



## **BUTLINS - SKILLS FOR FUN PROJECT**

Since 1936 Butlins has been the most recognised holiday company in the UK, offering guests entertainment, great facilities and an atmosphere to have fun and relax with family and friends. Butlins Skills for Fun Project, funded by the European Social Fund, commenced in October 2004. It is based at Butlins, Skegness and provides Basic Skills training for staff at the Butlins Holiday Camp and for employees of local businesses in the surrounding rural area. Coastal employees are often involved in the tourist industry locally and therefore the centre remains open in the evenings to accommodate shift patterns and longer summer working hours.

A large proportion of the staff at Butlins are foreign nationals from 11 different countries in Europe, the majority being from Bulgaria. The centre is a useful base for foreign nationals to come and learn English skills for their work at Butlins. This is of help to the students, saves time for the Butlins Team Managers who are instructing their staff and is of benefit to visitors enjoying their stay on the Resort. Attendees of English classes include waitresses, bar tenders, caterers, cleaners, shop assistants, amusement park and entertainment workers. Some of those taking Basic Skills lack the IT skills necessary to undertake on line tests and diagnosis. They benefit from our offer of Information Technology skills from basic to advanced levels, and some have even gained the Computer Literacy and Information Technology Certificate or the European Computer Driving Licence.

### **National Qualifications**

Students who have gained confidence and reached the required standards necessary are encouraged to take City and Guilds national qualifications in English. This may take anywhere between 6 to 40 hours depending on the ability of the student. The literacy and numeracy qualifications are part of the National Qualification Framework and are available at Levels 1 and 2.

Learning materials and tuition are customised and based on what Team Managers require from their employees, e.g. waitresses need to be aware of the English pronunciation and spelling of vegetables, sweets etc when dealing with customers. Training packages for local firms are also customised, wherever possible, to be conducive with individual learning requirements whilst remaining within the guidelines and framework of the relevant course.

### **Promotional Events at the Centre**

Many people who feel confident with their literacy, feel their inability to correctly use a PC would jeopardise a potential successful result. We therefore offer IT training alongside Basic Skills and hold specialised events for people from different ages and walks of life.

- Two separate Apprenticeship week courses involving students from local childcare and electrical firms taking part in residential outward bound activities alongside their studies of literacy and numeracy.
- A weekend event for the Sure Start project, involving disadvantaged families, working together on team building exercises together with information technology taster courses and literacy skills.
- An 80's theme weekend involving a partnership with Butlins and a local Vauxhall Dealership to encourage visitors to gain an awareness of using the computer for internet access to break down barriers of I.T. for future involvement of literacy tests. This was mainly for middle-aged visitors.

### **Impact**

134 Diagnostic tests, 106 Enrolments onto Literacy/Numeracy courses, 22 Companies assisted, 38 Literacy tests passed, 8 Numeracy tests passed, 15 CLAIT and 3 ECDL exams passed by employees who had previously taken Basic Skills qualifications and gained confidence through their achievements and 46 Completed I.T. taster courses using basic skills.