

The Shared Learning Newsletter

Number 10

March 2001



Aiming higher

Last month saw the launch of the national family learning network hosted by the Campaign for Learning (CfL) in partnership with NIACE, CEDC and Education Extra. The event at Westminster Central Methodist Hall on 7 February was opened by Malcolm Wicks, Minister for Lifelong Learning and Adult Basic Skills. Bill Lucas (CfL), Lisa Capper, Education Development Manager CEDC and Jeanne Haggart from NIACE, outlined their aspirations for a national strategy for family learning. The launch of the network follows on from the successful family learning weekend in October in which many Share schools participated.

Family learning weekend

This was organised by the Campaign for Learning to encourage all generations to learn together. How did Share families and schools join in?

Pupils, parents and Share teachers from six schools in Rhondda Cynon Taf shared an enjoyable learning day out at the Pontypridd Muni Arts Centre (see inside). Children dressed up in badger costumes and masks and there was a competition for the best mask/costume, but they were all so good that every child involved won and will now be going to the pantomime! The entertainment included stories and songs by Sian Drinan, the original Share Moderator. OCN accreditation certificates were presented to parents, and children received their Share certificates. Mair Williams made a Share badger cake and T-shirts to mark the



Malcolm Wicks

occasion. Beverley Podd, Family Learning Co-ordinator, said: *'It was a wonderful day and a true celebration of the success of the project, which continues to thrive.'*

Blair launches strategy

Tony Blair launched the new adult basic skills strategy on 1 March 2001. Malcolm Wicks has special responsibility for adult basic skills and the recently established Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit at the DfEE, headed by Susan Pember. By 2004 the unit aims to reduce by 750,000 the number of adults who have a difficulty with literacy and numeracy. *'As many as 7 million adults of working age in England cannot read or write as well as an average 11 year old. One in five adults of working age cannot look up a plumber in the Yellow Pages or read the instructions on a medicine bottle. Even more have trouble with numbers.'* (Extract from *Skills for life*, DfEE)

CEDC is looking at how best it can support basic skills needs of parents who want to participate in 'Share' or who already do so. For more details on supporting parents with such needs, contact Julie Higson, Share Regional Development Officer for the Midlands, on 01925 573397.

Parents in the community awards

The fifth annual Share Conference was held on 6 March in London. Delegates saw performances from Hindley Low Hall Primary School, Wigan. Parents performed a play about their experiences of Share and showed a video of their children taking part. Derek Grover from the DfEE and Maureen Banbury from OFSTED talked about the contribution that Share had made to family learning nationally. The conference closed with a street-dance from pupils of Broadway Community High School, St Helens – as part of CEDC's Community Learning Mix Millennium Volunteers programme.

In April, CEDC is launching a Millennium Awards scheme that will offer awards to parents who want to work with other parents in supporting their learning. For further information, contact Joy Sweatman at CEDC.



Malcolm Wicks, Lisa Capper, Jeanne Haggart and Bill Lucas

Photographs courtesy of Campaign for Learning

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Share family learning

KS3 pilot takes off!



Schools have now started the piloting of Share at Key Stage 3 and are trialling the first book of activities and units of accreditation. Let's find out how some of them are getting on.

Ready, steady...

Worcestershire parents at Birchensale Middle School in Redditch are thoroughly enjoying their Share sessions on a Wednesday evening. Eighteen parents have signed up and attended the first session; some have also indicated an interest in the accreditation. Following discussion with Alistair Sullivan, the Share teacher, parents have asked for a short presentation each week on one aspect of the Year 7 National Curriculum and how they can help their child, followed by an activity from the Share booklet, which they can do together at home to practise these skills. Having explored English in the last session, future plans include a look at Maths and IT, using the ICT suite.



Parents' session at Birchensale Middle School

You're a winner!

After attending two Share sessions and working on the 'You're a winner!' activity, what do parents think of Share so far? Roy Clarke and Gemma, his daughter, spent an evening on this activity, discussing and planning a holiday in Majorca, and then used the computer to present the results of their discussions. The skills used included literacy, numeracy, IT, planning, decision making and evaluation. They both agreed that they had had great fun together and, as Roy said: *'That's the key – shared! Before, I just listened and helped, now we're sharing and in future I'll get Gemma to explain her work to me, not just show me. The first activity went very well; it was very good indeed.'*



Terry and Megan Williams with their activity

Terry Joynes, mother of Megan, said that after they had chosen Switzerland as their holiday destination, they discussed and bounced ideas off each other and then used catalogues for the clothes and prices. They are talking about extending this activity to include Swiss culture, food and currency.

EuroDisney was the destination chosen by Lisa Bennett and her mum, who decided on a budget of £150.00 and packed a case for each other, which led to a lot of laughter and good times together!

Schools interested in taking part in Share at Key Stage 3 should contact CEDC for details.

Canny calculations

If you think multiplication tables are boring, then look at the activity 'Canny calculations' in the KS3 *Can do!* Sharebook. At Thistley Hough High School, Stoke-on-Trent, Bill and Yvonne Edwards, with their son Rowan, produced the super set of Napier's Rods shown below. These help children to practise the skills of multiplication and addition in an enjoyable way. 34 parents turned up to Thistley Hough's first session and the school now has four groups, two in the afternoon and two in the evening.



Rowan's set of Napier's Rods

News

from around the country

Badgers fun day out in Rhondda



We are always pleased to receive photographs of Share events for the newsletter. Thank you to Beverley Podd for her record of the recent Share Family Learning event held in Rhondda Cynon Taf – further details on the front page.

Where to now?

Many Share parents are accredited for the Share work they do with their children. This often inspires them to go on and take up jobs or further learning opportunities. Here are some examples of what some parents have moved on to.

At St Vincent's Primary School in Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, six parents have gained OCN certificates of accreditation for the Share work they have done with their children at home. So what are they doing next? Two are now going on to take a classroom assistants' course, one is taking a special needs assistants' course, and another is starting a teacher training course, while another is taking a travel and tourism course. In addition, six parents have received a personal career development interview to identify specific needs. This year, those who have gained

accreditation will support the Share KS2 activities, which will take place at a Breakfast Club.

At Northfield House Primary School in Leicester, seven parents, working with their children at KS2, have achieved OCN certificates – four at Levels 1 and 2 and three at Level 3 – working on Junior Sharebook 1 with Elaine Goodall, an ABE tutor. As a result of doing Share, one parent is now training to be a lifeguard, two are becoming volunteer helpers in school and two are taking up full-time courses: NVQ 1 in Hairdressing and Beauty and OCN Access to Humanities and Social Studies. For parents in the previous year's Share group, a basic computer course has been set up at school, in conjunction with Leicester College; three other parents have become paid ancillaries in school.



Parents at St Vincent's Primary School receive their OCN certificates

Isle of Wight family learning

A brand new Family Learning Centre, thought to be the first of its kind in Britain, was opened at East Cowes Primary School by David Pettitt, the Assistant Director of Education. It is being funded through the Single Regeneration Budget and Lifelong Learning and aims to offer parents a wide range of educational opportunities, including Share, together with the chance to gain recognised accreditation. These are complemented by a number of one-off awareness visits, which will give an insight into such areas as nutrition and children's health. Sarah Teague, the IOW's Family Learning Consultant and Share Co-ordinator, runs the centre and says: *'By taking part in the courses on offer, parents will be better equipped to help support their children's learning, and they will have the chance to gain some useful accreditation in the process.'*

Sarah organised lots of activities for the family learning weekend, including swimming, a junk modelling challenge, a visit to Newport Roman Villa and an exciting mystery puzzle – involving chocolate eggs – to solve at Carisbrooke Castle Museum.



Launch of the Isle of Wight Family Learning Centre

The Share team



Introducing the CEDC Share team – from left to right: Julie Higson, Share Regional Development Officer, Midlands; Lisa Capper, Education Development Manager; Mike O'Brien, Share Regional Development Officer, South; Ann Brian, Share Regional Development Officer, North and Teresa Johnson, Family Learning Co-ordinator.

The three regional posts are funded by the DFEE.

Barnsley's Ode

Kath McGraw, a parent at Parkside Primary School, in Royston, has just completed her first year of Share and wrote this poem to Diane Parker, the Family Learning Tutor, who, together with the class teacher, Sue MacFarlane, runs the Share sessions.



New units for parents!

Four accreditation units for Share parents of pupils at KS3, ranging from Entry Level to Level 3, have been written and are currently awaiting final approval from the Open College Network; they specifically match the activities for Share at KS3, but may be used by Share parents whose children are at KS1 or KS2. For example, the computer unit shown below, available at Levels Entry, 1 and 2, may be used by any Share parent who wants to learn about and support their children's ICT skills.

Share Units				
Titles and levels				
Unit title	Entry	Level one	Level two	Level three
COMPUTERS DON'T BITE Supporting ICT skills	●	●	●	
ALL CHANGE! Transition – understanding the school's learning environment	●	●	●	●
CAN DO! Working towards independent learning	●	●	●	●
RIGHT ON! Supporting the development of citizenship	●	●	●	●
STUDENT SELECTED TOPIC "Discovery"			●	●

Summary of new accreditation units

DIARY DATES

Regional conferences

Southern

Venue: Institute of Education, London University

Date: Monday, 2 April 2001

Midlands

Venue: John Ellis Centre for Lifelong Learning, Leicester

Date: Thursday, 22 March 2001

Northern

Venue: The Foresight Centre, Liverpool University

Date: Monday, 3 April 2001

Share LEA Network Meeting

Venue: Warwick University

Date: Thursday, 29 March 2001

Approved Trainer Course

Venue: TechnoCentre, Coventry

Date: 3 & 4 April 2001

Share quotes

'Share was recognised as an important part of the school/home partnership.'

(Brocklewood Infant and Nursery School, Nottingham City)

'Children in Year 2 this year have had SATs levels higher than we had expected when they started in Year 1.'

(St Denys Primary School, Southampton)

'It helps our professional development – we are gaining new skills relating to teaching adults and managing Share groups.'

(Allanson Street CP School, St Helens)

We are sorry to announce that Lisa Capper, who so successfully managed the Share project, will soon be leaving CEDC to take up a post with the DFEE as Regional Co-ordinator for the Adult and Basic Skills Strategy Unit. We know that everyone involved in Share will miss her energy and enthusiasm. *Good luck in your new job, Lisa!*

The *Shared Learning Newsletter* is primarily for teachers and parents taking part in Share. It is also useful for agencies or individuals who wish to find out more about how Share works in practice. We welcome articles, examples of activities, photographs and comments for inclusion in the newsletter. It is published termly and information needs to be sent in eight weeks before the end of term. We look forward to hearing from you!

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