

The Shared Learning Newsletter

Number 15

June 2003



The 'Two little humming birds' activity inspired Sally Gillier with her daughter, Haley, to make sock puppets. Sally commented: 'It's good to have words to the rhymes used at pre-school that are new to me, and the ideas after each rhyme are great!'

Brian, Preston's Dad, attends the Share sessions, whenever he can – 'I like seeing what he is doing. It's an important time in their lives.' Brian's wife, Nicky, adds: 'The children want you to be there and we enjoy doing the activities together.' Their younger son, Kian, aged two, also attends and takes part in some of the activities, making it a real family affair!

Success for Share at the Foundation Stage

This is a very exciting time for the Share project. Share at the Foundation Stage is nearing the end of its very successful pilot year in twenty five settings across five local education authorities in England. CEDC is pleased to announce that the full pack of materials will be available to all current Share areas from June 2003. The materials are based on the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum and are linked to the Early Learning Goals. Share Approved Trainers are able to start running training courses for Foundation Stage practitioners from June 2003; CEDC will also be running free sessions to raise awareness about Share at the Foundation Stage. Please contact Teresa Johnson at CEDC for more details.

Parents at Redwell Pre-School, in Wellingborough, who are trialling the Share materials in their Share sessions with their children, have been engaging in activities such as 'What's missing?', 'Amazing pictures' and 'Flour fun'. Joanne Purcell, mother of 3 year old Georgia, particularly liked the flour fun activity: 'We enjoyed this tremendously – the flour went everywhere! Georgia enjoyed making patterns – swirls, lines, circles, plus practising her initial G.'



Share parents at Brasshouse Infant School in Sandwell



Share training for the Foundation Stage

'Time for rhyme'

At the end of each session, parents and children sing a nursery rhyme together, using the Share CD and nursery rhyme booklet. If there is time, they take part in a follow-up activity. On one occasion they created ducks and a pond, which made the 'Five little ducks' rhyme more interesting and lively.

How does the teacher, Sharon, feel about the sessions? 'I've thoroughly enjoyed working with the parents and children.'

Accreditation units

New accreditation units, which can be used by the parents of children at all Key Stages, are now available through CEDC and your local OCN. The four units are called 'Play plus', 'Let's get moving', 'Let's find out' and 'Using everyday experiences' and are available from Entry Level to Level 3.

CEDC staff are currently working on a document mapping the Share Foundation Stage activities and accreditation units to the Adult Core Curriculum in Literacy and Numeracy. This document will be available by the end of August.

Share celebration

Share day out



Ashbrow Junior School, Huddersfield

Share parents and children from Ashbrow Junior School, in Huddersfield, were treated to a visit to Ponderosa Therapeutic Farm in Mirfield and a barge trip on Mirfield Narrow Canal. The headteacher, Andrew Allen, provided a minibus and packed lunches.

The children were thrilled with the barge and commented on the 'cuteness' of it. They now want to live on a barge, but not all the parents were keen on the idea! Everyone said that they enjoyed themselves, so we hope to make an outing an annual event in our Share group calendar.

Lorraine and myself will be running our third Share group next year. We are developing new ideas and ways of working with parents all the time. The parents are brilliant. They enjoy the weekly sessions and spend a lot of time working at home with their children, finding out things about each other that they weren't aware of before. They usually have a lot of fun!

Our next outing will be the annual Share celebration, hosted by FAST LANE, for all Share parents, tutors and headteachers in Kirklees. There is usually a good lunch and lots of praise and certificates for parents, children and tutors. It's an opportunity for our parents to meet other parents and see how many families are involved in Share. In addition, it highlights the value that FAST LANE places on Share and family learning.

Sharon Jowett, FAST LANE Literacy Development Worker

Lorraine Stirik, Ashbrow Junior School

Share presentation in Thetford

Last July, over 120 parents and children gathered at the Carnegie Room in Thetford, Norfolk, to be presented with certificates by MP Gillian Shephard. They were given these certificates in recognition of the commitment they had shown to working and learning together as part of Thetford Education Action Zone's Norwich Union Share Family Partnership project, which is taking place in Thetford's schools.

The event was also attended by a representative from Norwich Union,

which has sponsored this highly successful project, as well as representatives from the town council and from Share schools.

Activities before and after the presentation included a buffet lunch, a puppet show, ICT activities using laptop computers, craft activities and opportunities to play with toys provided by Thetford's Toy Library. The Norfolk Family Learning Team and 'Books for Babies' project provided many of these activities.

Julie Westrop, Thetford EAZ's Assistant Project Director, who organises all the family learning, commented: 'Today has been a true celebration of all that Thetford families and schools have achieved by working in partnership. What we now have in Thetford is something very special; Thetford families, schools and the community are creating a very strong partnership of which we are enormously proud.'

Doncaster's 'Share' of Sherwood Forest

Fifty parents, fifty two children (aged from 6 to 11) and a supporting band of teachers and LEA personnel took part in an activity away day to investigate Robin Hood's environment and get some first-hand insights into the lore of the woodland. The day's programme was devised and led by Liz Whilde, Doncaster's Family Learning Co-ordinator. It started with a quiz on the coach, to help while away the travel time and to give some practice in basic literacy and numeracy skills. This was followed by an exciting 'story walk' through the forest trails, led by a costumed storyteller – a dead ringer for Will Scarlett! He strode knowledgeably through little-used trails, enthralled children and parents with his tales of the

greenwood linked to Robin Hood and also to the history of the forest itself.

A group of KS2 children and their parents launched themselves into active studies of patches of the forest floor and especially the huge variety of 'minibeasts' to be found. Each family had a small investigator's kit, of which the 'pooter' was to become the favourite item – parents and children were fascinated with this tubed container, which allows small creatures to be deposited safely inside it. The adults were even elbowing the children aside in their eagerness to be involved!

Following the lunchtime picnic, sensory trails, I-Spy and the storyteller all held the group's interest and allowed for so



Doncaster's celebration in the woods

much learning within a hugely enjoyable context.

To complete the day, Share certificates were presented to record the families' successful participation throughout the year. The children also received a Share badger glove puppet.

Everyone agreed that the day had been an undoubted success and parents clearly indicated the great value they placed on taking part in a learning adventure with their children.

Accreditation success



Share celebration cake

Twenty schools in Wiltshire have now received Share training and accreditation is beginning to be taken up. Parents at eight schools are undertaking accreditation and Newton's Share parents are the first to receive their OCN certificates for the unit 'Making and using learning materials'. They have all completed Entry Level and Level 1, and several parents have started Level 2.

A big celebration was made of the certificate presentation. Bob Wolfson, Wiltshire's Director for Children, Education and Libraries, presented the certificates. The parents put on a marvellous spread, with one parent, Jo Keryn, making a wonderful Share cake.

Jo Pike, the Wiltshire Share Co-ordinator, has found through her research that: 'Parents who follow accreditation become more confident in themselves. They take an active interest in their children's learning and in learning in general. They start reflecting on how things have gone. They begin to generate their own games and activities such as making up car games to keep the children amused on long journeys ... they can identify when their child takes a step forward and think of ways of adapting activities or homework to suit their child's needs. They are ambassadors for learning, setting a positive role model for their children.'

Wiltshire celebrates twice!

Forty Share parents and children from Bowerhill, Mere and Newton schools took part in a fun day in the grounds of Urchfont Manor. The celebration started with a picnic, following which all the parents and children thoroughly enjoyed an 'unnature trail', before participating in a scavenger hunt. The day ended with the presentation of Wiltshire Share certificates to all the parents.



Parents at Newton Primary School receive their certificates

Share news ...

KS3 Share project works with the local newspaper

Two Share groups at Stoke Park School in Coventry have taken part in an innovative and exciting literacy/citizenship project with the Coventry Evening Telegraph. In July 2002 this resulted in a special edition of the newspaper featuring the school.

During their evening Share sessions, pupils (from Years 7 and 8) and their parents met with Richard Pearce from the local newspaper, who talked to them about the following topics: interviewing techniques, newspaper layout and headlines, writing articles, the use of ICT and photos, NIBs (news in brief) and job roles. Following discussions and a study of past editions, parents and pupils divided up the jobs and decided on the theme for the front and back pages.

With help from Marilyn Knapp, the school's Share tutor and professional mentor, they decided to feature the highlights of the school (such as sports clubs, musical events, the summer school and new technological advances) to coincide with the open evening on 8 July for the parents of new Year 7 pupils. One of the aims was to promote Share to new parents, as Mr Wolger, the



Parents at Stoke Park School study newspapers

Headteacher, commented: 'Hopefully, more and more users will join up as it has big benefits to parents and children. It's a good way of showing parents new teaching practices and will help them understand homework and lessons.'

Parents and children worked as a team, devising questions for interviews with staff, pupils, parents and Share staff from CEDC; pupils then wrote the articles on the school's computers and put the

pages together with the help of Richard Pearce.

Pupils and parents had real deadlines to meet and had to work extremely hard to get the newspaper to print on time! One thousand extra copies of the daily paper were printed for 8 July and given out to all parents at the school.

Parents and children had learnt a lot from this project and had great fun working together at the same time.



Producing a newspaper

WWW. 
shareuk.org.uk
PARTNERSHIPS in shared learning

Don't forget to visit the Share website!

ICT in Hampshire

Share activities have been extended in two Share schools, Wootey Infants and Cherrywood Primary. Parents were canvassed to find out whether they would be interested in developing some basic ICT skills. Funding was obtained from the Community Learning Unit.



At Wootey Infant School over fifteen parents were interested in learning how to use the Internet and e-mail, while at Cherrywood School five parents wished to get to grips with working with text.

Parents at Wootey Infant School preferred one-hour sessions to take place straight after the end of the school day, with a crèche run by Learning Support Assistants. This meant that the



eight school computers with Internet access could be used. Places were allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis and it was made clear to parents that this course would run for six weeks, so that more parents could be accommodated on subsequent runs. A course programme was agreed with the parents. The course was run by a tutor from the local adult community centre. It was a great success, with parents receiving a certificate for their efforts.

At Cherrywood School parents preferred to have one-hour sessions taking place just before the end of the school day. This meant that school computers could not be used, so five laptops were borrowed from the Adult and Community Unit. Again, a very successful six-week course was held, with parents receiving certificates.

With both programmes the aim was to promote participation by parents, thereby encouraging them to consider their own learning potential (in keeping with the Share philosophy). It was important to offer parents the opportunity to progress, so a representative of the local adult community learning forum attended the last session and outlined local learning opportunities.

Three more schools have now expressed an interest in offering similar opportunities – so back to the proposal for more funding!

Ryland Lee, Share Co-ordinator, First Partnership

Hull parents rewarded at celebration evening

Share parents from five schools in Bransholme Education Action Zone, in Hull, celebrated their educational achievements, dancing the night away at a special awards ceremony. The five schools were Cleeve, Highlands, Midmere, St Richard's and Maybury.

The EAZ celebration event was held at the Country Park Inn in Hesse. Following the presentation of certificates, John Butterick, Manager of the Children's University, gave a rousing closing speech, reiterating the vital importance of parents working with schools, with the goal of raising standards in Bransholme.



Parents discuss a project with teacher Moira Monahan (centre), at St Mary Queen of Martyrs School, Bransholme



Girls from Highlands Primary School enjoy the evening at the Country Park Inn, Hesse

Share news ...

Share teacher wins top national teaching award

Rachel Taylor, a Reception class teacher at Ackton Pastures School in Castleford, has won the Early Years Practitioner of the Year Award for Excellence. She received a glass trophy, a certificate and a £500 cheque from TV presenter Nick Owen at a special ceremony in Birmingham.

Trish Hollies, a Tutor Organiser for the WEA in Wakefield, said: 'Rachel was one of the first teachers to be involved in Share in 1997-8. Share has gone from strength to strength at KS1 under her

guidance. Her enthusiasm and rapport with the parents have been outstanding. The OCN External Moderator, after visiting her class, commented on her natural ability to relate to the parents, her skill at getting them to recognise and value their contribution to their child's learning, and to have fun at the same time ... Her input into the training sessions has been invaluable to other teachers.'

Well done, Rachel!



Share helps school to gain Investor in People award

Congratulations to Cliff Park First School in Great Yarmouth EAZ, which has been awarded 'Investor in People' status. Share was mentioned as evidence of good practice. The school recruited ten parents last year (including grandparents), four of whom have been working towards accreditation with the Open College Network.

Share has led to more parental involvement in the school: parents do things like contributing to the school magazine, making storybags, attending library skills training and playing maths games with Year 1 children.

Teachers have commented on how much more confident the children are and on how much better they perform in class after working with their parents at home. Teachers have also found that the children enjoy their 'special' time each week.

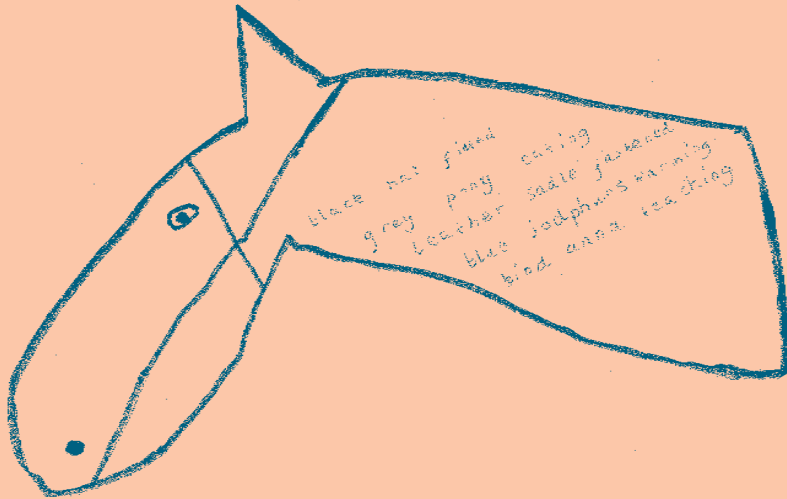
Parents find they have a clearer understanding of their children's preferred learning styles and of how they can help to move their children on. Sheena Lai, whose daughter Lisette is in Year 1, says: 'Share encourages parents to share responsibility for their child's education. Share affords parents the opportunity to work together with their child and school to achieve higher educational standards through extra-curricular work, play and fun – be it creating a number train together or planting beans at home.' Another parent, Julia Knight, adds: 'My daughter, who is 4, also joins in and is learning things without realising it! I would certainly recommend Share to other mums.'



from around the country

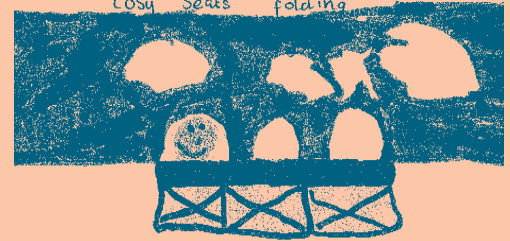
Key Stage 2 List poems

Parents and children from Primary 3 at Lockerbie Primary School, in Dumfries and Galloway, have sent us these 'List poems' they wrote for the Share activity 'Going to school' on page 38 in Junior Sharebook 3.



Going to the Pictures

Sleepy Mum sleeping
Sporty Dad watching
excited Andrew smiling
yummy popcorn going
half price tickets selling
cool film ending
interested people leaving
Cosy Seats folding



What parents say about Share

At Key Stage 1

Tina Atwal, a parent at St Chads CE Nursery and Infant School in Derby, has given us her thoughts on Share: 'When I first came to do computers, I had some help from the teacher, but I now know how to do it on my own. I like coming to Share every Tuesday. Very interesting to help your children – we do all sorts of things.'

At Key Stage 3

Share started in Hartland School in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, in September 2002. Of the twenty families who showed an interest, twelve have been to the school's weekly Share meetings. Roy Hobson, the Share tutor has sent us these comments from a Share parent:

'After a term, three or four of us turn up regularly to work with Tracey and Roy from the school – there's usually three or four kids there as well, a real family affair. None of us had any experience of Share. We were all worried and were not sure of how we could help our kids

learn. We needn't have been. You can't go wrong with the activities in the books. It's light-hearted learning, with adults and the rest of the family enjoying doing the activities with our kids and learning together. We share worries and ideas and it gives us confidence that we're on the right track.

'Is Share a success? It is for us!'

Share certificates

CEDC has recently produced the certificates pictured here, to give to those who complete training either as Share teachers/facilitators or as Share Approved Trainers.

These certificates will automatically be awarded on completion of the two-day courses. Certificates will also be issued to Share LEA/EAZ Co-ordinators, for them to pass on to those who have already completed the above courses. Please contact CEDC if you have not received your certificate by the end of June 2003.



International Share

The Share project has become involved in a very exciting international project: SOFT Change (Supporting our Families through Change) – this innovative project, funded through Comenius 2.1 and 2.2, is looking at the best parental involvement practices in England, Poland, Spain and Crete. A best practice guide will then be published in each of the four languages and will be disseminated through our regional and national networks and also through a transnational training programme. The guide will be written for serving teachers but will include a community perspective; it will be published in June 2003. The training course will be for serving teachers and advisory staff and will focus on the practical, using a variety of training styles.

CEDC is using three of its national schemes for its examples of best practice:

- Share
- It's a Man Thing!
- Parentaid.

An English website (softchange.org.uk) has been created to record the work in progress, and a Spanish website has also been set up, which is being used for communication purposes.

Three transnational meetings have been held so far, in England (Stratford), Poland (Opole) and Crete (Heraklion). The next meeting will be in Spain (Gijon) in October 2003.



SOFT Change group in the meeting room

Good luck Mike!

We are sorry to announce that Mike O'Brien, our 'Share 40' Regional Development Officer for London, has left to take up a senior post in Hackney's Youth Services. We would like to thank him for his hard work in developing and supporting Share in the London LEAs. We wish him luck in his new job!

CEDC has appointed Bernadette Gregory as the new Share Regional Development Officer for London. She will be based in Kent and will introduce herself in the next newsletter.

New Share booklets

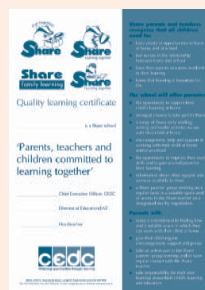
Share booklets containing five Foundation Stage activities have been produced in the following five languages: Bengali, Urdu, Turkish, Bosnian and Somali. These are now available for sale, priced at £2.50 each.



Congratulations!

Newton Primary School, Wiltshire, has received the Share Quality Learning Certificate for the high quality work it is doing with parents.

We hope to see many more schools receive this certificate in the near future.



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!

For further information, contact: Teresa Johnson at CEDC, Unit C1, Grovelands Court, Longford Road, Exhall, Coventry CV7 9NE.

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DIARY DATES

Share events

Regional Share/South Tyneside Family Learning Conference

Raising aspirations and standards – the impact of family learning

Venue: Chuter Ede Education Centre, South Shields

Date: 6 June 2003

Cost: free

Meeting of 'Share for speakers of languages other than English'

Date: Sandwell

Venue: 9 June 2003

LEA/EAZ Network meeting

Focus: Key Stage 3

ALI Inspections

Venue: The Welcome Centre, Coventry

Date: 3 October 2003

Share Approved Trainer course

Venue: Technocentre, Coventry

Date: 14-15 October 2003

CEDC events

Community Educators' Network conference

Date: 27-28 June 2003

Venue: Marriott Hotel, Northampton

CSN Conference

Zero tolerance – can extended schools deliver on school improvement?

Date: 11-12 November 2003

Venue: Burlington Hotel, Birmingham

National event

Family Learning Weekend

Date: 10-12 October 2003

For further information about any of the Share or CEDC events, contact Dawn Lamont at CEDC on 024 7658 8467.



Learning+Skills Council



Widening opportunities through learning

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