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# The Primary Network

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Issue 16 January 2012

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• The challenge for school leadership after a successful Ofsted  
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## Follow us on Twitter

The Primary Network team are on Twitter.

Go to [http://twitter.com/primary\\_network](http://twitter.com/primary_network) to follow us and keep up-to-date with all our primary activities.

### Developing leaders for tomorrow: primary – cohort 7

**Following the success of the previous six cohorts we are currently taking bookings for cohort 7 of the Developing leaders for tomorrow: primary programme.**

This 14 month practical leadership programme is for teachers in the early stages of their career, who demonstrate clear leadership potential. The programme aims to build leadership capacity in schools and improve achievement by developing future school leaders. It encourages aspirations towards whole-school leadership and raises awareness of key education issues.

For further information and to book places please email [primaryleadership@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:primaryleadership@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

### Primary Network Guide 2011-2012

As part of your membership to The Schools Network, we have put together a Primary Network Guide detailing all that we can offer you and your school. You should have received a copy in school before the Christmas break.

We hope you find it a useful resource. If you have any questions on the guide or did not receive a copy please contact the primary team at [primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

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# Welcome

## Sue Williamson, Chief Executive, The Schools Network

A Happy New Year and welcome to the January edition of the Primary Network newsletter. My new year's resolution is that we must do more to develop as an organisation supporting education from 3-19 years.

The primary network is very important to us, but we need to do more to bring together primary, special and secondary colleagues to understand the challenges we face and to appreciate the quality of each other's work. I remember visiting Robin Hood Junior & Infant School in Birmingham in my early days at the then Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. I was stunned by the quality of the work and the skills that the pupils in years 2 and 3 had. As a former Headteacher, I realised that I had under-estimated the capabilities of students entering my school. Transition is still a big issue in England – we need to get it right.

My ambition is for the Primary Network to get stronger and to have a greater voice. That we do tackle with secondary and special school colleagues, issues around transition, curriculum design and assessment. We want healthy debate and real understanding.



I hope you will discuss with your steering group (details on back page) and Dan Thomas ([dan.thomas@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:dan.thomas@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk)) the best way we can take this work forward.

Have a good spring term and if I can help, please email me on [sue.williamson@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:sue.williamson@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

## Welcome to new members

### We would like to welcome all of our new members since our last publication in September 2011:

Hadrian Academy, [Bedfordshire](#)

West Town Lane Primary School, [Bristol](#)

Bunbury Aldersey CofE Primary School, [Cheshire](#)

Mount Hawke Academy, [Cornwall](#)

Ilsham CofE Academy, Newport Community School, [Devon](#)

Churchwood Community Primary School, [East Sussex](#)

Essex Fresh Start,

### [Essex](#)

St Mary's CofE Primary School, [Gloucestershire](#)

Chessbrook ESC, [Hertfordshire](#)

Furley Park Primary School, [Northumberland](#)

Heath Primary School,

Peareswood Primary School, [Kent](#)

Waterside School, Willow Bank Primary School, [London](#)

Merefield School, [Merseyside](#)

Newton Farm Nursery, Infant and Junior School, Woodlands First and Middle School, [Middlesex](#)

Beeston Primary School, [Norfolk](#)

Croyland Primary School, [Northamptonshire](#)

Midsomer Norton Primary School, The Redstart Primary School, [Somerset](#)

Wharnccliffe Side Primary School, [South Yorkshire](#)

### We would also like to welcome our new iNet members:

St Anne's Primary School, [Australia](#)

Doukas School, [Greece](#)

Adhen Primary School for Girls, AlBarraa Bin Malik Primary

School for Boys, AlFurqan Primary School for Boys, AlNoiemiya Primary & Secondary School for Girls, AlWatan Primary School for Boys, Bint AlShateh Primary School for Girls, Ibn AlNafees Primary School for Boys, Khadeeja Bint Khuwaileed Primary School for Girls, Qatar International School, Sultan AlOwais Primary School for Boys, Umamma Bint Abi AlAsse Primary School for Girls, [United Arab Emirates](#)

Cadoxton Community Primary, Casllwchwr Primary School, St Christopher's

School, Ysgol Maes-y-Coed, Ysgol Pen Y Bryn Primary School, [Wales](#)

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'By schools, for schools' really does work and as a result powerful professional development and networking has raised standards and expectations at Cathedral School.'

Sylvia Morris, Headteacher, The Cathedral School of St Saviour and St Mary Overy, Southwark

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# Chorlton cluster of primary schools partnership

Eight primary schools in Chorlton, Manchester have developed their partnership since 2008 and now work to a formal memorandum of understanding with the local authority. This case study looks at their journey to a sustainable, self-improving school system.

## Key learning

- The partnership's activities have grown incrementally, each building capacity for the next.
- The partnership was able to set the agenda for extended schools work and therefore use funding more effectively.
- Although external funding has been used for some projects, the majority of activities pool schools' existing resources and enable them to be used better, thus making for sustainability.
- Networking has had tangible impact on the range and quality of teaching and learning, with a strong focus on citizenship and links with parents and the community.
- The partnership enables the schools to respond to national and local change, for example taking responsibility for school improvement.
- The partnership has succeeded because a group of successful schools came together of their own volition with the purpose of collaborating to improve outcomes for children.

## Background

Chorlton is a diverse and vibrant community in a south Manchester suburb. The schools in the partnership are Barlow Hall, Brookburn Community, Chorlton Church of England (voluntary aided), Chorlton Park, Oswald Road, St Ambrose Roman Catholic and St John's Roman Catholic. Old Moat in a neighbouring area joined the cluster following its federation with Chorlton Park. The schools are a mixture of small, medium and large, and serve areas ranging from the very affluent

to poor and disadvantaged. In summer 2008, heads of the seven Chorlton schools initiated a network to:

- improve mutual understanding
- develop mutual support
- enable children to work together on group projects.



Amongst the heads are one National Leader, two Local Leaders, and an executive head. One school is a hub school for modern foreign languages, one has Food for Life and Green flag status, one has the BECTA ICT quality mark, one is a national sports school and all are national healthy schools. One has applied for teaching school status with the full support of the rest of the partnership.

Later in 2008, the cluster became the final Extended Schools cohort in Manchester. In addition to funding for the individual schools, this gave funding and administrative support to the cluster. Three Parent Support Advisers (PSAs) were recruited, each to work with a group of schools focussing on pupil leadership and parent engagement. Supported by the PSAs, and a parent who was a representative for Save the Children, school councils worked on a global project, with workshops and assemblies culminating in raising £6000 for the Haiti disaster. This was presented to Save the Children in a ceremony outside the Town Hall. Additional funding enabled the PSAs to provide Webster-Stratton parenting courses. A network for the primary PE teachers was formed, which created the Chorlton Primary Sports League and a calendar of sporting activities. Other joint activities included a choir which performed at the Chorlton Arts Festival and the Chorlton Schools sing-a-long.

All the schools joined The Schools Network

in 2009/10. One benefit was access to information on ICT development where schools reviewed their ICT structures, and set up class blogs to engage parents further and extend pupils' ICT skills. The partnership also set up an EYFS staff network to work on improving outdoor provision and foundation stage provision. There is now a Google docs cluster forum for recording early years progress that can be shared with and added to by parents.

In spring 2010, the local high school began to consider trust status and met with partnership schools to seek interest in joining a high school led trust. In the event, this was not pursued by any schools but it led to the partnership considering whether it needed a more formal basis. Meetings of heads and chairs of governors produced a shared vision in the form of the Chorlton Child Guarantee, with strands for academic, personal, social, community, sporting and cultural achievement, aiming to ensure that all children in the partnership schools will be able to achieve in all strands, this has been communicated to all parents.

In 2010/11 the range of shared activities increased.

- With a joint inset programme for all staff aimed at raising aspirations, each school hosted an event to share its particular strengths. A staff network for assessing pupil progress (APP) in maths was set up and a common professional development programme for teaching assistants was developed.
- Joint work on ICT strategies for leadership and management, curriculum and best value in purchasing led to work by the school business managers on best value, beginning with facilities management and school meals.
- The school council network worked

on a family learning project, leading to a family and community learning day in each school.

- Three schools engaged in an INTERGEN project, in which senior citizens volunteer their time and skills to support teaching and learning.

The heads have all been accepted onto the Centre for Educational Leadership's headteachers' advanced coaching programme. The City Council sees the partnership as a successful example of collaboration, and after further discussion involving the chairs of governors the cluster signed a memorandum of understanding with the Authority. The Authority gave financial support to a successful bid for National College School Business Partnerships funding, to recruit a Partnership Business Manager.

The partnership has now commissioned an external body to support the cluster in school improvement.

### Key challenges

- To deal with cuts in funding
- To respond to changes in the educational landscape
- To ensure that the partnership is sustainable and outlives changes in individual school leadership.

### Next steps

- Use the Partnership Business Manager effectively: to organise partnership business, facilitate liaison and access further funding and support so that school leaderships can focus on teaching and learning and ensure that the Chorlton Child Guarantee is delivered.
- Exploit the external networks accessed by the schools to share information on change and potential responses.
- Ensure that there is wide ownership and commitment to the aims of the partnership.



For further information on this partnership please contact Schelene Ferris, Headteacher, Brookburn Primary School via [s.ferris@brookburn.manchester.sch.uk](mailto:s.ferris@brookburn.manchester.sch.uk) or David Watson, Headteacher, Chorlton Park Primary School via [dwatson@chorltonpark.manchester.sch.uk](mailto:dwatson@chorltonpark.manchester.sch.uk).

# The Big Draw

Gaynor Dale, Deputy Headteacher and Arts Team Leader, Robin Hood Primary School, Leeds

On the 3 October 2011, Robin Hood Primary School in Leeds took part in the drawing event, The Big Draw. This event is a nationally recognised event, organised by The Campaign for Drawing. It promotes the importance of drawing in both educational and arts settings and highlights the enjoyment that can be derived from engaging in powerful and purposeful drawing activities.

The aim of the event at school was to immerse the children in drawing activities which served a range of purposes, from skills based outcomes to more free and exploratory activities. We wanted to show the children that drawing forms an enormously important part of our curriculum and that drawing activities extend far beyond the idea of a simple pencil on paper technique. Most importantly we wanted the children to be excited and energised by being creative. We began the day, with a whole school assembly, which was lead by the Deputy Head and Arts Team Leader, Gaynor Dale. The children were asked to take off their shoes as they entered the hall, which was lined from wall to wall with heavy duty white lining paper. This added to the excitement and suspense of what the day would bring. The children were informed about the format of the day and were encouraged to see themselves as real artists that were about to be part of an amazing and dynamic drawing day.

As the children returned to their classrooms, they began engaging in their structured class drawing activities and members of staff began to set up the hall for action! Each class was able to spend time in the hall across the course of the day to add their own unique piece of drawing to the lining paper. There was a huge range of drawing materials available and there



were no rules in terms of what they drew or where they drew it. The children showed how imaginative they are by displaying a massive range of drawing techniques from drawing round each other, to creating collaborative flowers, to experimenting with lines and shape to simply 'see what happened'!

Meanwhile back in class, every key phase had a different drawing focus, from which they would produce two high quality





outcomes. These class drawing activities were specifically designed to promote various age appropriate drawing skills and engage the children with unusual and authentic drawing experiences. The results were truly magnificent, from foundation stage's bear drawings and key stage 1's autumn themed creations, right the way through to key stage 2's architecture drawings and portrait based Manga representations.



Once the day was over, it was time for the staff to get to work in the hall and go about displaying the art work, so that it would give the strongest visual impact possible. The climbing frames were brought out, display sheets were hung up on the walls and washing lines stretched out from wall to wall. These display spaces gave us the chance to group the art work into themes whilst providing us with a powerful and almost 3d aspect to our display. Once all of this was collated and hung up, the hall was totally transformed into an artistic space, so powerful it left grownups and children quite speechless.

the community event, which took place the next day, after school. Parents, friends and colleagues were invited to visit our display and make a nominal donation to 'buy' their child's work, to encourage the children to feel as though what they had produced was valuable and for a real purpose. The feedback from the event was incredibly positive with one parent being overheard saying 'It's better than the Hepworth, this!' It doesn't get much better than that!

The children were given the opportunity to interact with their work on display before

Do you have something exciting and innovative happening in your school or with your local schools which you would like to share with our network? If so please email [primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).



# The Hatcham Advantage – The value of all-through schooling

Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College (HAHC) is part of the Haberdashers' Aske's Federation of three 3-18 academies in South East London. All are traditional academies located in some of the most deprived communities in the UK.

We aim to ensure the best possible academic preparation for our students. We have always recognised the importance of mathematics and English and the excellent record of HAHC, our original academy, over the past decade, in delivering five good GCSE's is proof of our success.

Hatcham College became the Federations first all-through academy in 2008 when Monson Primary School became the 'Primary Phase' of HAHC, renamed Hatcham Temple Grove (HTG). In 2010 we changed the structure at HAHC when we became lower school EYFS to year 4, middle school year 5 to year 8, upper school year 9 to 11 and federated sixth form.

A three year study was carried out into the efficacy of all through schooling, based on the academic progress of two cohorts of students moving through the middle school. In a matter of three years our educationally disadvantaged students from HTG had made progress to bring them in line with the academic profile of our other students. We call this the 'Hatcham Advantage'.

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**'An all-through Hatcham education helps children to raise their attainment and improve their academic outcomes.'**

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Many of the children at Hatcham Temple grove (HTG) face significant challenges in their lives that results in them joining our school educationally disadvantaged. In order for these children to be successful in their education then they need to make

even faster progress than their more advantaged peers, if they are not to carry this childhood disadvantage with them for the rest of their lives. The summary data below illustrates the difference between the profile of students entering the secondary phase from HTG compared to our other students.

## **(2010-2011)**

1. In the current year 7 (34 HTG children from 208 of the total)
  - 21 (62%) of the HTG children are FSM compared with 72 (35%) of the total
  - 12 (35%) of HTG are SEN A compared with 31(15%) of the total
  - 11 (32%) of HTG are EAL compared with 46 (22%) of the total

## **(2010-2011)**

2. In the current year 8 (30 HTG children from 208 of the total)
  - 12 (40%) of the HTG children are FSM compared with 58 (28%) of the total
  - 8 (27%) of HTG are SEN A compared with 41 (20%) of the total
  - 17 (57%) of HTG are EAL compared with 63 (30%) of the total

We assess children against the age related outcomes set out in the National Curriculum for reading, writing and mathematics; these outcomes are measured as National Curriculum levels. Age related expectations are that at seven years of age children should have attained at least level 2, at 11 they should have achieved at least level 4 and at age 14 they should have achieved at least level 5 or preferably 6. Clearly these levels are wide as the expectation is that children make 2 levels of progress in the four years between age seven and 11. It is standard practice therefore to divide these levels into three sub-levels, thus attainment at age seven might be 2c, 2b or 2a, with 2a being the highest. In order to make the expected 2 levels of progress we would normally expect children to progress by 2 sub-levels



# Jack Charlton, Assistant Principal (Head of middle school), Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College

per year which, if achieved would result in progress of nearly 3 full levels over the four years of key stage 2, thus representing good progress and challenging individual targets. Clearly where children have not attained at least level 2 by the end of key stage 1 (aged 7), then progress will need to be even faster to attain level 4 by the end of key stage 2. This was and continues to be the challenge for those children and for their teachers, and it is this imperative that led to the creation of Hatcham as an all-through school. The children who were in year 5 when HTG was created have now just commenced year 9. It was therefore timely to consider the extent to which this goal of accelerating progress had been achieved.

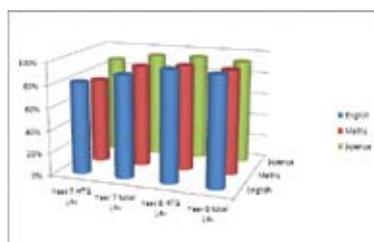
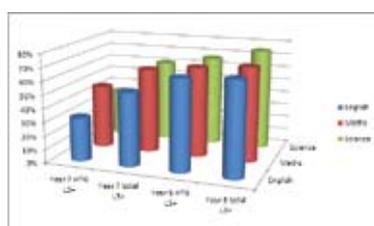
Data collected for two cohorts, over a period of three years, shows that a Hatcham education has accelerated the progress made by HTG children; by the end of year 8 the average outcomes of the HTG children match the average outcomes of year 8, as a whole.

This success story starts in the lower school (at Hatcham College this is reception to year 4).

- The progress made in reading, writing and mathematics when HTG was first formed improved dramatically. This is reflected in the outcomes for current year 9 who were in year 5 when HTG was created and equally the current year 8 who were in year 4; in both of these cases the average outcome improved by at least 3 sub levels in that first year of HTG compared to a normal expectation of good progress of 2 sub levels.
- The children start from a lower level in the lower school (year 7 the HTG children's average level was below the Hatcham average); they achieved the same average outcomes as all Hatcham children by the end of year 8 (which are acknowledged as outstanding; Ofsted

July 2011 pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy learning - grade 1).

The two charts show improved average outcomes for HTG compared with whole year cohort (L4+ and L5+)



If you would like further information on this school or would like to share what is happening in your school please email [primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

# The challenge for school leadership after a successful ofsted is always 'where do we go next?'

Mark Wilson, Headteacher, Robin Hood Primary School, Wakefield

Robin Hood was inspected in April 2011 and was judged to be an outstanding school. On one level, the inspectors were telling us what we already knew, on another it was the affirmation that we needed to help spur us on to the next phase of development.

I was very keen to mark this new phase of development in an emphatic way. Governors and I had taken a Learning Walk around the school some months earlier and had identified some areas that, despite the bright paintwork and beautiful displays of children's work on the walls, we felt didn't quite convey the ethos and values - the message of the school in the way that we wanted. I am a great believer in the power of a building – a school in particular – to influence the people within it. I am very much of the view that a beautiful school environment is an essential part of the 'outstanding jigsaw'.

So the conversation with Governors set me thinking.

The ofsted visit in April, alongside the need to redecorate the school hall during the summer gave me further impetus. I was keen to mark our next development phase with a bold statement of intent. I have always thought that primary schools should be text-rich environments. I wanted to represent the attitudes, values and ethos of the school physically – designed into the decorative scheme. Design and physicality were important to me as that's where I felt that we would achieve the impact for the pupils, community and staff.

As luck, or serendipity, or fate, would have it, I received an email from Yvonne Thurley Design. Yvonne was already working with schools on design concepts.

Yvonne Thurley writes:

'My first meeting with Mark was truly inspiring! His passion, energy and desire to visually demonstrate to a high standard what the school is all about was infectious.

My starting point was looking at the current school tree logo and the large space where Mark wanted to create a real impact. It was fundamental that we built upon what the school already had in place visually to develop it further and to ensure it linked well.

We wanted to keep it simple but dramatic – the hall space allowed the large scale designs to be installed, so creating that real WOW factor. Adding in more greens, greys and silver worked extremely well and the colours of the tree trunk were also introduced to maintain consistency. The text trees came about due to Mark's vision of a text rich design and the quotations chosen were those we felt were most powerful from Mark's great collection - they work really well. The wording was extremely important, aiming to inspire and motivate the children on a daily basis. These designs not only have an effect on the children's minds and attitude; they also make them feel valued within their school environment.'

We involved children, staff and Governors in choosing the words and phrases that now have pride of place on our walls. The quotations come from my Quotes of the week – which have been appearing on the staff notice board every week for the past six years now, and from the song that our children come into the hall to every Celebration assembly 'What have you done today to make you feel proud?' Working with a professional designer



# Reflecting on impact: LP accreditation



was a fantastic experience and was 100% the right decision. Yvonne's ideas and imagination brought the scheme alive. Basing the whole design scheme around the circle at the centre of the school logo was a brilliant insight that has given us a very simple but incredibly rich visual identity.

The reaction of the pupils when they first entered the hall after the summer break was incredible. There was a collective intake of breath which seemed to last for several minutes. The same was true when staff first saw the design and when parents joined us for the first Celebration assembly of the new school year.

Now, several weeks in, the children are, of course, very used to it. The design around them is part of their environment, part of what they expect of the school. There is a clear visual identity that says to me 'We are proud of what we are and are confident about our place in the world' exactly how we want our children to feel about themselves.

Our children talk about themselves as being special. They recognise that they belong to a special community and are proud to do so. The words and messages and quotes, and the shapes and the colours, are part of their identity, and are part of the glue that binds us as a community. The next phase of our journey together will be incredibly exciting and will be powered by shared values, a shared belief and great design.

For further information on this school please visit [www.robinhood.leeds.sch.uk](http://www.robinhood.leeds.sch.uk) and [www.yvonnethurley.co.uk](http://www.yvonnethurley.co.uk).

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**'We are an outstanding primary school and great believers of peer led learning. We have found membership to the larger LP network invaluable and the accreditation process really made our LPs reflect and think about their impact and identify next steps for their professional development.'** Headteacher

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The Lead Practitioner Accreditation recognises the work of those who demonstrate outstanding expertise in their field and also lead colleagues to improve their practice. Already proving to be highly valued in the secondary sector.

The Schools Network is pleased to see this success growing across the primary network and able to offer a 10% discount to member primary schools.

For further information please visit [www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/practitioners](http://www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/practitioners).



# Exciting home learning for early years - an imaginative, playful classroom resource

The Schools Network is always on the lookout for innovative and learning focused ideas to share – this new app; ABC Spy combines the eternally popular I Spy game with learning the alphabet and letter sounds.

Young learners are challenged to create their own ABC by taking photos of objects in the world around them that relate to each letter of the alphabet. This might be in the classroom, at home, around the super market or on a car journey. ‘Simon Spider’ helps with handy hints – ‘can you think of a fruit that begins with A?’ - and if they get stuck (some letters are tricky!) they can choose one of the images provided in the app.

Using an ingenious photo editor, children choose a frame to put their picture in, and when they have completed the alphabet, can watch a movie of what they have created. The film can even be uploaded to YouTube to share with friends and family, reinforcing learning and eliciting a great sense of pride and excitement!

The app uses simple game mechanics to encourage and reward effort and progress: trophies are awarded for key achievements – the first photo taken, taking more than 3 photos for one letter and so on. Parents and teachers are given immediate feedback and can reward effort (demonstrated by time spent) as well as achievement – a stats screen shows how well they’re doing and how long they’ve spent completing the alphabet.

ABC Spy gets children – individually or in groups - doing something productive on a smartphone, providing an active experience that improves their literacy and develops creative thinking skills.

- Playful learning – this is genuine stealth education.

- Choice – letting the child direct their own learning.
- Dialogue – talking about what they’re thinking and doing.
- Sharing – looking at their achievements and sharing their work with others.
- Exploring – finding new things and taking a closer look at the world around them.

ABC Spy is a new app produced by Stealth Education, a London-based start up which fuses sound pedagogy with the power of games, apps and interactive entertainment. For more information on Stealth Education and other innovative and learning focused ideas visit Latest news and articles at [www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/primarynetwork](http://www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/primarynetwork).

To join colleagues sharing ideas and strategies for using ABC Spy in the classroom, and with home learning email [sarah.camm@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:sarah.camm@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk) or go to [www.abcspy.com](http://www.abcspy.com).



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**‘ABC Spy puts a creative tool in the hands of the child and allows the adults to get out of the way. It gives the child choice - they’re directing their own learning.’** Professor Mark Alter, Professor of Educational Psychology, New York University

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**‘Even very young children now want to create, modify and share content. There are so few apps or games which allow them to do on their own, ABC Spy represents a genuine and exciting departure for educational games aimed at the early years market.’** Gurtej Sandhu, Former Digital Director, The Times

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**‘My three kids constantly want to use my phone and my youngest – now 6 – takes an awful lot of photos! Combining literacy – phonics, spelling and vocabulary – with taking and editing photos seems like such a great idea.’** Henry Playfoot, CEO, Stealth Education

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# BBC Stargazing LIVE returns in 2012

## Join the fun and share astronomy with primary school pupils across the UK!

Following the phenomenal success of series one, Professor Brian Cox and Dara O'Brian return with Stargazing LIVE on 16, 17 and 18 January 2012, and BBC Learning are producing some exciting opportunities for schools nationwide to get involved.

### Events

More than 180 partners (including schools) held over 330 Stargazing events during January 2011, and more than 40,000 people attended. Many had never done any astronomy before and there were lots of 'wow!' moments.

Smithton Primary School presented a talk on 'Seeing the Quantum' with the Highlands Astronomical Society and St Peter's School in York shared their cosmodome with the public. At Wootton Wawen C.E. Primary, families shared a view of the night sky the simple way, using the naked eye, before investigating how binoculars and telescopes could change their view. We hope even more schools will get involved for series two in January 2012, and BBC Learning can support your events with resources, ideas and contacts. If you don't know much about astronomy, don't worry, we can match you with an astronomy professional in your area. It couldn't be easier to collaborate to put on your own stunning star party.

Our popular Star Guides have been revised, updated and improved for 2012 and we are producing a special events guide for schools packed with ideas for things to do to make your evening sparkle. If you're holding a public Stargazing event during January 2012 you can add it to the BBC's new online activity planner, Things to Do ([bbc.co.uk/thingstodo](http://bbc.co.uk/thingstodo)). Our network of BBC Learning Project Managers can help you make connections with other local organisations who might be able to help make your event bigger and better,

including astronomy societies, wildlife groups and universities. Events uploaded to BBC Things to Do will also receive Stargazing LIVE resources, including Star Guides.

### In the classroom

We know that astronomy and space science can engage and excite young people in the classroom and below you can find further information about our planned resources for Stargazing LIVE 2012.

### Early years and KS1

If you teach very young children, then Little Stargazing is for you. A series of four films on the moon, space and planets will be available to download from the BBC Teachers' website, along with worksheet ideas and some specially produced audio from our partners at CBeebies radio. Resources will be available from Christmas 2011.

### Key stage 2

To tie in with the National Curriculum Physical Processes module 'The Earth and Beyond' we're producing a Stargazing LIVE Teacher's Pack as a downloadable PDF. With 'How To' videos demonstrating planetary concepts (produced by our colleagues at Blue Peter), films about the stars and solar system featuring incredible BBC graphics and lesson plans and worksheets we hope students and teachers will be inspired. The pack will be available before the school Christmas holidays to assist with lesson planning.

### School's day

Stargazing Schools' Day is on 19 January, when Professor Brian Cox will be speaking live to schools across the UK, at 2pm via webcast. The webcast will be available via the BBC Teachers' website. The webcast, featuring exciting space science demonstrations, will be interactive and Brian will be answering questions from students.



To find out more about any of these opportunities and to get involved with Stargazing LIVE email the team at [stargazing@bbc.co.uk](mailto:stargazing@bbc.co.uk).

# 2nd Blackpool Innovation Conference – Winter Gardens, 31 October 2011

## Neil Hodgkins, Headteacher, Devonshire Primary School, Blackpool

The 2nd primary Blackpool Innovation Conference promised to be an enticing follow-up to the inaugural one held in 2010 entitled 'Illuminating the Curriculum'.

A seaside venue contrived title was avoided this time as the headteacher planners now felt fully switched-on to the attractions of the event. For a few participants, this year's conference needed to be particularly engaging as they were somewhat jet-lagged after returning, just the day before, from The Schools Network half-term study tour to Beijing! Neither they, nor the 800 or so other delegates were disappointed.

The conference was staged, once again, at the Winter Gardens which was in the midst of having a make-over. The main atrium area had already been restored to former glories creating a great impact at registration. No doubt many people would have been happy to 'network' for longer in this very pleasant environment but delegates were ushered into the Opera House in time for the irrepressible Blackpool FC manager, Ian Holloway, to give the opening keynote address. As he sauntered on to the stage with his hands in his pockets, some of us wondered if we were going to get a laconic, off-the-cuff, post-match type of reflection but, instead, the 'audience' were treated to 20 minutes or so of humour, dry wit, perceptive observations and family references which endeared him to everyone and was the perfect 'warm-up' for what was to follow.

The main keynote talk was given by Professor Barry Carpenter who gave a fascinating insight into the needs of children with complex learning difficulties and disabilities. This was a very thought-provoking and, at times, moving

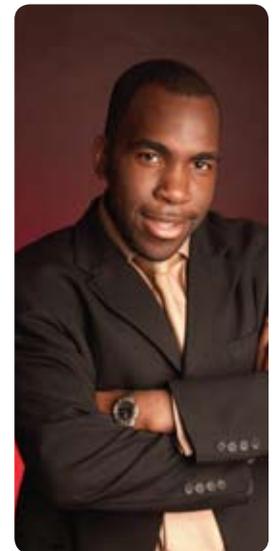
presentation as Barry gave details of some case studies such as the testimony of the mother of a prematurely-born son with problems whom she described as being 'wired differently'. It is a sobering fact, which resonated with many of us, that only one child in six is from a 'normal' background. Children who are born pre-term often have behavioural, emotional and psychiatric problems and there is a challenge to meet their needs. 'It is our job to sort it' said Barry, which gave us food for thought at the morning break!

Delegates were welcomed back into the auditorium with some wonderful harmonious singing (despite their headteacher's input) from the pupils at Anchorsholme Primary School, who had come to perform even though it was an inset day! A solo performance by Matthew of 'Nessum Dorma' made hairs on the backs of necks prickle and he received a standing ovation.

If anyone thought of having a relaxing snooze after all this, 'Action Jackson' and his colleague from the 'Fix-Up' team had other ideas and audience participation was the order of the day as each person performed cheer-leader style Mantra 'I-am-amazing!' A highly entertaining and motivating session made us all realise that perhaps our 'get up and go' had not, after all, 'got up and gone'.

After a lunch break, during which delegates could view the exhibition stands, the afternoon session offered a plethora of riches from which people could cherry-pick.

- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder with Barry Carpenter.
- The Cambridge Primary Review with Alison Peacock.



- Early years with Alistair Bryce-Clegg.
- ICT! Can you justify the cost with Peter Twining of Vital.
- Data and school improvement with Lee Glynn from Hawes Side Primary School.
- Engaging children and young people with complex needs led by Beverley Cockbill.
- Primary school Chinese with Marcus Reoch from Dragons in Europe.
- Sensory Processing Disorder from Mark Gray at Shine Therapy/Waterloo School.
- The Blackpool Monopoly Challenge with John Sutton.

### What a line-up!

Evaluation and feedback on the day confirmed the overwhelming success of the day, planned by a small group of heads with fantastic support from Dan Thomas who was able to draw on the contacts, expertise and know-how of The Schools Network to enable us to put on an amazing event for just £15 per head!

Blackpool primary schools have already reserved 5 November 2012 as one of their inset days to enable staff to attend the 3rd conference. This is a commitment for the first Monday after the autumn half-term break and is an event which can be influenced and driven by whatever needs and requests are put forward by colleagues.

However, it is not just restricted to Blackpool delegates – all member schools are welcome to join us for a fabulous day at the seaside – perhaps we should offer it as a residential and boost tourism at the same time!

For further information on the 3rd Blackpool conference or on bespoke inset days email [primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

## Primary Executive Headteachers – cohort 2

Due to the success of our first cohort we will be running our second cohort of Primary Executive Headteachers starting in February 2012. This high impact leadership programme focuses on the skills and requirements needed to successfully undertake this unique role of executive headship and supporting other schools.

For further information please email [primaryleadership@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:primaryleadership@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).



## Primary literacy twilight meetings



As part of your membership offer we will be holding Primary literacy twilight meetings around the country.

These meetings will provide opportunities to share and develop best practice in improving students' literacy in collaboration with other schools. We will be running three free meetings per year starting in January 2012.

To find out more please visit [www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/literacy](http://www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/literacy).

# 3rd Primary/iNet study tour to Beijing, China

Our first view of Chinese primary education began in Fendou Primary School, an average sized state maintained primary school with a mere 1,500 children on roll; 670 of whom boarded at the school. The facilities and resources were staggering from a 25m swimming pool to individual museums. The school day began with raising of the Chinese flag, pledging allegiance to their school and whole school exercise. Children then had break time, which involved them being in organised groups with their teachers. Every child took part in skipping or basketball or other fun games – no child was left out and they all had super agility and hand eye coordination – something to consider for our break times maybe?

The teachers have a different role to us, they only teach one subject but to all years. School starts at 8am and finishes at 3pm. However, school is not over yet, every child picks an activity they wish to do as a club everyday. This is their 'special skill' for example swimming. For at least one hour after school they must practise, not as a fun club but to further develop themselves. This appeared to be how they differentiated the children's learning as there was no evidence in the lessons we observed.

The children were in classes of about 42. In each lesson we observed, the children sat at desks and were totally focussed on their teacher. The children chanted responses back to the teacher's, mainly closed questions. No differentiation was evident and children clearly had to meet the needs of the curriculum rather than vice versa. Children who fell behind caught up after school. The headteacher revealed that he had dealt with no behavioural issues in the ten years of his headship.

Our second school, Sino-Cuba Friendship



School had impressive modern buildings, and their friendly and organised welcome consisting of tea and cake immediately reminded us of home except for the fact that we were in a board room that would rival any blue chip company. The vision of the school came down to three layers - respect and harmony amongst each other, pursuing excellence and learning through good team work. The staff and children wore uniforms on special occasions and on Monday's for the raising of the flag.



The core subjects were Chinese, Maths, English and P.E. The children spoke English fluently and led the tours around the school. We observed a few lessons but were mesmerised and inspired by the outdoor military group exercises which was led by the children.

There was an abundance of resources, each child had a piano in music for instance! However, there was no ICT equipment for the children in any room. When we spoke to one of the teachers about this we were surprised that that they viewed modern technology as a resource for teaching and a distraction to learning. Fuxingmenwai No. 1 Primary School was our next port of call. Like other schools it was a huge school with 1,200 children, no differentiation in class, no behaviour issues,

## Claire Lowe, Executive Headteacher, Blackfield Primary and Fawley Infant Federated Schools and Karine George, Headteacher, Westfields Junior School, Hampshire

little ICT being used and teachers teaching to the curriculum standards. However, this school seemed to be trying to employ some western educational strategies. It was the first time in any lesson we actually saw some peer learning with the use of working partners.

The paparazzi were awaiting our arrival at our fourth school, Kangleli Primary School, and by now we were becoming used to our celebrity status. The school itself was situated in a shanty town, with stray dogs roaming the streets. For the first time we saw hundreds of happy chatty children scurrying along corridors and running up the stairs much as they would in an English school. The school stated it had a focus on firsthand experience, learning history and culture through museum and theatre visits.

All of these learning experiences followed a similar pattern with an introductory lesson to engage the children and share targets, the visit and finally an individual report which could be written, pictorially represented or through PowerPoint. The school had leading practitioners within school who shared good practice throughout their school and the district. The final school, Yucui Primary School, was the largest of all and included an international element. With over 4,000 children from 4 to 18 housed on a university style campus.

Today was the opening ceremony of the Yucui annual sports festival. We were privileged to observe classes of children dressed in a variety of costumes, each holding a flower, pom-pom or similar decoration. Each group of children showed pride in their brief performance to onlookers of parents, visitors and teachers. The school was led by a comprehensive management team incorporating of



the principal and three vice principals. The principal was proud to boast of the school's achievements at national level including awards for basketball, dance and music. He informed the group that 99% of students entered university with 60% awarded a place at the 'key' universities in China.

The Principal described his biggest challenge as his concerns about the psychological pressure on teachers and students due to the rapid economic growth in China leading to parental pressure and competition between students and schools alike.

On reflection, key points of note were:

- children had fantastic co-ordination, balance, fine and gross motor skills through repetitive practice
- standards for behaviour were implicit within their cultural identity resulting in respectful relationships
- teachers were held in high esteem as professionals
- excellent use of technology as solely a teaching tool.

This study tour brought together 14 colleagues from across Britain, who were given the rare opportunity to understand and reflect on our cultural heritages and consider new insights into children becoming global citizens!

To find out about future primary study tours please email [primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

# Publications by Professor Brent Davies

## Free to download for member schools

**Professor Brent Davies is a leading expert on educational leadership and works closely with The Schools Network.**

Working with Dr Barbara J Davies, these two pamphlets on leadership and transition are free to download from the iNet website. Go to: <http://www.ssat-inet.net/en-gb/resources/publications/Pages/publications.aspx>. Both pamphlets include international examples of best practice and have been produced for iNet, the international arm of The Schools Network.

### **The nature and dimensions of strategic leadership in schools**

The challenge of school improvement often, quite rightly, focuses on improved operational and tactical activities. However, once initial improvement is made how that improvement is sustained can be problematic. Another challenge is how successful schools make the leap to be outstanding.

This pamphlet outlines the nature and dimensions of strategic leadership in schools, which is the cornerstone of their long-term success, and seeks to address these challenges. This pamphlet considers:

- The nature of the strategy.
- A model for strategically focused school development.
- How to develop strategic leadership more widely in school.
- Defining strategic measures of success.

The pamphlet clearly outlines the characteristics and skills of strategic leadership. It highlights the importance of developing the talents of all staff - and in particular the leadership talent. It will help both existing school leaders and emerging leaders to reflect on and develop the roles of strategic leadership. It encourages them

to find time to think strategically and to think and act differently. It gives examples of how to extend leadership more widely in school, and strategic measures of success. The result can be genuine transformation of schools.

### **Primary to secondary transfer - insights for good practice**

One of the key elements for a successful secondary education, which many schools still find difficult to achieve, is the effective transfer between phases, especially from primary to secondary school. In this pamphlet Professor Brent Davies and Dr Barbara J Davies offer advice and suggestions from published research and their own recent work in schools. They include ideas for good practice from schools' experience in the UK, Australia and New Zealand, with seven case histories. Three diagnostic tools developed by the authors specifically for this publication will help school leaders and staff to examine their own practice and find ways to improve transition, whether in an all-through school or between schools. They also highlight some innovative ways in which primary and secondary schools have worked together, sometimes with staff working across the schools from year 5 to year 8, to ensure an effective and stress-free transition for pupils.

### **About iNet**

iNet (International Networking for Educational Transformation) works with schools and organisations to transform education through the sharing of best practice and innovation. iNet offers a range of online and face-to-face support - including workshops, study tours, conferences, online forums, publications - to make this possible. There are nearly 1,300 members in 35 countries, many of which are primary schools. Membership is free as part of your primary school's membership to The Schools Network.



You can find out more at [www.ssat-inet.net](http://www.ssat-inet.net).

# Go global primary workshops

## Martin Frobisher Infant School and Normanton Common Primary, Wakefield

**'You are never too young to make a difference'. John Wood, founder of Room to Read**

Students from year 1 to year 6 participated in the first Go global primary workshops on 22 November 2011. The morning session involved 20 students aged 5-7 from four schools. The Go global story time learning objective or 'WALT' was: **What can each of us do to help others?**

Sat together on the carpet the children introduced themselves and talked about their favourite book or story. All of the children were then engrossed in the read-a-loud of Zak the Yak, the children's book written by Room to Read founder John Wood with its bright colourful pictures and its rhyming pattern.

The children quickly made new friends and worked together on a series of activities, exploring the characters and places in the book and thinking about the mood and feelings the book gave them and some of the favourite lines from the book. Taking a break outdoors, the group made reading, memorising and reciting tongue twisters seem very easy. The children gave their suggestions of how they, like Zak the Yak can help make sure children in places like Nepal have books to read.

Everyone agreed to go back to their schools and talk to teachers, friends and families about the learning from the morning. The children are keen to do what they can to make sure all children have libraries full of books. Congratulations to these children who become The Schools Network first Yak Pack members.

Teachers accompanying the groups said: **'The children enjoyed the story and liked being there and liked meeting other children.'**

A comment from a student at the Go global workshop at Normanton Common Juniors that afternoon was:

**'My parents say time flies when you're having fun and time definitely flew by.'**

More than forty students from Normanton Common, Newlands Primary, Altofts Junior and Normanton Junior schools came together for an afternoon of Go global activities. All of the schools already have enterprise projects embedded in their KS2 curriculum so students readily took to the tasks and challenges set for them.

We were impressed at how effortlessly students formed teams with their peers from other schools and how productively and creatively they worked and delivered presentations together. The children showed real understanding of the Go global mission:

**'World change starts with educated children working together to shape their world.'**

They gave powerful reflections on the importance of education for future life and happiness and about how a good education should be open to children no matter where they live in the world. Having considered some of the barriers to learning faced by children around the world, the students quickly came up with ideas to generate funds to build schools in countries they had been thinking about. Ideas included making and selling their own products such as jewellery and other souvenirs, raffles and a sponsored dance. The students suggested raising awareness of the community by having a banner up outside the school letting everyone know what they are doing and how they can support. Thank you to all of the children and staff who participated in the workshops. We look forward to hearing how all the great ideas are taken forward.



If you would like to give children from your school a chance to get involved in the Go global challenge and primary workshops visit our web pages at [www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/globalisation](http://www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/globalisation) or get in touch with [angelina.adams@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:angelina.adams@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

# Student Digital Leaders

The Learning Technologies Team is delighted to announce that the popular and successful Student Digital Leader (SDL) programme is now on offer to member primary schools. This exciting and expanding network is bringing together students with a passion to help their school implement its vision and strategy around the use of technology. By taking on leadership roles in school, students are ensuring that the most appropriate technologies are embedded into lessons and other aspects of school life, thereby giving their peers opportunities to develop the most appropriate skill sets for their continuing education and eventually, the global workspace.

Access to SDL Online (sdgleaders.ning.com) provides opportunities for both SDLs and their teachers to share news of the various leadership roles they are undertaking in school and the impact this is having on peer engagement and student achievement. They will also be able to share the progress being made with their action plans and to recommend new technologies or web2.0 tools which they believe have an important role to play in the classroom.

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*'The ability for me to make a difference. My role gives me responsibility.'* Tim, Student Digital Leader from Hamble Community Sports College talking of his experience as a Student Digital Leader.

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*'Once a new technology rolls over you, if you're not part of the steamroller, you're part of the road.'* American writer Stewart Brand

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Roles in school are determined by the need to champion a particular use of

technology but in many schools, the VLE Champion is proving very popular. A student who will ensure that their school's learning platform is being used effectively, that resources are current and engaging and perhaps most importantly, that their teachers have the skills to embed use of the virtual learning environment both in class and for home work.

A Student Digital Leader will also want to ensure that the potential of the school's existing technology is being maximised and that costs associated with future technologies are kept to a minimum; this may mean our SDLs helping their schools to capitalise on the portable technologies that students already carry around with them, i.e. mobile phones!

Other roles may include school photographer, ICT club organiser, eSafety champion, whatever role a student undertakes, being a Digital Leader is a huge enhancement to their curriculum vitae. Primary SDL modules that will give guidance to students about leadership roles and professional development training to teacher mentors will be available for a small extra charge early in the new year (although updates to those modules will be free), we can also organise badges and certificates, even a networking conference for a number of local or regional schools if there is sufficient demand. And there will be opportunities for Primary SDLs to book places at The Schools Network's Student Digital Leader Spring Conference at Microsoft in Reading in March.

If your school is interested in joining the SDL Online programme as part of the membership offer, please contact the Learning Technologies Team at [learningtechs@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:learningtechs@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk). Teacher mentors will also receive regular newsletters as part of this offer.



*'Across society we are becoming ever dependent on computers and technology. So how do we innovate within the educational landscape? Who are the real experts when it comes to technology? Who makes most creative use out of its potential? The answer is simple, the young people in our schools.'*

Extract from SecEd Digital Edition, 10 November 2011 – Ben Solly, Assistant Principal at Long Field School, Melton Mowbray on why he felt the SDL programme was right for his school. Read the whole article here – <http://content.yudu.com/A1ulo3/SecEd10Nov2011/resources/10.htm>

# Primary Academies: the importance of collaboration

The National Primary Academies conference was held on 4 November 2011; 125 leaders of primary academies, and primary schools considering becoming academies, gathered to explore what it means to be an academy. The conference provided the chance to consider the implications, challenges and opportunities presented by academy status.

**How might primary academies make the most of this opportunity?**

**How might they exploit their independent status? What do they expect the impact to be?**

**What have they already experienced, in terms of obstacles, solutions, changes and outcomes?**

Of the schools represented at the conference, almost one in three had already converted and adopted academy status, with a further 8% having concrete plans in place to do so. 50% of the schools had over 350 on roll and 7% had fewer than 150 on roll. The most commonly expressed concerns among primary schools faced with the academy question seem to centre around the relationship and engagement with the local authority; the capacity and expertise among existing staff to source and negotiate high quality and Value for Money Service Level Agreements and contracts to replace those previously provided by the LA; and the relatively small scale of the LACSEG (Local Authority top slice), making the financial element of the considerations less persuasive than in those larger schools with bigger budgets.

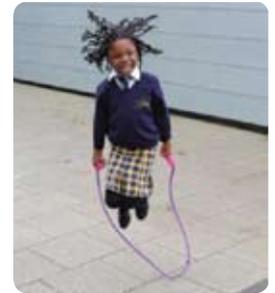
The Schools Network believes passionately in school autonomy in the power of schools to lead system-wide improvements and is convinced of the benefits of collaboration and co-operation among schools and business and other partners. As a membership organisation, it has sought,



for 25 years, to work with its member schools (over 90% of all secondary schools in England, several hundred primary schools, universities, FE colleges, special schools – and almost all academies) to identify and develop excellent practice and to facilitate opportunities to bring schools together, to share ideas, their strategies for success and their achievements. Building networks of schools and leaders lies at the heart of The Schools Network's vision; for this reason, delegates were invited to sit at tables grouped by region, so that they could begin to build those relationships and networks so critical for maintaining high standards in our schools.

During the conference, delegates were presented with opportunities to discuss key issues surrounding academy status and to respond individually to a series of questions. To request a copy of the paper detailing the interesting results afforded by the discussions at the conference, please contact [academies@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:academies@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk). The Academies team have produced a publication of Primary Academy case studies called 'The academies programme: three perspectives from primary schools' (2011), if you are interested in purchasing this please contact the team.

The Schools Network has unmatched experience supporting schools as they become academies. We provide a range of services for groups of schools and individual schools including support for developing group structures, full academy conversion management and post conversion support services.



For further information go to [www.schoolsnetwork.org.uk/academies](http://www.schoolsnetwork.org.uk/academies) or call the team for advice or a no obligation quote on 020 7802 9101.

# Westfields Junior School achieve gold!

We would like to celebrate Westfields Junior School for achieving the Gold Award of the Parental Engagement Quality Standard (PEQS).

Positive parental engagement is an embedded feature of life at Westfields. The school has a genuine commitment to ensuring parents know they have a key role to play, and in making sure each teacher and classroom is 'parent friendly.'

Parents and staff talk very positively about how their partnership supports children's learning, and children see their parents working closely with their teachers. One child said: 'I know what I am doing well and what I need to do to improve, teachers go through that with our parents, so my mum and dad know what I'm good at and what I need to practice or what I need to do better like with my punctuation. My teacher gave my mum and dad lots of ideas about how they can help.'

There is emphasis to ensure parental engagement activity impacts on learning. For example; a well received and popular maths evening was followed by parents coming into school to work alongside their child in class. One child said: 'my mum came to school and got lots of help to understand maths because she was taught maths differently. She got lots of ways to help me with my maths targets.'

Changes to homework are another example of this, changes were made in direct response to parental feedback as parents and children said they enjoyed investigating and researching together at home. 'It's loads better than homework, and I like working with my mum and dad on it, I get lots of praise and they enjoy it too.' said one child.

There is a highly personalised approach to working with parents – teachers go 'above

and beyond' in gleaning information from parents about their child to enhance engagement. Parents, staff and children talk positively about high levels of communication between school and home.

Wide reaching strategies exist for communicating with parents and they can feedback after each event. Two way communication is deeply embedded in school, with parents regularly informed about what happens as a result, for example, parents were consulted about what they wanted from reports and it informed a new reporting format.

The school website is viewed positively by parents; a feature of this site is parents are signposted to well planned activities, presented in an easy to use and accessible format. Both parents and children enjoyed getting positive text messages home, and use learning logs to positive effect. There is an embedded ethos of celebration and fun, with parents included and involved through stages of the rewards system. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in school and are invited to support teachers in all activities. Governors, are engaged and active, are known to children and can articulate their role in both supporting learning and helping school develop. Parents know they genuinely matter, and school values their partnership in supporting the children's learning.

Karine George, Headteacher at Westfields says 'Parents and carers are the first educators of their children and have a vital role to play in the learning of their children. At Westfields we utilise every opportunity to engage parents/carers. We encourage parents to come in and learn alongside their children. For those parents who find this difficult, we utilise technology in different ways so that they support their children.'



For more information on how your school can achieve the PEQS, please visit our website: [www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/peqs](http://www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/peqs), or email [engagingparents@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:engagingparents@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

# Stimulating, interactive, informative

A cluster of primary schools from Cheshire have recently engaged in a programme of training to improve teaching and learning in their schools.

The difference with this training is that the learner is put back in the driving seat, meaning the children become responsible for developing their own independent learning skills through the skilled direction of the teachers.

The focus is on planning lessons and activities which allow the children to lead ownership of their learning through constructing their own ideas, opinions and answers whilst working collaboratively with other members of their class. Group work during the course mirrors the way children interact in the classroom, as participants are asked to work in teams with other teachers from a variety of schools, giving them an insight into what they ask of learners in their classroom and the challenges they face. This highlights the importance and impact of group work in its ability to pull different knowledge, skills and understanding together.

The training highlights what teachers are already doing well in school and provides a framework to build upon this. During the course, participants are allowed the freedom to reflect on their current practice and be creative in bringing together a range of ideas to improve their lessons and engage more children, more of the time.

This stimulating, interactive and informative training is the Teacher Effectiveness Enhancement Programme (TEEP). At the end of the first two days, the teachers reflected on their experience so far and the impact they envisioned it having:

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'I have been inspired to adopt TEEP in order to raise and maintain high standards of learning and teaching.'

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This course has inspired my teachers in the same way.' Headteacher

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'The TEEP Learning Cycle maximizes learning and effective teaching. It is like you can breathe and think 'Oh I can do that. It makes sense now.' Deputy Headteacher

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'It has given me a renewed excitement and confidence.' Teacher

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The second part of the training is now eagerly awaited after some time to put into the learning into practice.

In June, St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School completed their TEEP training with their whole staff team and are now using it as a framework for effective teaching for effective learning. Teachers found the course to be inspiring, refreshing and gave numerous techniques to enhance their teaching. They also gained an increased enthusiasm for making lessons more fun, useful and engaging for all pupils.

Comments following the course included:

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'The programme offers class teachers excellent ways to be effective and promote pupil learning'

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'Has given me lots of new ideas and inspiration to plan fun and meaningful lessons'

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'It's not about reinventing what you do, it's about making small changes that have a big impact'

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To find out more visit [www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/TEEP](http://www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/TEEP) or email [TEEP@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:TEEP@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).



# National primary headteachers steering group

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## Primary Network team

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Please feel free to contact the Primary Network team with any questions or for further information on membership at [primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk](mailto:primarynetwork@theschoolsnetwork.org.uk).

For up-to-date information on all of our work visit [www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/primarynetwork](http://www.theschoolsnetwork.org.uk/primarynetwork).



**The next meeting of the national primary headteachers steering group will be taking place on Tuesday 24 January 2012.**

The group represents all types of primary schools and all geographical regions and helps design, develop and deliver our work.

At our next meeting we will be considering the main issues facing primary schools for the coming year and beyond so that we can focus our work on these specific areas.

If you have any issues that you would like the group to discuss at this meeting, please contact the chair of the steering group **Neil Hopkin** at [neilhopkin@rosendale.cc](mailto:neilhopkin@rosendale.cc) and he will keep you informed about our progress.