many new things. The tutor also gave me advice about the maths and English courses that ran at Bury Adult Learning Centre. I enrolled on both and the tutors helped me to achieve these certificates - they were great!

I started working for Bluebird Care in Bury in September 2014. They supported me to do my level 2 and 3 in adult social care. I have now been promoted to a Senior Care Worker. I enjoy my work supporting vulnerable people within their own home.

Thanks to all the staff and tutors at Bury Adult Learning Service. I would not have got this far without the support from them, for this I will be forever grateful."

And finally.....A big thank you to those who have contributed to this term's newsletter.

If you would like to contribute to the next issue of the newsletter, please email Giovanna at g.kerwin@bury.gov.uk