

Newsletter

Issue No. 4 – Sept 2011

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1. Director's message

For some, most, or all of us, we are enjoying any number of permutations of the following: reconvening after a well-earned summer break, fast approaching the end of another quarterly reporting phase and preparing for a busy autumn term packed full of conferences, events and training days. You will see later that we are holding another Stakeholder Training Day on October 27th. This day is free and all are welcome. This time we are focusing on a key area of our work, how we inform and support parents and carers, and what more we can do to ensure their views are carried back to government to shape future policy.

We will be offering our support and expertise to the Pathfinder pilots and Achievement for All.

I am delighted this time that we have not one but two examples of best practice to share with you. I am always encouraged and warmed by the fantastic work that goes on across the country by colleagues.

2. Focus on ... Best Practice

The Bloomfield Learning Centre. The Bloomfield Learning Centre is a specialist assessment and teaching unit for 6-16 year olds, with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties. Based at Guy's Hospital, London, we are a charity with no statutory funding.

We aim to help all those referred to us, regardless of their families' financial situation. To this end, we keep our fees to a minimum. Funding for lessons is mixed; some schools and parents contribute, whilst other lessons are funded through charitable bursaries. All fees are subsidised.

Our six part-time teachers and three assessors are amongst the most highly qualified in London. They have substantial classroom experience, as well as additional specialist dyslexia training with RSA, Hornsby or OCR level 7 qualifications. All teaching is multi-sensory and individual.

We carry out four assessments every week and provide tuition for seventy-five children in hour long sessions.

We also provide training courses, for teachers and teaching assistants, in synthetic phonics and dyslexia awareness. Three of our teachers are the creators of Dandelion Readers.

Contact:
Jane Orr, Head teacher
T: 020 3228 9767 (term times only)
www.blearning.biz

Discover Children's Story Centre
Based in Stratford east London – this hands on story centre for 0-11 year olds focuses on literacy, creativity and play. The centre hosts a number of stimulating environments including an indoor Story Trail featuring multi-sensory exhibits such as a Sparkly River and Magic Tower. Story Building workshops are held on the Trail which support oral storytelling and the creation of original stories. When schools book a session they also have access to an outdoor garden.

Discover also houses an exhibition programme, currently Welcome to Monsterville a monster town designed by illustrators Sarah McIntyre, Neal Layton and Ed Vere. Workshops designed around the exhibition focus on persuasive writing/speaking and listening and storytelling.

Both programmes are available all year round and are augmented with visits from authors and seasonally focused sessions. Discover also offers an extensive range of outreach programmes and teacher training.



To find out more go to
<http://www.discover.org.uk/schoolsandgroups/visitdiscover/>

Images:
TMitchell 1011117 1104 - Story Trail – Sparkly River
Contact:
Kate Wolstenholme, Learning Manager.

3. Partnership Work

Cara Evans from the Communication Trust is now on maternity leave, we wish her all the best; Beki Martin is providing cover during this period. Steve Huggett is the new Director of The Autism Education Trust. The three Trusts are members of the Strategic Partnership Board providing a strategic role. Some outcomes of this close collaborative working to date includes raising awareness of specific learning difficulties and communication issues by all three Trusts at important training events for parents and teachers, joint development of our professional development Frameworks to inform the school workforce and joint messaging to government such as our round table

meeting with Sarah Teather and subsequent follow up. The Trusts will be working together to further develop an offer of implementation of the Green Paper, how we can strengthen the Code of Practice and how we ensure our children and young people are included in the offers around the Pathfinder pilots.

4. Project Highlights

We are supporting organisations, both large and small to upscale their work and to roll out examples of best practice. One example of this includes an innovative project working in an inner city academy supporting parents and children through a crucial transitional phase from primary to secondary education. This work, delivered by Springboard for Children, will use a buddying mentorship initiative which we will be keen to report back on. Other examples, delivered by the BDA, include working with parents and volunteers in the community to support children with dyslexia in workshops, providing training to young offender institutions and direct support to young offenders and supporting schools to provide a dyslexia friendly environment whilst mapping to existing frameworks.

5. Latest News

Sarah Hanna our Trust Manager has left to begin her maternity leave. Congratulations to Sarah and her husband on the birth of a baby boy, Xavier on 26th August 2011.



We are pleased to welcome Sharanjit Sahi as Sarah's maternity cover. Sharanjit joins us from CfBT Education Trust and brings valuable operational and project management skills to the role.

6. Events

SureStart Conference

14th September 2011
Central London

The theme this year is 'New Ways of Working'. The event is timed to consider changes to the EYFS in light of recommendations of the recent Independent Review. The conference brings together 150 – 200 Sure Start Children's Centre Leaders and their staff.

The DST will be attending to engage with professionals about dyslexia.



SEN, London

14th – 15th October

The Business Design Centre

The DST will be available on stand 12A.

The conference looks at SEN on a budget, Technology, Green Paper and policy shifts and teacher training and CPD across the 2 days.

The DST Stakeholder Day

27th October 2011

Victoria Park Plaza, London

You are invited to a free day where The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust will be launching a new project aimed at supporting parents and carers in the community with children with dyslexia and specific learning difficulties.

Keynote speech from The National Network of Parent Carer Forums.

We will be gathering your views and opinions on key issues to feed back to government.

If you would like to book your place, please email info@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk

Topics for discussion.

1) How do we communicate effectively with parents in the community?

2) Where would you like to meet, what issues would you like to discuss, how should we present the information?

3) Bridging the gap between home, school and specialist help; how to get the best out of parent champions.

4) What is working already that you would like more of, for example, models of good practice?

7. Your say

We recently received your feedback on our interventions for literacy website and are now updating information, which will be completed at the end September. Take a look at

www.interventionsforliteracy.org.uk

If you have an item you would like included in the newsletter, please email us at

info@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk