

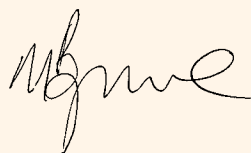
## IN THIS ISSUE

## Director's message

Welcome to this 12th edition of our Trust newsletter. As usual we have included information that we hope you will find useful as models of good practice.

This time the theme is schools and practitioners; quite timely in view of the current draft legislation, regulations and draft SEN Code of Practice. There is a responsibility on all classroom teachers to be able to identify all children having special educational needs and to put the most effective interventions in place.

There's never been a more important time to support our school's workforce and we remain committed to helping.



Mel Byrne  
Director

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## **Focus on... examples of good practice**

### **One-to-one literacy support – a case study on how it can work**

Springboard for Children provides one-to-one literacy tuition and support within schools working in some of the most economically and socially deprived communities of the UK. Last year we supported 594 children and young people in primary and secondary schools, providing 21,964 individual lessons. The children we teach have considerable barriers to their literacy learning and have likely been referred to other interventions before coming to Springboard. Often children will have experienced unsettled, or sometimes chaotic, home environments and many will have specific learning difficulties. Without Springboard's provision, the children we teach would fall further and further behind their peers.

In Springboard centres, pupils are taught by a skilled adult outside their main classroom. Tutors use a phonics-based, flexible programme which ensures children have the building blocks of literacy in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes to apply when they are back in the classroom. Pupils are identified as needing support by their schools and we focus on individualised learning, identifying and building on children's strengths. All Springboard's work is based on the value and impact we know one to one support can have. We believe that every child has the right to a fair chance of future success and for those who need specialist support, we are there to help them make a giant leap forward into a brighter future. Like Aiden.

Aiden started at a Springboard centre last September at the beginning of Year 3. His class teacher suspected that Aidan was on the Autistic Spectrum as he presented complex needs and had been a challenge to teach. It was very hard to predict what he would be like from one lesson to the next; he needed to know exactly what was coming and he reacted very badly to a change in routine. He also had very low confidence and self-esteem and would often refuse to read a book because he said it was too hard.

Aiden was very aware of his difficulties and how he compared to other children in his class; the fact that he couldn't read at the same level of his peers really affected him. He could be very negative about himself and would often be in tears because he was so discouraged. Despite these barriers to his learning, his Springboard tutor persevered and gradually he was willing to attempt more books and his reading started to improve. It often seemed like one step forward, three steps back but he gradually settled down and made fantastic progress. The more progress he made, the more confident he became.

Aiden made three sub-levels of progress in both reading and writing in the three terms of the intervention and having gone from a 4 to 21 on PM Benchmark he has gone from a non-reader to a reader. He is visibly proud of himself and the progress he has made and his face lights up with a smile when he has been able to read a book. His teacher has also expressed how pleased she is with his progress and how well he has responded to Springboard's intervention.

Aiden's story is one of thousands of children across the UK. We know that it is still a struggle to meet the needs of children with SEN or literacy difficulties. If you'd like to know more about the work of Springboard, please contact [Carolyn Clarke](#) or visit the website [www.springboard.org.uk/schools](http://www.springboard.org.uk/schools)

Springboard are also Facebook [www.facebook.com/springboardforchildren](http://www.facebook.com/springboardforchildren) and Twitter [www.twitter.com/springboard4](http://www.twitter.com/springboard4)



# Bloomfield Learning Centre In-School Screening

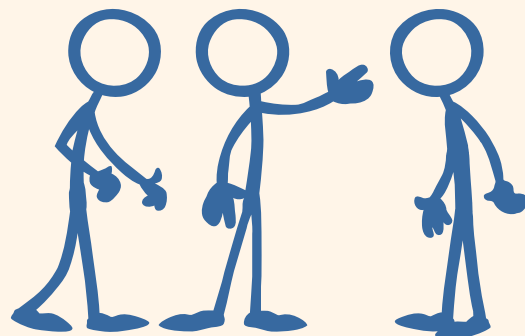


The Bloomfield Learning Centre is a specialist assessment and teaching unit for 6-18 year olds with SpLD. Here Jane Orr, Headteacher, explains their mission to help children, from low income families, who are under-achieving at school; children whose parents cannot afford to pay for private dyslexia tuition.

We aim to teach our pupils to read and write as quickly as possible, providing them with the literacy skills needed to cope in the classroom and to ensure they have access to the National Curriculum.

At the Learning Centre, we work closely with SENCOs and class teachers, throughout London. We are acutely aware of the pressure schools are under and how challenging it can be to provide targeted teaching for every child's specific needs. An increasing number of schools have been requesting our help. To this end, we have compiled a screening package designed to identify those pupils who may have specific learning difficulties.

If you would like to know more about the Bloomfield Learning Centre and the services offered, please contact them on 020 3228 9767 or [jane@blearning.biz](mailto:jane@blearning.biz).





## Project Highlights

### Inspired Educators Project : Mencap training to address impact of teaching assistants

James Bradley, Mencap, explains how they are addressing concerns raised in a recent report.

Recent research has countered the assumption that Teaching Assistant (TA) support is always beneficial to the progress of pupils with special education needs (SEN) or lower attainment. The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff in schools (DISS) Project carried out a large scale investigation over a five year period, collecting data from over 8,000 pupils.

The research, carried out at the Institute of Education (IOE), London, had shocking results "...in the seven year groups surveyed we found no evidence that TA support had helped pupils make better progress in science, maths or English."<sup>1</sup>

This led to the following explanation of these unexpected and troubling findings:

- Support from TAs was not in addition to teacher support – it was instead of
- Pupils with SEN or lower attainment were separated from their peers, the classroom and the teacher when supported by TAs
- TAs often had the main responsibility for the planning, delivering and differentiating of work (teaching!) for pupils with SEN or lower attainment
- TAs' pedagogical input was well intentioned, but the choice and quality of tasks and their verbal interactions with pupils were not always appropriate

The research director, Professor Peter Blatchford, says: "While TAs are extremely dedicated – many working extra hours without pay – their routine allocation to pupils most in need seems to be at the heart of the problem. **TAs cannot be blamed for this.** Policymakers and school staff need to rethink the way TAs are used in classrooms and prepared for the tasks that teachers give them. This will help maximise their huge potential to help teachers and pupils."

<sup>1</sup> The Deployment and Impact of Support Staff Project



Mencap has spoken to its network of Young Ambassadors<sup>2</sup> to find out firsthand what challenges children with a learning disability face in mainstream education and how TA support affects their time at school. One such Young Ambassador, Eleanor Forrester, 21, was able to share her personal experience of TA support.

Young people aged 16-25 with a learning disability have the opportunity to become a Young Ambassador for Mencap, where they volunteer for 6 months and have the chance to influence decision-making to benefit everyone with a learning disability in the wider community. To find out more, visit [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

Eleanor has fond memories of her time at primary school, but feels her secondary school could have done a lot more to create the kind of inclusive environment she experienced before Key Stage Three, saying: “Secondary school was completely different; many of my teachers were not able to provide the support I needed. Her most frustrating time at school came when she began studying for her GCSEs: “I knew I needed a good level of maths to be able to get a job when I left school so I really wanted to do well. My maths teacher decided that I would be more comfortable in a separate maths class with other pupils with special needs. The only problem was this class was taught by TAs who often made me feel like they didn’t understand the subject. Sometimes they would be late - not even showing up one time - and sometimes we would repeat work that we had done before and I would be confused by how they taught me.”

The DISS Project showed that policymakers and school staff need to have a clear and consistent view of how TAs are used in the classroom, then make sure they are prepared for their role in the right way. The DISS research first started grabbing headlines in 2009. Since then many schools have begun to rethink the way TAs are used to support learning, however Mencap recognises that each school is at a different point on this journey. That’s why the Inspired Educators Project was established with the aim of supporting schools to maximise the effectiveness of TAs.

Whether you are a teacher, SENCo or senior leader our project can support you. We will work with 1,500 people across England this academic year.



<sup>2</sup> Young Ambassadors are young people with a learning disability who support Mencap and the work that we do. Find out more at <http://www.mencap.org.uk/what-we-do/our-projects/inspire-me/young-ambassadors>

## New interactive site helps schools support all pupils communicate to the best of their ability

The Communication Trust has launched the [Communication Commitment](#), a new interactive website for schools. It's a simple way to ensure all pupils communicate to the best of their ability by developing a whole-school approach to communication.

The Commitment helps schools to support all of their pupils, including those with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), to communicate better – part of the Ofsted Framework and helping preparations for the SEND Reforms, due to be implemented in September 2014.

Once schools register, they gain access to free information, toolkits, resources and a personalised Action Plan to develop the best approach for their school and pupils. Then they can find out about our expert member organisations who offer a range of support to help schools go further.

Go to the site and start on your Commitment Journey today!

[www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/commitment](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/commitment)



## News

### Have your say on government changes!

The Department for Education has launched a consultation on the SEN Code of Practice. The Trust will be responding to this and would like to know your views. Alternatively, you can respond to government directly [here](#).

The closing date for responses is 9th December 2013.



## Diary dates

### 22nd-25th January

BETT Show London

### 14th-15th February

IIC Show (Inclusion, Independence and Choice) Manchester

### 27th-28th February

Education and Innovation Conference Manchester

### 20th-22nd March 2014

The Education Show Birmingham NEC







## Your say



We are always interested in what our stakeholders have to say, as this helps to shape our work ahead.

If you are a parent and would like to share your experiences with other parents, perhaps you'd like to join our group on Facebook [Parent Champions?](#)

If you are a professional and would like to keep up to date on Trust activities, you can join us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)  

We are always looking for contributors for our newsletters so please get in touch if you have an item you would like to be included in the newsletter. Alternatively if there is something you think we need to cover, please let us know.

Email the Editor, Sarah Hanna at [sarah@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk](mailto:sarah@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk)

