

Ellingham Achieves Quality Standard for Information Advice and Guidance

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Leytonstone based Ellingham Employment Services, a charity offering vocational guidance training and supported employment service for people who have learning disabilities, were recently presented with the Matrix Standard for information advice and guidance services.

Mr. Duncan Smith, MP, presented a plaque to Ellingham's Chief Executive, Chris Bailey and Chair, Peter Le Rasle on Friday 28 March 2008. During his visit Mr Smith met Ellingham's staff and young people between 16-25 with learning disabilities, who were previously not in employment, education or training (NEET), but are now participating in the 'Earn' project.

The Earn project which is funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), works with the young people to improve their confidence and employability and support them into paid employment. Participants on this innovative project have also had the chance to produce multimedia CV's and some have already begun paid employment.

Mike Pettifer, LSC Area Director for London East said:

"The Learning and Skills Council would like to congratulate Ellingham on achieving the Matrix Standard. Helping young people with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities understand the options open to them gives them a chance to fulfil their aspirations and fully participate in education and training.”

Chris Bailey, Chief Executive of Ellingham said:

“We are delighted that Ellingham have been recognised for the quality of the information, advice and guidance they give to young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to prospective employers. We are committed to breaking down barriers and perceptions about people with disabilities and to provide real employment opportunities for them to reach their full potential.”

- Ends -

Notes to editors

Ellingham Employment Services

Ellingham Employment Services are specialists in preparing & placing people with learning disabilities, many of whom may also have physical or sensory disabilities, into a range of employment opportunities throughout North East & Central London.

Ellingham Employment Services Ltd is a company limited by guarantee and registered charity, established in 1985, with finances provided through contracts with Local Authorities, Department of Work & Pensions (through direct JobCentre Plus funding), & through ESF co-financing through Learning Skills Councils & JobCentre Plus.

Considerable work has been achieved by Ellingham on a European Portfolio with a range of transnational European links with Florence, Holland and Eire.

Ellingham provides a comprehensive vocational service, including detailed evaluation and vocational assessment procedures, work experience and supported employment placement opportunities.

Other projects currently running at Ellingham include ‘Oasis’

Oasis is a horticulture based vocational training programme funded by the Learning and Skills Council and European Social Fund, for people with learning disabilities who are long-term unemployed (often with no qualifications or previous work experience). This multi-layered programme provides learners with an individually tailored learning plan to ensure successful outcomes within the structure of the accredited programme (NVQ1). By the use of the uniquely

developed modular programme which combines practical elements of horticulture manufacturing, retail & environmental studies (recycling) & ICT as a route to more formal learning, beneficiaries are gaining qualifications in vocational skills as a start to lifelong learning whilst they are progressing towards employment.

Oasis has been a huge success, with the contract extended to June 2008. 11 People have so far progressed into employment, and by June, 30 people will have gained NVQ1 in Horticulture.

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

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