Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme Ltd

Annual Report
2012
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Mission Statement:

To provide a high quality Adult Literacy service in the Ballymun area
Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme was established in 1986, to provide adult literacy and basic education tuition through a partnership between volunteers, community organisations and statutory bodies working in the area. Funded through the City of Dublin VEC, by the Department of Education and Skills, with assistance from the European Social Fund, as part of the National Development Plan - Towards 2016.

In July 2000 the Scheme became a company limited by guarantee.

Directors; Tom O’Donnell, Leo O’Brien: Secretary; Kathleen Friel.

Members; Celia Rafferty, Betty Cummins, Alan Gleeson, Gerry Campbell.

Tutors are employed by the company.

The Scheme is run by a Board of Management, comprised of a partnership between the company, volunteers, community groups and statutory bodies working in the area, namely:

This Board of Management provides a representative structure in which all who are making a contribution can have a say in how the Scheme operates. Mary Love, as the City of Dublin VEC Literacy Services Organiser for the area, attends to the day-to-day management.
Introduction

Statistics on adult literacy in Ireland
The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) 1997 highlighted the extent of literacy difficulties among Irish adults. The results for Ireland published in 1997 and, based on data collected in 1995, showed that one in four or 25% of Irish adults had literacy difficulties. They also indicated that over 80% of those who scored at the lowest level, Level 1, had a Junior Certificate qualification or less. The IALS also showed that people with literacy difficulties are more likely to be at risk of social exclusion, are less likely to take part in education and training and more likely to be unemployed (Morgan et al, 1997). To date, this remains the most up-to-date information on adult literacy levels in Ireland. However, Ireland is currently participating in the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). PIAAC is the most comprehensive international survey of adult literacy skills ever undertaken. When published, PIAAC will provide information on skills that people use at work and in their everyday lives. This will include information on how they use literacy, numeracy and technology skills. The results from PIAAC will be published in 2013. (NALA research report: Participation in Three Adult Learning Settings).

The established definition of literacy is that it involves listening and speaking, reading, writing, numeracy and using everyday technology to communicate and handle information. It includes more than the technical skills of communication: it also has personal, social and economic dimensions. Good literacy skills increase the opportunity for individuals and communities to reflect on their situation, explore new possibilities and initiate change.

Literacy difficulties impacts on all aspects of an individual’s life. Adults with literacy difficulties often find it difficult to access or progress in employment, or help children with homework. They avoid situations with reading and writing and so may not play an active role in their community or in society. Good practice in adult literacy work starts with the needs and interests of individuals. It is concerned with personal development and building confidence as well as technical skills. The concept of learning to learn underpins our work. We train tutors how to teach; we also teach our students how to learn.

Area Profile
The scheme’s area of responsibility is Ballymun, Santry, Whitehall bordered by the Swords Road; Glasnevin bordered by Glasnevin Avenue – Griffith Avenue.

Ballymun wards A, B, C and D are defined as a RAPID area (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development). This is a focused Government initiative to target the fifty one most disadvantaged urban areas and provincial towns in the country. For the purpose of this report the statistics are for the geographic electoral area wards A, B, C, D.

Ballymun is situated approximately 4 miles north of Dublin city centre. It originally consisted of seven 15 story towers, nineteen 8 story spine blocks, ten 4 story and 400 houses. In the 1970s 1400 houses were
added. Ballymun is currently undergoing major regeneration which began in 1996. The 2800 flats are being replaced with new housing. According to BRL regeneration news, by the end of 2012 over 1600 new homes will have been built and it is estimated that the demolition of the final three blocks and the last tower, Joseph Plunkett Tower, will take place towards the end of 2013.

The 2011 census figures for this area show the population as 16,236. As the regeneration progresses this is expected to increase. 41.11% of the population is under the age of 25.

The 2006 census showed an unemployment rate for Dublin City as 10.7%. However the 2011 census now shows the Dublin City unemployment rate as 18.5%. Ballymun has recorded higher than average unemployment rates in the following wards:

Ballymun A – 26.4%
Ballymun B – 43.0%
Ballymun C – 35.6%
Ballymun D – 41.9%

In addition, in Ballymun A, B, C and D the percentage of people whose education ceased by the age of 16 is 22.6% which is nearly twice the national average of 12.97%.

(“Central Statistics Office – Census SAPS Micro Data File”)
Literacy Provision

Registrations for 2012 were 788. This equates to 476 individuals, some of whom have taken multiple and varied courses during the year, plus 20 individuals who took ITABE funded projects (Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education). In addition 78 migrant workers, who have come to live in our community, took part in Basic English courses, ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). Total number of students was 574.

Training and support was provided for 51 tutors, thirty three of who were volunteers. Volunteers worked on a one to one basis with a student to prepare him/her to move into a group. The Scheme also engaged in raising awareness of literacy difficulties in the local area. Advice and training was provided for local groups, training workshops and seminars for tutors and students. Progression routes for students were identified. As in previous years BARWS responded to community needs by networking closely with other local education providers. This enabled a tailored, student centred approach, with flexible delivery in place and time.

![Economic Status within Scheme](image)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Economic Status within Scheme</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed (&gt;1Yr)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed (&lt;1Yr)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed (includes CE Workers)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in Labour Market</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>186</td>
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Tuition Venues

**Evenings:**

Mondays and Tuesdays - 7.30pm - 9.30pm.
- Trinity Comprehensive School. January to June 2012.
- Local Employment Centre. January to June 2012.

**Daytime:**

- Geraldstown House, Health Services Executive, Family Resource Centre. Room dedicated to scheme usage plus others on request.
- CDVEC Adult Education Centre. Two rooms dedicated to scheme use – one with eleven computers. Other rooms on request.
- Public Library community room.
- St Margaret’s Travellers’ Community Centre.
- STAR Project Horizons Centre.
- YAP Horizons Centre.
- St Joseph’s Primary School – parents’ room.
- Holy Spirit Girls Primary School – parents’ room.
- Drop In Well Community Centre.
- Mens’ Centre.
- LINX Project Centre.
- SOLAS Community Centre.
- Local Employment Centre/Job Centre.
- St Michaels House Training Centre, Omni Centre.
- St Michaels House Training Centre, Northbrook.
- Ballark Community Training Workshop.
- Poppintree Community Training Workshop.
- Unit 2 Partnership Enterprise Centre (provided by CDVEC for tuition and administration).

Crèche facilities were provided free of charge to participants in Geraldstown House. This enabled the scheme to provide a Family Literacy programme with progression routes. In addition, a sessional crèche worker was contracted to work with the HSE crèche workers in Geraldstown House and this enabled the expansion of the Family Literacy Programme.
The following learning opportunities were offered

1:1 Tuition
1:1 tuition is tailored to the needs of adults who lack confidence in their reading and writing skills. It is an initial step towards group work.

Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education (ITABE)
A six-hour a week, two mornings programme for fourteen weeks. This is a specially funded project for six to eight participants. Tuition is given in basic maths, reading and writing with workshops on Learning to Learn and educational guidance.

Learning Groups
Small groups working on reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and comprehension, for everyday life. For many it is their first introduction to working with other students who have similar needs.

Numeracy
For students who want to learn basic maths including multiplication, division, fractions, metric measurement. Using projects ensures participation and engagement. Those who wish can then progress to FETAC 3 Maths and put a folder of work together to obtain certification.

Spellwell
This course covers memory aids, word families, simple spelling rules, difficult words, and a host of other strategies to help you improve your spelling. We look at how memory works and learn tricks to help remember problem words. The course aims to cater for all learning styles and prepares an adult for ‘learning how to learn’.

Storysacks (Tuesday morning, with free crèche)
Storysacks is a part of the BARWS Family Literacy Programme. It involves parents or caregivers of children under the age of six choosing two books for their child, a story book and a non-fiction book. The parent/carer will then decorate a bag with the name and picture of the story applied to the front, create background and relevant props to bring the book to life for the child, and a game (flash cards, board game etc.) all related to the story to give the book another dimension.
The non-fiction or fact book is used to bring learning into the real world for the child. All of these things are then placed in the bag and presented to the child by the parent/carer. Storysacks is a great introduction to our Family Literacy programmes. All are encouraged to progress to FETAC 3 Child Development and Play.

Computers/Silver Surfers
An introduction to computers, internet and email for home use also covering basic word processing. Groups to practice are set up for emailing. Internet takes students to the level of comfort in booking holidays, research and shopping on the internet. FETAC accredited option at level 3 Computer Literacy and Internet Skills is provided for those who need certification.
Know Your Mobile
Understand how to read and write normal text, text language and predictive text. Learn how to operate common mobile features, alarm, silence and basic settings and be able to use the Organiser and Contacts folder. An interactive White Board is used effectively with this group.

Women Activists in Early 20th Century Irish History
This course covers the role of women in Irish society around 1900s and significant Irish women in the second half of the 19th century. The foundations of the Irish Women’s movement and the Irish Suffragettes are explored. Background to the women activists in the 1916 rising and those related to the leaders of the rising. Changes for women in Irish society from 1900 – 1923 is covered. Students read a relevant book e.g. “Unlikely Rebels” by Anne Clare and take relevant educational trips e.g. to Kilmainham Gaol.
All students are encouraged to progress to CSPE.

CSPE- Civic Social and Political Education
As students progress from History this course is themed on the role of women in the establishment of the Irish State and modern Ireland. It covers key Government Acts affecting women and the Irish Constitution. Concepts of democracy, women in politics, rights and responsibilities of citizens were explored. Irish political system, parties, Oireachtas and President are studied as well as Irish local politics elections and referendums. Joining the EEC (EU), reflecting on modern Ireland, equality and the equal status acts.
A trip to Leinster House and Dail Eireann is included.

Introduction to Poetry
This course looks at the structure and form of poetry; investigates the meaning of a range of poems from different countries and eras, together with the lives of the poets. The course aims to deepen an understanding of poetry and to enhance an appreciation of it.

History of Irish Playwrights
In this group students read about the history and work of famous Irish playwrights. The first act of a play is worked through, with group members in the character parts, which gives students the opportunity to read aloud thereby increasing their confidence to engage as active citizens within their community.

Creative Writing
This group gives students a forum for their creativity to emerge and their imagination to expand. They explore their hidden talents through the process of reading their work to others, discussing each other’s work and offering comments which helps them to understand what constructive criticism is. This process feeds into other areas of their lives. The students get an opportunity to engage in a discipline which allows them to grow in confidence and knowledge as well as getting personal satisfaction and affirmation.

English for Speakers of Other Languages
It aims to help migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers to learn conversational, functional English that will help them in practical everyday situations, such as shopping. This is delivered only at the most basic level of English.
Health Literacy
This course incorporates a social model of health. Areas also covered are: how to find and understand health information; how to use the health services; an explanation of common medical terms and terminology in health settings. BARWS is one of the delivery partners in the Ballymun Health for All initiative from where students are referred.

Managing Homework
This short course gives the parents of primary school children an opportunity to get together and share their experiences of doing homework with their children. It gives them time to explore concepts such as ‘Learning Styles’ and develop strategies for managing homework within the home. They can develop individual homework plans that fit into their family routines while exploring the influence that TV and computer games have on the completion of homework. It looks at online software, NALA’s Help My Kid Learn, which shows how parent’s can engage with children for learning purposes in fun ways at home. It also raises awareness on where parents can access other adult courses if they wish to up-skill in other areas.

FETAC Level 3 Modules

Communications
This course covers reading for comprehension using different subjects of interest. It provides an opportunity to brush up on letter-writing skills and to write creatively. The course provides a lot of opportunities for group discussion, using effective listening and speaking. A new addition in 2012 was the inclusion of social networking and electronic technology. There is no exam, rather a folder of work that is built up over time at a pace that suits the learner.

Personal Effectiveness
This equips the person with the skills to use their resources in order to meet the personal and social demands of their lives. This module is generally integrated into communications or other level 3 modules.

Maths/Application of Number
This course equips the student with the knowledge, skill and competence to apply mathematical skills to solve mathematical problems. It develops a limited range of skills which enable effective functioning in personal life, education and the workplace.

Child Development and Play
The course explores the strong link between child development and play. Students examine how play helps to enhance the five areas of development – physical, emotional, intellectual, speech and social. Students make a play item and plan a play activity for children. The course also looks at the use of effective communication skills with children.

Nutrition and Healthy Options
This course is designed to develop knowledge of the basic principles of food safety and associated legislation. The role of nutrients in the body, the concept of a balanced diet, human digestive process and common dietary disorders are explored. Contemporary nutritional issues related to food production are covered. Ingredients relevant to special dietary needs are identified and explained, including low calorie, low cholesterol, vegetarian, diabetic and coeliac diets. Nut and other allergies are discussed. The impact of purchasing, storage, preparation and cooking on nutritional value are
The versatility of vegetables as an accompaniment to meat and fish dishes or as a well-balanced, stand-alone meal is demonstrated. A limited range of varied and palatable meals for vegetarians are prepared. Possible only if access to a HSSAP approved kitchen.

Computer Literacy
This module aims to equip the student with the knowledge, skills and competencies to access and operate a computer for their personal needs. It outlines how information technology affects everyday life and includes social networking. It explains commonplace information technology concepts and terminology. It describes the health, safety and personal hygiene considerations of working with computers and the security necessities and implications of password, viruses and provision of personal details. It outlines the functions of the main hardware elements of a computer and storage devices. It covers the use of a range of keyboard capabilities and the use of computer application such as creating a file, entering data using the keyboard and mouse, and storing a file appropriately.

Internet Skills
This module is designed to equip the student with the knowledge, skills and competencies to use internet applications to locate and access information of interest quickly. It introduces the student to the key terms and considerations associated with using the internet. It covers the use and efficient management of an email account to communicate with others. The student learns to take responsibility for one’s own personal security and privacy when using the internet.

FETAC Level 4 Modules

Communications:
This course facilitates an appreciation of the role of communications in everyday life and enables the students to take responsibility for their own learning. It creates an awareness of the importance of non-verbal communication in all communication settings. It gives an understanding of the scope and depth of communications in the 21st century encompassing awareness of changing technologies and their impact on everyday life. It develops effective writing skills and enables the student to interpret written and aural materials across a range of vocational, social and everyday tasks. The course is generally taken after Junior Cert English or as progression from Level 3.

Student’s comment:
“This course has a lot of different parts to it so it never gets boring. It is a level 4 and I was a bit scared that I wouldn’t be able to keep up and get everything done to get the certificate which I really want to get. I never did my leaving cert. so this is like a second chance. It really gets my brain working and I am never without a dictionary. I love all the reading pieces and giving my opinion on things. I am getting much better at talking in a group now.”

Understanding Interculturalism:
This course explores the area of culture and its components such as beliefs, customs, traditions via the students own culture and that of other cultures. It also explores the opportunities and challenges involved in living in a community with people from a different culture and provide the student with the opportunity to challenge such issues as prejudice, stereotype and racism. This is generally offered as a progression route to existing students.
Other Accreditation:

**Junior Certificate English, Ordinary Level**
This programme covers the course for the Junior Certificate State Examination. It is a one year course running from September to June. Students read and discuss a novel or short story; study a play and examine the plot, characters and setting; study poetry; write short stories; essays, letters, reports and debates; look at advertising, newspapers and other information to which we are exposed on a daily basis.

At the end of the course students can sit the Junior Certificate English Examination.

Other services:

**Educational Guidance Service**
An adult education guidance service is provided by City of Dublin VEC to meet with students on a one to one basis to provide information and advice on progressions from the scheme. Learning groups can also engage with the service as a group for an introduction to the service and for the facilitation of student workshops.

**Our Practice**

Thematic learning is an interesting and meaningful teaching practice for adults. It provides people with opportunities to broaden their reading field. It is inclusive as project work incorporates a multisensory approach. This ensures individual learning styles are accommodated. Students are better motivated and given an opportunity to use and acknowledge their individual skills. Students are encouraged to value their own abilities and opinions, reframe their learning experience, set short term and long term goals, and to take a more active role in aspects of their life and their community.

Some examples of the themes were:

**Health Literacy**
The USA Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the department of Health and Human Services offer the most relevant definition of Health Literacy. It emphasises a dual responsibility for health literacy. “*Health literacy emerges when the expectations, preferences and skills of individuals seeking health information and services meet the expectations, preferences and skills of those providing information and service.*” (IOM 2004)

We delivered seven courses in Health Literacy in 2012 in which 61 students took part. Two of the courses were for men. A tutor was referred to the St Margaret’s Traveller community to work on the newsletter in the Primary Health Care Project.

The findings from the 2011 European Health Literacy Survey (HLS-EU) revealed four out of ten people (almost 39%) in Ireland have inadequate or problematic health literacy. Health literacy involves a person having the skills to understand basic health information, whether they receive it in writing, in person or over the phone. Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme acknowledge that the social conditions in which people live powerfully influence their health. With this in mind a course in health literacy incorporates a social model of health.
Student's comment:
“I now write down questions (for health service providers). It is the best thing I learned.”

Nutrition and Healthy Options:
This course is a natural progression from the Health Literacy courses. One course was delivered in LINX centre, accredited at FETAC level 3, as a HSSAP approved kitchen is required for FETAC quality assurance.
It was also delivered as a non accredited course called Nutrition and Healthy Eating.

Student’s comment:
“The food pyramid is very helpful to be sure you eat a variety of food.”

Women Activists in Irish History:
This course was designed in response to the interest shown during a trip to Glasnevin Historical Museum. It also served as a lead into CSPE with a view to greater participation in active citizenship.
Students studied Irish women of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During the course a book Unlikely Rebels: The Gifford Girls and the Fight for Irish Freedom was read. The author Anne Clare came to the group to give an account of her researched story about the Gifford family and to answer any questions that arose. Meeting her reinforced the learning that had occurred in the sessions. Students wrote an account of her visit for the scheme newsletter. The group on completion of the course was interested in attending talks or visiting historical sites. Visits to the Little Museum of Dublin to hear a lecture Easter Widows by Sinead McCoole (Author of No Ordinary Women) and a guided tour of Kilmainham Gaol were subsequently arranged.

Students’ comments:
“Little did we realize what a momentous part these women played in the formation of our State and the debt we, of this generation, owe them.”

“Anne’s talk brought all we learned during the History course to life and reminded us of the brave, hard working women who fought and inspired so many to work for our freedom and our rights.”

CSPE
With a view to preparing students for civic engagement in 2012 this course was themed on the role of women in the establishment of the Irish State and modern Ireland. Key Government Acts affecting women and the Irish Constitution. Concepts of democracy, women in politics, rights and responsibilities of citizens were explored. The Irish political system, parties, the Oireachtas and the role of President were studied as well as Irish local politics, elections and referendums. It also covered joining the EEC (EU), reflection on modern Ireland equality and the equal status acts.
A trip to Leinster House and Dail Eireann was included.

ICT
Get Online Week
Get online week was a campaign to get new computer users online. The initiative was promoted by FIT (Fastrack to Information Technology) who seek to develop the use of technology in Ireland. This project gave the scheme students, with little or no knowledge of the internet, the opportunity to see modern technology in use and to consider taking our course in computer literacy.
Using social networking is a requirement of the FETAC 3 Communications module; to meet this requirement Skyping sessions were set up between the students studying Communication in Geraldstown House and those studying it in the CDVEC Adult Education Centre. This enabled the students to produce evidence of this activity for their portfolios.

**Know Your Mobile**
This course continues to have referrals from the Active Retired Groups in the area.

**Student’s comment:**
“Before I left my mobile at home, now I take it everywhere with me. Being a senior citizen it is now a great support to me.”

**Family Literacy:**
A Family Literacy Programme is still a priority and continues to be developed with progression routes. Family Literacy courses could not take place without the wide range of stakeholders which make up the Board of Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme, sharing responsibility for the needs of the area. This is through funding, referrals, tutor training, provision of premises, crèche facilities and equipment.

Family Literacy programmes have a significant knock-on effect on school performances of children, along with opportunities to break the intergenerational cycle of low literacy attainment. In 2012 nineteen mothers availed of the crèche facilities in Geraldstown House HSE Family Resource Centre while attending tuition. Without this facility these parents could not have accessed tuition. The 2011 census shows 58.9% of families with children in Ballymun are lone parents compared to the national average of 25.8% and the average for Dublin City of 38.2%. For families with all their children under the age of fifteen 57.6% are headed by a lone parent compared to the national average of 11.51%.

Our storysacks project delivered in Geraldstown House for the past six years has enjoyed huge success, with referrals coming from HSE, youngballymun, and satisfied students referring family or friends. As a reflection of this in 2012 we were requested by a HSE project worker in Geraldstown House to run a specific Storysacks for migrant mothers using Geraldstown House HSE Family Resource Centre. This was with the view of helping parents to understand the importance of reading to their children in English prior to their starting school.

With the knowledge that “Parental involvement in a child’s learning has more of an impact on their educational outcomes than any other demographic measure including social class or level of parental income” (Desforges, 2003; Feinstein et al, 2004; EFLN 2008: NESF, 2009). (Taken from NALA Research briefing paper – Family Literacy in Ireland) we piloted a ‘Managing Homework’ course for parents in Holy Spirit Girl’s School through the Home School Community Liaison representative on our Board. This was run with a view to putting on further relevant courses for Parents e.g. ‘Helping with Maths Homework’.

This short course gave the parents of primary school children an opportunity to get together and share their experiences of doing homework with their children. It gave them time to explore new concepts such as ‘Learning Styles’ and develop strategies for managing homework within the home. Parents developed individual homework plans that fit into their family routines while exploring the influence that TV and computer games have on the completion of homework. They looked at online software, NALA’s Help My Kid Learn, which shows how parents can engage with children for learning purposes in fun ways at home. It also raised awareness on where parents can access other adult courses if they wish to up skill in other areas.
Students’ comments:
“I learned new ways to do homework with my child and things are better now, I got good tips.”

“Really interesting and very practical with information on individual child’s learning style.”

“This course is teaching me so many different things about how important play is for the development of my child. I am delighted because now I make sure she is involved in different kinds of play and yet I did not realise just how much this is good for her. The discussions are lively and interesting and I enjoy doing the worksheets as I am writing about things I understand and am interested in. Out of all this I am going to get a FETAC Level 3 certificate (Child Development & Play) which is great as I am enjoying it, learning plenty and then getting a cert at the end.”

Cultural
In developing our progression routes to and through historical and cultural studies we were mindful of how the courses, within these strands, help our students to further develop their skills and attributes. They hone their interpersonal, communication, analytical and critical thinking skills as well building on their knowledge base around history, literature, citizenship, and the broader arts. This enables them to be more comfortable and confident in both their personal and working lives. Education and training should complement each other, for a healthy community.
Accreditation awarded

Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme is registered with FETAC (Further Education Training Awards Council) to offer programmes leading to FETAC awards in the National Framework of Qualifications. The Awarding Body is now called QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) since the amalgamation of FETAC, HETAC and the NQAI from November 2012.

The system of modular accredited portfolio based certification can provide an appropriate recognition of the knowledge gained by the adult students. It also provides us with interesting courses as a means of building literacy skills. It is often the stepping-stone to the more formal Junior Certificate exam.

Listed are the accredited modules in which component certificates were achieved in 2012. Thirty eight portfolios were accredited. Twenty five at FETAC level 3 and thirteen at FETAC level 4.

FETAC modules at Level 3 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)
- Communications
- Personal Effectiveness
- Nutrition & Healthy Options
- Child Development & Play

FETAC Level 4 NFQ
- Communications
- Understanding Interculturalism

Junior Certificate Level 3 NFQ
- English
Tutors Continuous Professional Development:
The scheme promotes continuous professional development and workshops are held to share learning and experiences in relation to best practice.

Workshops were attended in 2012 in the following:
- Making and Sharing Materials.
- Assessment methods for teaching and learning.
- Interactive Whiteboard training.
- The use of Moodle. CDVEC
- Seminar on Integrating Literacy and Culture. DALC
- Maths conference. NALA
- Family Literacy conference. NALA
- Tutors Forum. NALA
- Organisers Forum. NALA/ALOA
- FETAC Briefings. CDVEC
- Conference for ESOL tutors themed employability. NALA
- The effects of cannabis on mental health. Youngballymun lunchtime lecture.
- Information on pensions for staff members.

In addition a Support Tutor was available to support the tutors.

Waterford Institute of Technology/NALA run a third level qualification specifically designed to enhance the skills and understanding of experienced tutors working in adult literacy practice.

In 2012 tutors took the following professional development programme in WIT:
- One tutor continued to study BA (Ordinary) in Adult Education Level 7 NQF.
- One continued the Higher Certificate Course Level 6 NQF.

The schemes initial tutor training was revalidated in 2009 by Waterford Institute of Technology for a further five years. The course is the Literacy Methodologies 1 module of the WIT Higher Certificate in Arts in Literacy Development level 6.

The scheme trained 21 new volunteers to add to our existing panel.

Mentoring
The mentoring initiative continues whereby experienced tutors share and support each other and also new trainees. Additional tutors continually offer their support as mentors having had the experience of support and further skills development.

Cultural and Social Events
A trips working party, comprising students, support staff, and tutors, planned and organised successful and enjoyable evening and daytime educational trips in order to develop a sense of identity and participation in the broader scheme. It also gives students from the various centres an opportunity to meet. All these events were open to 1–1 students, group students, tutors and others involved with the scheme and there was very good attendance at all events. Decisions on what to do or where to go were made in consultation with students and their preferences were listened to.
The 2012 calendar of events included:

- 48 who visited the Mansion House where we had refreshments and a guided tour by the Lord Mayor, Andrew Montague.
- 24 students studying Women Activists in Irish History and CSPE went on a tour of Leinster House and the Seanad while both were in session.
- 12 students studying Women Activists in Irish History attended a lecture on the Easter Widows in the Little Museum of Dublin and the group took a tour of Kilmainham Gaol.
- 10 students of creative writing read the play *An Inspector Calls* as part of the study of dialog writing and then attended the play in the Gaiety Theatre.
- Tutors and students attended an evening with Dermot Bolger and David McWilliams in AXIS.
- Author Anne Clare visited the Women Activists in Irish History group answering questions and speaking about her book *Unlikely Rebels: The Gifford Girls and the Fight for Irish Freedom*. This was a wonderful event as the students were able to have the learning reinforced by their questioning, subsequent to having read the book.
- The ITABE Group took an educational trip following work on a major project that involved both literacy and numeracy projects. The group, apart from studying the history of the Titanic, researched, planned and organised the trip to Belfast’s Titanic Museum.
- A trip to an Internet Café is part of the Silver surfer’s course.
- BARWS student representative on the Board of Management attended the NALA student forum.

Students’ comments:

“My recent visit to the Mansion House was so enjoyable and informative. The warm welcome we received from our Lord Mayor, Andrew Montague, who was our guide, got the morning off to a flying start. His telling of the history of the Mansion House was fascinating. Also the History class shone with their knowledge.”

ITABE Student:

“The trip to the Titanic Museum in Belfast was great after the project in class. I had learned how many rivets and all about them in the ship, so the trip made it all real.”

Students who attended the quiz, organised by the CDVEC Adult Guidance service as an end of Christmas term celebration, reported the sense of equality they felt when they were able to contribute to the team made up of tutors and students.

DCU Writing Competition, for Adult Literacy Students.

Fourteen students entered stories; three from BARWS creative writing group were shortlisted for a prize from a total of 110 entries. BARWS were proud to have the overall winner in 2102. As in other years there was a large group of tutors and students from the scheme at the prizewinning celebration hosted by DCU Library with author Roisin Ingle.
It is the aim of the scheme to publish a book of students’ writings every two years. A working party of tutors, students and organiser take the project from initiation to launch by a well known personality. It is an enriching and rewarding project to work on. 2012 saw once again the publication of a book that was an enormous success for all concerned. Suggestions for themes were sought and 16 were submitted by students and tutors. The working party decided that amid all the national gloom and doom a book on funny stories would be welcome, as one suggestion was on embarrassing moments. This led to plenty of creativity as tutors used the theme of people’s most embarrassing moment to get students writing. What an enjoyable experience the editing committee had as they laughed their way through the stories that were submitted. Some ESOL students also submitted stories to the publication. Adult literacy is more than the teaching and learning of a set of skills. Enabling students to value their words and experiences gives meaning to the skills being developed. Thematic learning is one way of supporting this.

T.V. presenter Mark Cagney was a popular choice to launch the book “Embarrassed? I’m Scarlet”. The event was as always hosted by the Ballymun Library. The Lord Mayor of Dublin City Councillor Andrew Montague, attended and spoke of his knowledge of the work of the scheme in the area. Three students read their stories at the launch that was attended by representatives from community, public and statutory bodies. BARWS book launches are recorded as one of the best supported events in Ballymun. 2012 was no exception with in excess of 250 people attending on the Thursday afternoon of June 14th. Tutors and students were proud to also hold a display of their projects work in the library. The launch not only celebrated the work in the book, but is powerful in raising awareness of adult basic education in the area. It also provides reading material in the local community.

For the students who read their stories at the launch it often leads to improved self esteem and confidence with the knock on effect of improved motivation and learning.

The book launch was reported through articles and photos in the Northside newspaper front page. Added to this Mark Cagney spoke about the launch the following morning on his TV 3 Ireland AM Show. His enthusiasm for adult education and acknowledgement that the writing of these stories as a very enriching experience for the students; was an invaluable message on the broadcast. This was uploaded onto YouTube.

YouTube: Book Launch Mention Ireland AM

Extract from Mark Cagney’s launch speech:
“…..The ability to read and write is the seed that grows and feeds your mind, it opens doors and entire worlds, and it is your ticket to wherever you want to go. ….. the value of literacy is not just about educating yourself, or getting ahead, it also has another vital function for human beings. The written word has the power to nourish our souls, from the sheer joy and beauty of language, to its ability to transport us to places we’ve never been and make us feel like we belong there. Its ability to allow you to escape to a better place and, if only temporarily, give us respite from the harsh reality of our own world. Good writing can make us laugh, cry and think all in the space of a sentence. It is the greatest journey you can undertake without having to get up out of your seat, so to those of you who have embarked on this wonderful adventure I say Bon Voyage, and enjoy every minute of the trip…..”
An in-scheme reading evening of the book was well attended by students. Many of whom, because of being in a supportive atmosphere, had the confidence to read their stories. This was for some the first time reading in public. A slide show of photos from the launch was shown.

ESOL students also took the opportunity to share their stories. Some reporting how exciting it was to be able to send the book to their families back in their homeland to show what they were involved in. All these events lead to confidence building and increased student participation in events other than their own group or one to one tuition. Forty books went to the Public Library service and the Prison Service.

Students’ comment:
“*I was on the committee for the scheme book, and it was so enlightening! I had no idea of the knowledge necessary to put a book together, e.g. law- what can and cannot be published.*”

Student who read her story at the launch:
“For the whole day I was on the biggest high I have ever been on in a long time and it felt great.”

Student who read his story at the reading evening:
“I went to the reading night thinking I was going to listen but instead I read my story to everyone in the room. I never read in front of people like that before. But I felt absolutely fantastic. I went home very happy.”

**Literacy Awareness and Outreach**

With the belief that “Together is Better” Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme was active in a number of community organisations and committees. This ensured that knowing how to address literacy difficulties are known and reflected in organisations' practices.

**Book Exchange**
The scheme participated in the Book Exchange run monthly by the Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership. The idea behind the Book Exchange is for people to bring a book and to take a book free of charge. The aim is to make books more accessible in the community where there is no local book shop. It promotes reading thereby encouraging greater use of the public library which fully supports the project. From feedback it has been noted that people are reading books that they would not normally choose. All the scheme students are encouraged to attend on the first Thursday morning of each month. In September an information stand on our courses was staffed by tutors from the scheme at the book exchange. Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership report that during 2012 there were 2988 visits.
For photos and more information see [www.ballymun.org](http://www.ballymun.org)

**Book Launch**
The biennial launch of the schemes book of students’ stories and poems is a major event in the area of literacy awareness and outreach in the area. Press release and photo shoot calls were made to all the local and national press. Mark Cagney spoke about the launch and the people he had met on the day during his morning TV 3 Ireland AM shows that week. This was uploaded on to YouTube and photos of the celebration posted on the scheme’s website.
See YouTube: Book Launch Mention Ireland AM
Education Fair
BARWS is a member of the Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership education working group who organised the annual Education Fair. It took place in Ballymun Civic Centre on September 13th from 9.00am to 2.00pm. It was officially launched by Minister Roisin Shortall TD. Forty one education and training organisations ranging from basic education to third level staffed stands, gave out information and registered people for courses. Thirteen members of the scheme voluntarily staffed Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme stand during the morning. The CDVEC guidance service provided information throughout the day. It was a well worthwhile event for community organisations to network and showcase their activities. Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership report that over 250 local people attended. BARWS took 10 new enrolments and had 23 enquiries/referrals.

Scheme Newsletter
A team of tutors and students publish a newsletter “What’s the Story” twice a year. It features contributions from students, the range of learning opportunities, event notices and progression paths. This colourful newsletter was distributed to local organisations as well as internally in the scheme. The Christmas edition included a selection of stories from our international ESOL students who wrote about Christmas celebrations in their countries of origin.

Targeted Outreach
The scheme is actively involved in local committees such as;

EQUAL: The aim of the EQUAL Youth Project is to bring together all of the agencies that work with young people who have left school early, with the aim of an integrated approach to providing them with services. It is about maximising existing resources. It specifically targets young people between the ages of 16 and 24. There has been agreement on policies, procedures and protocols for an inter-agency model of cooperation.

- Key practitioners meet on a monthly basis to review action plans.

Agencies involved: Ballymun Job Centre, Ballymun Regional Youth Resource (BRYR), Ballark Community Training Centre, Poppintree Community Training Centre, BARWS, Youthreach, HSE, Youth Action Project (YAP), Probation Service, Dept Social Protection jobs facilitator, Trinity Comprehensive School vice principal, PACE.

Ballymun Health for All Steering Group:
BARWS are members of the Health For All steering group coordinated by the Ballymun Whitehall Partnership Community Development team. Other members include HSE Health Promotion Officer, Local drugs Task Force, Women’s Resource Centre, DCC Sports and Recreation Officer, HSE Ballymun and Larkhill Primary Care Teams and Development Officer, Poppintree Youth Project, RAPID coordinator, St Margaret’s Travellers Primary Care Team, STAR Project, SOLAS, YAP, Drop In Well, CAFTA, Job Centre, Men’s Centre, Men’s Network, Larkhill Active Retirement Group.

All these agencies have a plan that supports the development of initiatives to improve the health and quality of life of the people they serve.
NALA report, from 2011 European health literacy survey findings, that 39% of Irish adults in Ireland have inadequate or problematic health literacy. 17.5% of Irish people have difficulty understanding leaflets that accompany medicines, with those with lesser education indicating greater difficulty. Low levels of health literacy results in poorer health, poor quality of self-care and self management of disease, ineffective use of the health service and a decreased ability to advocate for oneself in the healthcare arena. We know from the 1997 adult literacy survey that older Irish adults (55-65) are more likely to struggle with everyday literacy tasks.

Events
BARWS also took part in the following 2012 events:
- Local Positive Aging Week celebrations.
- International Volunteer Day celebrations in the Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership.
- Adult Learners Week.
- Community Groups Open Days.
- Intercultural Day celebrations in Ballymun Shopping Centre. ESOL posters were displayed in Polish and Lithuanian to target the most basic of our immigrant community.

Networking
The scheme continues to have a well established local referral network, especially with Ballymun Job Centre/Local Employment Centre.

A meeting was held with the Home School Community Liaison and the principal of Holy Spirit Girls School which resulted in the scheme providing a course for parents in Helping with Homework. Our outreach worker was invited to attend a Home School Community Liaison local cluster group meeting to speak about outreaching and what the scheme has to offer in terms of what might be of interest to parents.

Scheme Web site
Having a website gives us the added value of uploading photos from events and displaying project work. This adds to our multimedia approach to advertising. Our Facebook page is accessible from this website. www.ballymunreadandwrite.ie

Poster Campaign and Outreach
At the beginning of each term posters were placed in various public venues to outreach for the course and service. Our outreach worker also contacted organisations directly to make them aware of what courses and services were on offer.

Facebook
Different forms of communication are needed depending on the target group. It was suggested by the Board of Management when reviewing our promotion strategy that a Facebook page be created. We launched our page in November 2012. This is monitored and updated with photos and news and is also accessible through our web site.
Progression

In May/June each year students are given the opportunity to formally review their learning paths and plan their progression route through personal evaluation with their tutor. All students are offered and encouraged to take the Introduction to Computers course. Learning options are circulated through the regular scheme newsletter.

Education Guidance
The City of Dublin VEC Adult Education Guidance Service is part of the service provided by the Read and Write Scheme. During 2012 the guidance counsellor provided;

- Workshops on the guidance service to tutors and students.
- Forty three students were met at 13 workshops.
- Fourteen students, 5 male 9 female, were met individually.
- Information on progression routes and a workshop on Learning to Learn was given to the ITABE course participants (Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education).

Progression other than in the scheme
One aspect of the work that the Adult Education Guidance Counsellor does with the scheme’s students is to help them to develop confidence to progress both within the scheme and outside of it, as appropriate. This is achieved through the provision of workshops and one-to-one educational guidance.
sessions, as described above. In this way, the work of the Guidance Counsellor with students can take place on an on-going basis, with the ultimate aim to assist them to progress with their educational journey.

**Intensive Tuition Adult Basic Education (ITABE)**

**AIM**

1. To provide adults with literacy/numeracy difficulties access to intensive tuition with a minimum of 6 hours tuition per week over a 14 week period.
2. To provide the opportunity for demonstrable improvement in literacy/numeracy skills.
3. To provide tuition within the context of the individual student’s needs and the level of basic skills required to function within the home, community and workplace.
4. To deliver the tuition programme within appropriate models of good practice.
5. To provide an opportunity to achieve accreditation.

**Outcome**

1. Measurable increase in participant literacy/numeracy levels.
2. Appropriate levels of engagement with the Adult Education Guidance Service.
3. There is a requirement of pre-course and post-course assessment. The pre-course assessment is a negotiated statement of the learner's perceived ability. A post-course assessment is intended to measure any progress in skills and knowledge made over the period of the course.
In Ballymun each project of 84 hours tuition was given six hours per week for fourteen weeks and this was allocated to literacy and numeracy provision. Four projects ran in 2012; twenty students, nineteen male and one female participated in the projects. On completion one student progressed to VTOS, two to non accredited literacy groups and an introduction to computers in the scheme at a higher level. Four continued onto FETAC 3 Communications and Personal Effectiveness when these courses started in January.

Thematic learning was utilized as a learning medium following an interest analysis. Projects were integrated into our underlying aim of literacy and numeracy teaching. A trip to the Titanic Museum in Belfast followed an in-depth project in literacy and numeracy in an innovative way. In addition to the areas of reading, writing, listening and speaking, the provision of a learning to learn element helped the students to understand their learning styles and how memory works. The education guidance counselor also provided one to one education guidance. There are also two computers in the room to provide a diverse learning approach. The NALA on line Write On programme as blended learning was used in this regard. A multisensory approach ensured individual learning styles were accommodated. Students were better motivated and given an opportunity to use and acknowledge their individual skills.

**Student’s Comment:**
“Being in the ITABE class has given me a great boost of confidence. I now read the newspaper and am confident to speak to people now.”

**Ensuring Equality and Diversity**

- **Age and Opportunity**

  In an era of increasing demand on individuals who want to participate fully in this growing information based society knowing how to read and navigate through digital texts is essential for everyone. Whitehall has a high proportion of residents over 55. The 2011 census shows 29% of Whitehall A, B and C are 55 and over compared to 21.78% for Dublin City. Through our networking with the active retired groups in the area there has been a steady increase in the number of mature students. Referrals come also from those who took our courses.

  The ever popular Silver Surfers, the Introduction to the Internet courses for the over fifty fives, highlights the significant benefits of learning to older members of our community. BARWS ICT courses ensured all older people are given the opportunity and support to engage with technology in a meaningful and beneficial way. We are meeting the needs of the community with appropriate jargon free explanations of new technology appropriate to this age group. Photos were attached, and emailed as attachments for the first time. Others looked up the census records, and holidays with destinations researched. Cinema and theatre shows have been booked on line and films previewed. A group met in an Internet Café to support the learning outside of the classroom.
78 students engaged in the DEP-FIT BenefitIT3 project whose purpose and aim is inclusion specifically for senior citizens, disadvantaged, unemployed and people with little or no formal qualifications.

**Student’s comment:**
“The diversity of the class is great. It allows you to meet other people and you feel comfortable with them.”

A course “Know Your Mobile” was also popular as people were not using their mobile to full benefit. Reports came in of the benefits for people using the alarm and organiser features especially.

**Student’s comment:**
“No matter what your difficulty, it was teased out in the next class.”

- **Learning disability**
The scheme continues to collaborate with St Michaels House in providing literacy tuition and in the St Michaels House training centres, Northbrook and OMNI Park. There is also a self/family referral group in CDVEC Adult Education Centre.

- **Travelling community**
According to the 2011 census 246 people in the Ballymun area identified themselves as Travellers. They account for 1.53% of the local population compared to the national average of 0.64%.

Since its inception BARWS has supported the travelling community by providing tuition at their local St. Margaret’s Community Centre. Others take tuition in various venues provided by the scheme on a one to one and group basis.

In 2012 BARWS tutors delivered basic English, Numeracy and Health Literacy. Health Literacy incorporated a social model of health. A thematic approach held interest while improving reading, writing and oral skills.

- **English for speakers of other languages: ESOL**
In the 2011 census 12.4% of the population of Ballymun wards A, B, C, D are non Irish nationals. This is an increase from 2006 of 2.3%. This compares to the national average of 14.49%. The largest nationality was Polish 3.7% followed by UK 1.3% and Lithuanian 0.9%.

The scheme provides free classes in ESOL to asylum seekers, refugees, those with leave to remain and migrant workers. ESOL has much in common with adult literacy. It is about “survival” English that impacts on daily life. Students who come from a range of countries have come to live and work in the Ballymun area. These classes are at basic level for those who have had no previous knowledge of English. The levels are AO (pre-beginner) as defined by ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) and A1 beginner ALTE, or level 3 FETAC Language as a Second Language.

In 2012 there were seventy-eight adults from the community who studied ESOL at AO level in the scheme. The majority were Polish Nationals, with Lithuania being the next highest number for country of origin. Posters in Polish and Lithuanian were displayed locally for these classes. This ensures that we target those with most basic language needs. All ESOL students as participants in the scheme were invited to write for our scheme book in 2012. Some reported how delighted they were to be able to send the book home to their country of origin as an example of what they were engaged in, in Ireland.
For the Christmas edition of the Scheme Newsletter ESOL students wrote either personally or in groups about Christmas in their countries of origin. This was circulated to all in the scheme and to other local community groups. Feedback was very positive.

**Student’s comment:**
“I did not have the confidence to talk with my work colleagues at break time. The classes have helped me with the words and expressions that are used to talk about everyday things.”

(“Central Statistics Office – Census SAPS Micro Data File”)

**Ensuring Standards**

The following were implemented from our 2012 action plan for improvements:

- A selection of coloured paper was made available in all tuition areas to accommodate students with Specific Learning Difficulties.
- Resources for students/tutors were updated. For example, reading glasses and equipment to support tutors e.g. label printer, laminator, and resource book display units. A camera, globe, head sets for skyping were also provided,
- Two laptops were purchased.
- Tutors with expertise in IT advised on the updating of ICT in the scheme.
- The Interactive Whiteboard is used by groups especially the Know your Mobile and Women Activists Irish History in the CDVEC Adult Education Services Centre.
- Computers are available in unit 2 Partnership enterprise centre, in the scheme room in CDVEC and Geraldstown House with internet access by dongle if no wifi available.
- Tutor mentoring was encouraged and supported.
All applicants for tutor training were interviewed and 22 selected. Garda vetting is a requirement.

Good practice for literacy provision includes assessment for teaching and learning in the form of initial, formative and summative. In 2012 a standardised Assessment Tool for Teaching & Learning was developed by the CDVEC. To support the implementation of the use of this tool training for group tutors was provided through City of Dublin VEC and twenty-one group tutors took part in the training. Since then, within BARWS, the tool has been rolled out for use with non accredited literacy groups and with 1-1 literacy students.

**FETAC Quality Assurance:**

**External FETAC Authenticators Report stated:**
“Good practice was observed, such as, all modules were comprehensively covered with evidence appropriately presented. It was shown that the tutors had a good understanding of modules and the standard requirements. There was a comprehensive internal verification system in place with all documentation provided.”

### Scheme Participation Charts

**January – December 2012**

**Profile of Participants**

(Excludes International Students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age/Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>18-20</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>21-24</td>
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<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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30
Male age at leaving school
Excludes International Students

- 12 or Under: 3%
- Age 13-14: 29%
- Age 15-16: 34%
- Age 17-18: 9%
- Above: 25%

Female age at leaving school
Exclude International Students

- 12 or Under: 5%
- Age 13-14: 18%
- Age 15-16: 25%
- Age 17-18: 8%
- Above: 36%

Ratio Female to Male Student
Excludes International Students

- Male: 64%
- Female: 36%
A Selection of Feedback from our Students:

**Literacy Groups:**
“I feel I learned I was not as bad as I thought I was and not as good as I could be”.

“I had to do an exam in work, out of forty two I came out on top. My class gave me this confidence.”

“I enjoy the openness and the sharing of all.”

“What I have learned in the class has helped me to progress in my job. It has helped my confidence and my reading and writing.”

**Spellwell Student:**
“It is very enjoyable. I look forward to it every week.”

“It gets your mind working; I am more aware of words and am more confident about spelling. I have started texting now because I have more confidence about my spelling.”

**Silver Surfers: Sent from an internet café:**
“I find this very interesting and I won’t be afraid to go into an internet café after this morning’s class.”

“I learned a lot in this class I can now do Internet banking, access google and links, email and put my photos on the computer. It was a most enjoyable class.”

**Know Your Mobile student:**
“For so long my family and friends were saying...Are you not able to text? It’s easy. I will show you sometime but it never happened! Now after this course I can text and do many things with my phone, it’s really fantastic. I am not afraid to experiment. Now my friends say isn’t it great for keeping in touch. So we are doing just that!”

**Creative Writing Group:**
“Since doing this class I have been reading more, and have an increased love of reading”

“I am doing things I wasn’t interested in when I was in school.”

**Introduction to Poetry Group:**
“I consider that the Scheme has impacted greatly on my life. I read something in the paper recently and because of the poetry class I understood what it was.”

“This class puts us in the great position of using and developing skills in literacy, writing and understanding – if you don’t use it, you lose it.”

**ESOL student:**
“It’s important to know when you go to the doctor what the doctor is saying if your child is sick. The course helps me with vocabulary for these situations.”
Women Activists in Irish History Student:
“I always loved history but never learned anything about the women who played a very important part behind the scenes.”

“All their (women) hard work was never acknowledged. I am really enjoying the course. I am even looking up history on my computer as I have also learned that skill in the scheme”

Health Literacy:
Mens’ groups:
“This course should be done in schools so people would be healthy before it’s too late.”

“I respect my body more now.”

“Your body is the greatest machine ever.”

Womens’ group:
“The tutor was able to bring this down to the level that everyone in the group could understand and she always checked that we knew what she was talking about. I was never afraid to ask a question. It was brilliant.”

One to One Literacy:
“I have learned my address and to fill in forms. Before I would leave if I was handed a form to fill in, now I am able.”

“I feel I can read more of the paper.”

FETAC 3 Accredited Group:
“I used to panic terrible when I was doing courses at the beginning but now I’m more relaxed. I can speak up now and I have been made a supervisor in the job. I used to stand back and let someone else do things now I am doing the paperwork in the job and everything.”

“I am more confident in a group situation and have become more relaxed talking about issues that I wouldn’t have talked about in public before. When my grandchild came home with a spelling question I was able to answer him and it made me feel great as I could never do that before.”

“It makes you feel more independent. I know how to write a letter and use a dictionary for spelling now. I don’t have to ask my wife anymore.”
The team who contributed to the success of BARWS in 2012

18 Group Tutors

Eileen Griffin
Vera Hughes
Deirdre Whyte
Colette Smith
Aine Lavelle
Anne Murphy
Christine Carroll
Claire Hand
Catherine Freeman
Regina Tunney
Maeve Dooley
Denise Griffin
Victoria Sargent
Breda Rogers
Mary Archer
Geraldine Hanan
Mary Valentine
Denise Kinsella

33 One to One Voluntary Tutors

Colleen Fitzgerald
Anne Murphy
Helen Mulhern
Angela Noonan
Clare Neylan
Aileen McDowell
Aideen Foran
Patricia Flannery
Mary McCarthy
Michelle Rolston
Amy Fogarty
Ann Bradley
Deirdre Goodman
Phyllis Morris
Bernadette Quigley
Ella McCarthy
Helen Curtis
Deirdre Keating
Linda Morley
Shay McConville
Mary Twohig
Valerie Duhy
Joey Hughes
Martha Savage
Derbhile Byrne
Tracy Deery
Lisa Keenan
Kathleen Friel
Grainne NicGibb
Breda Matthews
Anne O’Neill
Yvonne Graham
Ann Healy

Sessional Creche Worker
Rebecca Sherlock

Tutor Training Team
Jean Brophy
Vera Hughes
Mary Love

Scheme Support Team (part time)
Jean Brophy: Support Tutor & FETAC coordinator
Liz O’Rourke: Workshop Supervisor
Linda Morley/Yvonne O’Dowd: Administration

ITABE Project coordinator
Liz O’Rourke

Adult Education Guidance Service
Tina Dowling/ Michelle Morrissey

Full time Organiser
Mary Love
Acknowledgements

Special thanks are extended to:

- City of Dublin VEC/Department of Education and Skills under the National Development Plan (N.D.P) and EU – for office and tuition facilities, the core grant and continuous professional development.

- Trinity Comprehensive Schools for tuition rooms both daytime and evening Jan – June.

- Health Services Executive for tuition rooms and crèche facilities in Geraldstown House.

- DEP and FIT ltd: BenefiT 3 Initiative: This project is assisted by funding from the Benefit Initiative of the Department of Communications, Energy and National Resources.

- St Joseph’s primary school for tuition room.

- Holy Spirit Girls primary school for tuition room.

- Local Employment Centre/Job Centre for their facilities for evening computer courses.

- Public Library for their continued support and hosting the Scheme book launch.

- Staff including crèche workers, caretaking and canteen staff in the tuition venues.

- Staff in the Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership.

Scheme staff, volunteers and students for their unfailing enthusiasm, cooperation, engagement and support at all events.
Conclusion:

The new census figures from 2011 gave us the basis for informed outreach and programme planning. We delivered our literacy programme which responded to the needs of individuals and the community through co-operation with other organisations. Basic education was delivered in a wide variety of venues with the relevant supports, such as, crèche facilities provided by HSE Family Resource Centre Geraldstown House and the adult environment of the CDVEC Adult Education Centre, as well as our work in other supportive community venues. Working with partners in the community also ensures that knowing how to address literacy difficulties was reflected in organisations’ practices.

The options for learning were again increased in 2012. We provided an innovative response to identified needs and student feedback for example; following a scheme trip to Glasnevin Cemetery Museum a course in history with emphasis on Women Activists in Irish History with progression to Civic Social and Political Education was delivered. In addition the demand for Health Literacy increased by fifty one students from the previous year, when it was first introduced as a learning option. The Family Literacy programme expanded to include Managing Homework along with Storysacks and FETAC level 3 Child Development and Play. Feedback and evidence in the comments from students show, that engagement in our adult literacy scheme led to increased self confidence, improved employability skills, improved health and family management with positive impact on children’s school performance.

We continued to offer accredited courses at FETAC level 3 and 4 and met the demand by offering courses at flexible times and start dates. All FETAC activity was comprehensively covered through the FETAC Quality Assurance. Standards were maintained by providing tutors with continuous professional development. Certification is one way of measuring outcomes but it does not necessarily capture the wider benefits or qualitative outcomes. The Assessment tool for Teaching and Learning developed through the CDVEC was implemented in non accredited tuition.

Students were encouraged and supported to broaden their social, cultural and historical knowledge base. This was done, in addition to classroom based studies by facilitating them to visit places and attend events of interest as well as visiting institutions of the state such as the Oireachtas and the Mansion House. 2012 saw the publishing of yet another scheme book Embarrassed? I’m Scarlet! with a highly successful launch hosted by Ballymun Library.

We continued to outreach our service using a number of tried and tested methodologies along with new approaches such as facebook. Targeted outreach reflecting the needs of the demographic areas ensured all students in our area were catered for. The older population as indicated in the 2011 census in Whitehall made up the majority in our ICT programmes. International students came mainly from the new apartments.

Progression of students is central to our work. Support staff and tutors were in constant communication as to the best progression options through which the students would have the best possible outcome from their engagement with the scheme. An important aspect of this progression was the ITABE programme where people in 1-1 tuition progressed and got the benefit of extra hours of tuition. This in turn gave them the opportunity to engage at a group level without the stress of following an accredited programme. With this dedicated time they became comfortable with group work and eventually some moved seamlessly into accredited courses. The scheme is aware of the necessity to meet the needs of others in the community such as older people, those with disability, members of the travelling community and migrant workers. Specialised tuition was provided to meet the needs of these groups.
We worked also with those who were unemployed, both long term and recent, as well as those not in the labour market to up-skill and update students especially in the area of modern technology.

Literacy is a right for individuals and communities to continue and extend their education. Apart from a set of skills, it is about encouraging people to live meaningful lives with engagement in their communities. This report allows us to understand the difference that hard work by students and staff can make to a person’s life on an everyday basis. The work of 18 group tutors, 33 one to one voluntary tutors, management, support staff and supportive organisations, who are acknowledged within the report, helped the Ballymun Adult Read and Write Scheme deliver, once again, a quality literacy service to the community in 2012.
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