

## Mother with moderate learning difficulties in suspected abusive relationship

### Key messages:

1. The personal, social and emotional aspects of the EYFS course helped the learner to articulate her behaviour and that of her family and to see how it affected her child;
2. Working with different agencies as part of the course helped the learner to build up trust in statutory agencies.

*“In many ways the course has given her support at a very critical period of her life and that of her child.”*

This learner attended the introductory Early Years Foundation Stage course and progressed to the short 30 hour course. She was a white female who had moderate learning difficulties. Her four year old child attended the nursery that was a partner for this programme. The mother was targeted to attend the course because the nursery staff had concerns about the child and had seen evidence of domestic violence to the mother.

During the course, the learner disclosed her own abuse as a child to the teacher. It became apparent that her husband was very controlling and constantly rang or texted her throughout the course. Most of her course work was destroyed at home, which she initially blamed on her young child. As the course progressed, she gained in confidence and began to disclose about domestic violence to the tutor, and to share with the group the difficulties she found with parenting. The personal, social and emotional aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage course helped her to articulate her behaviour and that of her family and to see how it affected her child.

The joined up approach of the family learning team and the nursery school helped her to see that agencies worked together. She started to trust people more and to get more involved with the agencies that were trying to help her. When she decided to leave her husband, the group provided a supportive environment for her. Although she was not able to attend all of the sessions, she was there most of the time and did attend the trip to the farm at the end of the course.

The Family Learning tutor commented:

*“The trip to the farm was wonderful for her and her child as she was able to put into practice what she had learned on the course. She was*

*communicating very effectively with her child. It appeared as if the support of the group and staff had given her more confidence as well as the skills. Her child was really happy.”*

Bolton Family Learning