

# The Shared Learning Newsletter

Number 16

December 2003



14 October 2003 was the date of the official launch of ContinYou, the new community learning charity formed by CEDC and Education Extra. At the launch we were fortunate to have the company of a number of eminent supporters, who celebrated the event with us. From left to right in the photo are: Baroness Cathy Ashton, Under Secretary of State for Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare; Phil Street, CEO of ContinYou; John Pugh MP, Liberal Democrat; Adrienne Bloch, Head of Education, John Laing plc; Baroness Kay Andrews; and Kim Boswell MP, Conservative.

## Share continues to move forward!

Exciting developments have taken place since our last newsletter. You might have spotted our new name: ContinYou – this is a major new community learning charity, formed by the amalgamation of CEDC and Education Extra, which took place in October 2003 (14 October was the official launch date). Our two organisations had been working closely together for some time, before deciding that we could offer a better service by putting this collaboration on a permanent footing.

ContinYou will operate, as before, from its two main bases in Coventry and in Bethnal Green, London. There will also be a new office in Cardiff. ContinYou will carry on providing all of the services formerly offered by CEDC. Its work will now be extended to include Education Extra's expertise in study support and the delivery of out-of-school-hours learning programmes to schools and other bodies. This means that Share will continue to operate as before, so you will carry on getting your copy of the *Shared Learning Newsletter*

as usual. Share will still operate from the Coventry base, with the same regional offices, staffed by Julie Higson and Anne Hydon.

ContinYou will provide a wide range of well-established initiatives, as well as developing exciting new programmes that will encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to take up opportunities for learning.

Our work will focus on:

- schools, education and lifelong learning
- economic and community regeneration
- study support (out-of-school-hours learning)
- tackling health inequalities
- working with families
- building partnerships.

For more information about what we are doing, please visit the websites: [www.continyou.org.uk](http://www.continyou.org.uk) and [www.shareuk.org.uk](http://www.shareuk.org.uk).

### Twins enjoy Share



Mansel Infant School in Southampton sent us this photo of Luke and Rebecca Jones, 6 year old twins, who had fun with the activity 'Finding materials'. They built houses and transport from scrap materials.

### Correction

We are very sorry that the wrong fax number was given on some of the Share order forms that have been sent out. Please note that the correct number is 024 7658 8441.

# Share news ...

## Courses after Share

Enterprising Share parents at three schools in Hampshire – Anstey Junior, Cherrywood Primary and Wootey Infants – were not content to take part in the 'bite-size ICT' courses (offered as extensions to Share), but have also now attended 'Emergency First Aid' courses, offered by St John Ambulance and Red Cross tutors. Twenty five parents have already gained certificates and another fifteen parents are about to be involved.



Hampshire parents with their First Aid certificates

## ICT skills used for Badger Village

The Share group at Brock C of E Primary School came up with a brilliant idea for an activity: parents and children created 'Badger Village' on the wall and then produced a 16 page 'Visitors' guide', using their literacy and ICT skills. Each page describes a different shop and ends with a rhyme. We particularly liked 'The Share Inn'.



The Share Inn  
Proprietor: Mrs H.Allen  
A warm welcome awaits you from your hostess, Helene.  
Enjoy our home cooked pub fayre,  
From sandwiches and salads to,  
Cooked meals from our comprehensive range  
or  
Stay a night in one of our comfortable, well-equipped rooms.  
For further details enquire within  
or call 123456.  
Whisky, rum, brandy, gin,  
Whatever you fancy  
Come on in!

## KS2 Computers in Space!

The children and parents at Ramnoth Junior School in Wisbech have enjoyed using the computers for their Share activities, particularly 'Space in my pocket', as Liam Nixon's work (pictured below) shows.

They have also been engaged in designing and writing a leaflet, using the activity in Junior Sharebook 2 – the leaflet on 'Crocodiles' by Samuel Edwards is a good example of this.

## Wakefield uses 'Computers don't byte!'

Share's computer unit, 'Computers don't byte!', was introduced in Wakefield last September. It was delivered by adult education tutors working in partnership with schools. The interest was phenomenal, with a hundred parents wanting to find out how RM software worked, how their children were taught ICT and how they could use ICT to support their children's learning.

Joint sessions were also included in the Share programme, where the children could show off their ICT skills as they worked with their family partner. By working together they learnt how to make games, use the Internet and explore CD ROMs used in school. For some it has been a really successful introduction to Share, with many parents moving on to the school-based Share programme, working with the class teacher.



## Accreditation in Wakefield

What a success story! Share has continued to grow in Wakefield schools. Last year they had their best year ever, with a record 240 parents on various Share programmes throughout the district and with 96 parents gaining accreditation.



Lets get snappy!

1. Do not walk your crocodile near small children.
2. Keep away from cats and other animals.



# from around the country

## Gym Joey and 'Let's get moving'

Wakefield is now busy integrating the Share accreditation unit 'Let's get moving' into their 'Gym Joey' programme. This is one way of giving parents who have not had the opportunity to join the Share programme before the chance to gain OCN accreditation, by working with their pre-school children, as they collect their fun-fit badges issued by the British Gymnastics Society.



## Share Dad takes the lead!

Share has been running successfully for four years at Sandfield Close Primary School in Leicester. This is due in no small part to the hard work and enthusiasm of Shabnam Mulla (who has run Share for all that time) and Anne Kitchen (who co-ran Share with Shabnam for the first two years). The headteacher and other staff are also very supportive of Share.

The sheet of parents' comments was something that the Share parents organised themselves, with Jit Mistry taking the role of co-ordinator and word-processor. As the only father in the group, Jit enjoyed his Share time and remarked (sounding somewhat surprised!) that he had initially been reluctant to go to the trouble of organising time off work to attend the group, but he had found it an enjoyable,

informative and rewarding way of being involved with his child's education in school and at home. He would definitely recommend it to other parents, especially Dads.

All of the parents have been very actively involved in the sessions, sharing a variety of their own ideas for activities. Some of the sessions have been led by a parent, with Shabnam acting as facilitator.

All ten parents gained accreditation at Level 1 in the unit 'Aiming high'.

As the 2003-4 academic year will be the fifth year of Share, the school is planning to hold a celebration later in the year, with invitations to all Share parents from the past and present.

Sue Rogers, Family Learning and ABE Tutor, Leicester College

## Badgers make wonderful parents

Sue Scholes, the Learning Mentor and Share tutor at Broadgate Primary School in Leeds, sent us this photo of their badger display:



Sue started a Share group in February 2002 with four parents and two grandparents, who between them cared for ten children of different ages. All these children join in the Share activities. This was such a dedicated Share group that they even took part in a Share session on the morning that England played in the World Cup,

when the rest of the school were watching television!

Last year, the group carried on into their second year and helped to recruit a new group of Year 1 parents by talking to parents at the initial meeting about the benefits they found, which they felt included:

- 'time for me'
- 'special time with my child'
- 'a chance to meet new people'
- 'flexible sessions that are structured around parents' needs'
- 'brilliant ideas for fun activities'
- 'helping us keep up with modern methods of teaching and making us more aware'.

Seven parents/grandparents joined the new Year 1 Share group. After only five weeks, teachers had already noticed an improvement, particularly with the confidence not only of the children taking part, but also of their parents. Parents are now becoming more involved with their children's learning and are helping out in the classrooms and with PTA events.

Broadgate Primary School has now gone on to run many different courses for parents, on topics such as: art/craft, basic computing, aromatherapy, yoga, mini-maths workshops, literacy and numeracy.

# Share news ...

## Getting the foundations right in Sure Start areas

Jackie Cairns, the Family Learning Co-ordinator, has sent us this report from Bolton.

The Bolton Literacy Trust is busily setting up Share groups in Bolton's four Sure Start areas. Sure Start is a government initiative to help the parents of young children. It is hoped that children will get a better start in life if their parents receive support. Taster sessions for Foundation Stage Share have been held in libraries, nurseries and playgroups. Share has been particularly welcomed at Young Mums' Parent and Toddler sessions, where parents have valued the activities.

Parents at Trinity Pre-School, Farnworth, have thoroughly enjoyed Share. Angela, Daniel's mother, commented: 'I have really enjoyed the Share sessions. They have given me some good ideas to use when playing with the children. Rather than buy expensive toys, why not make them? My children love the activities –

we have had lots of fun and my children are learning at the same time.'

Lesley particularly enjoyed the 'Oscar' activity and it was also a great hit with her children, Elliot (3½) and Luke (2½).

Share has already been running in Bolton since 2001. It is accredited through the Manchester Open College Network.

One mother commented: 'We have benefited as a family, as it has promoted lots of family discussions and laughter. Some of the activities have been to make up games which has involved members of the family, young and old. Share has also helped me to find maths fun, which is something my teachers never could. Because Share complements the work they are doing in school, my daughters have enjoyed teaching me things I had long ago forgotten about.'

## Share owl trail

Last summer Southampton LEA offered its schools £250 for an end-of-term celebration for everyone taking part in the Share scheme. At Mansbridge Primary School, the parents planned and organised the event, as well as preparing a budget and writing an evaluation.

They decided on a trip to Itchen Valley Country Park.



Mansbridge Primary School, Manchester

'The afternoon started with a picnic. After lunch, we hired nets and trays for pond-dipping – it was hard to tell if the adults or children enjoyed it the most! We found several snails, a dragonfly and also a few items that we couldn't recognise, as well as quite a lot of weed!

'After a short break for ice-creams, we collected the items needed to complete an owl trail. The task was to work out where Ollie sleeps. We were all given a sheet with fifteen clues – each one led to a symbol. There was also a decoding chart to help us work out the secret message.

At the end, the children exchanged their completed sheets for a prize. Finally, all the pupils were encouraged to write a short message in the visitors' book, before returning to school.'

As the Share tutor, Samantha Rudgeley, concluded: 'We had a fantastic afternoon and both parents and children gained a lot.'

## Raising Aspirations and Standards

A conference for practitioners involved in family learning initiatives in the North-East was held at Chuter Ede Education Centre on 6 June 2003. The day was jointly organised by CEDC (now ContinYou) and South Tyneside Family Learning Service, in order to celebrate the successful launch of Share in twelve schools in the Borough.

As well as demonstrating the exciting and innovative practice in family learning taking place in South Tyneside and exploring the impact of these nationally, the conference offered various workshops and a performance of dance and rap poetry on stage by parents and children.

Speakers included James Nottingham, Director of N-RAIS (Northumberland's Raising Aspirations in Society), Phil



Parents and children from family learning groups in Stanhope and Laygate Primary Schools

Street, CEO of ContinYou, and Tony Gill, Headteacher of Hadrian Primary School.

Anyone interested in finding out more about family learning in South Tyneside should contact Helene Walke on 0191 519 1909 ext 485.

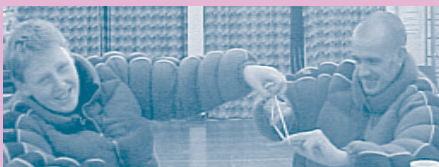
# from around the country

## Share aware in Thetford EAZ

Share is going from strength to strength in Thetford, with nearly 300 parents involved. Chances are that everyone in Thetford will know someone who is 'Share aware'. Share is now in all nine of the town's primary and nursery schools and is starting in the high schools too. The Thetford Share newsletter has even been translated into Portuguese!

Thirty one teachers and teaching assistants have been trained to deliver Share and are leading activities such as the 'Great Knicker Elastic Caper'.

In the photo Gina Cason and Kevin



Austin from Canterbury Infant School can be seen getting to grips with their elastic and equilateral triangles! This activity has helped parents and children to understand, recognise and name 2D and 3D shapes.

### Share at Norwich Road Primary



Two Share groups are running at Key Stages 1 and 2. Activities that parents and children have done together

have included shoe-box theatres, persuasive writing, story-telling, mind-mapping, fabric printing, cupboard safari and tangrams. The Hill family produced a school guide for new pupils, as well as some Share posters and shipwreck stories.

Share groups took part in the Thetford Carnival and in the week of arts activities held last June. They also attended another Share 'Graduation' ceremony with the local MP, Gillian Shephard, awarding certificates.

### New ways in maths at KS2

Parents and children at Admirals' Junior have been working together to explore new ways in maths. Parents have used the classroom equipment, experienced the numeracy hour and learnt more about how their children are taught. Parents feel that Share has helped them to understand how to help their children at home (and even to brush up on their own skills).



### Pupils' performance in Share at KS2

Share children at Abbey Farm Junior have received certificates to recognise the work they have done at home with their parents. This included designing passports for pets, as well as performing a puppet show for their classmates, using their own scripts and a song composed with family members. They are also engaged in a longer project, growing vegetables and keeping a diary of what they observe.

## Awards evening in Doncaster

In celebration of the success of Share, the Civic Mayor of Doncaster, Councillor John Quinn, hosted an awards evening at the Mansion House to distribute certificates and thank all those who had taken part.

The event, which was introduced by Mark Eales, Doncaster Council's Executive Director of Education and Culture, included headteachers, teachers, parents and children. Seventeen parents received OCN certificates for completing 28 Share units.



Participating teachers have already seen a marked improvement in the progress of children taking part in Share, particularly with literacy and self-confidence. Parents have welcomed this opportunity to gain a better understanding of education and teaching methods.

The Civic Mayor said: 'The Share scheme is a great way for parents not only to have fun and spend more time with their children, but also to get actively involved in their education. Children are our future and we should continue to promote and support schemes such as this to nurture their learning, education and development.'

During 2001-2, fourteen schools participated in Share, with a total of 88 parents attending weekly groups. This year, fifteen schools are taking part and the number of parents is expected to rise. In addition, the LEA has been piloting Foundation Stage Share specifically targeting children in care, with extra support being given for carers who want to take part.

## Share Dads have their own sessions



Share Dads in assembly

After Stephen Twigg (at that time Minister for Young People and Learning) launched the Dads and Sons 'Give an Hour' scheme, Haringey wanted to support and promote this national initiative. They decided to pilot a 'Dads only' Share group at South Haringey Infants School.

Their aim was not only to provide children with good role models, but also to give fathers an insight into school life.

Fathers received personal invitations to participate in the group. Those taking part came from a range of backgrounds, including Armenia, Bangladesh, the Congo, England, Kosova, Lebanon, Somalia, Turkey and Zambia.

The group meets on a weekly basis and the sessions are therapeutic, practical, informative and curriculum based. So far, the group has been involved in a range of activities including:

- handling Victorian objects, led by the education officer from the Geffrye Museum
- visits to the Geffrye Museum and the National Portrait Gallery
- a cooking session in which one of the Dads showed everyone how to make Makote Stew
- activities from the Sharebooks, such as 'Paper pets' and 'Tangrams'.

There have been unexpected spin-offs from this group, with fathers becoming enthusiastic and coming up with

ideas of their own. During one session on playground games, Lilu Miah, a father from Bangladesh, remembered an intricate form of 'cat's cradle' that he had played as a child and was able to teach it to the others in the group. Lilu then went home and made some 'magic' wire puzzles, which were very difficult to untangle.

These fathers were then asked to share their skills with the children at a whole-school assembly. Lilu explained his games in Bengali for half of the children, with Veena Sharma (Haringey's Parental Involvement and Share Co-ordinator) then translating his explanations into English for the rest.

Richard Clifford, who does Share at home with his daughter, Rosa, says he enjoys the group because he meets and discusses topics, such as sport and computers (that is, men's issues!) with other Dads.

## Visit to Bruce Castle



The Dads' group went on a visit to Bruce Castle in Tottenham and looked at a school photographic exhibition using a pin-hole camera. The Museum Manager explained the process

and showed the fathers the cameras and samples of work. They were also very interested in seeing how many changes had taken place in the many photographs of the local area.



Share dads on top of Bruce Castle

Following this, the Dads looked at the view from the top of Bruce Castle and heard what the local area would have been like 150 to 250 years ago. Inside, they saw many of the artefacts, which children are allowed to touch, and they had the chance to ask questions about the exhibits. They were also encouraged to try out things, such as the old carpet sweeper shown here.

Brian, Elena's father, enjoys 'learning what goes on in schools these days' and

also helping his daughter with her reading and Share work. He enjoys the Dads' group rather than the mixed groups, because he feels more comfortable working with other men and thinks that 'women tend to take over and lead'!

Richard also added that Share time was special for him and his daughter and he enjoyed being part of the school.



Share dads using an old carpet sweeper

## Brent combines Share and ESOL



Every Friday morning, Joyce Pryke, the Share tutor at Mitchell Brook Primary School, holds Share sessions in the school hall. During this hour, parents discuss the previous week's activity. Joyce then introduces the new activity and offers parents guidance on how they can use it with their child. Parents then try out the activity for themselves and learn how they can engage older or younger children as well. This gives parents the confidence to complete the activity at home with their child and helps them to understand the learning points and the skills used.

The session continues with an adult education tutor coming in to teach English; she joins half-way through the Share session and then uses the Share activity to expand into the language class. The partnership works extremely effectively – the whole session is very informal and there is a good balance between supportive learning and social interaction. The Share session is used for the speaking and listening part of the ESOL curriculum. The writing, spelling and grammar used in the second half with the adult education tutor covers the reading and writing aspects of the ESOL curriculum.

Mitchell Brook School provides an excellent example of how Share can be expanded to suit the needs of the community and to complement the child's learning.

## New games at Cleves School, in Newham

Parents in this Share group have all been encouraged to make up their own games and to share them with other parents – they are then rewarded with a box of chocolates!

One of the parents has developed a literacy game to help with learning the differences between nouns, adjectives and verbs.

The parent made three trays: one for adjectives, one for nouns and one for verbs. She then wrote some words on cards and hid them in the garden. Her child had to find the cards and put them in the right tray. The whole Share group then played this game, which reinforced what the children were learning.

The Share tutor had introduced this topic by creating a 'feely bag' from the activity in the Share Foundation Stage pack, encouraging parents to make their own and to use it to help their children use adjectives in their own language.



## DfES visit



Carolyn Unsted, the Team Leader for Parental Involvement in the Children's Education Team at the DfES, visited one of the mixed Share sessions at South Haringey Infants School, which took place in the Family Learning Room. Carolyn talked to the parents about their Share work and was very impressed with what she saw. She also heard from Veena Sharma about the work of some of the other 26 groups in Haringey.

# What's new?

## Share CD in Gujarati

A pilot CD has been produced in Gujarati/English to be used by families at home or during Share sessions. The CD tells parents about Share and how they can help their children. It also guides them through some Share activities aimed at children at the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1.

ContinYou would like to thank Share supporters from Leicester College and Leicester City schools for their help in the development and production of the Share CD. Special thanks to Paul Ayres (Lecturer in Music Technology, Leicester College), Ilan May, Ed Jadowski, Clare Brierley, Chris Faulkner (students at Leicester College, on the B Tec National Diploma in Music Technology course), Shabnam Mulla (Sandfield Close Primary School), Manisha Javer (Charnwood Primary School) and Sue Rogers (Leicester College).

If you would like to be part of this pilot and receive a free copy of this resource to use with Share families, please contact Anne Hydon on 0788 774 8137.



## Goodbye to Bernadette!

The bad news: we are sorry to announce that Bernadette Gregory, the Share Regional Development Officer for London, has left us and gone back to Australia.

We would like to thank her for her hard work with developing and supporting Share in the London LEAs and liaising with the local Learning and Skills Councils.

The good news: Bernadette plans to start Share in Australia – so watch this space!

## New accreditation unit

A new Share accreditation unit for practitioners has been developed through the Open College Network. It will be available at Levels 2 and 3 and will require practitioners to build a portfolio of the work they are doing, whilst setting up and running Share sessions.

This unit will go to panel at the Open College Network in January and will be ready for use by the end of January or early February.

If you are interested in piloting it, please contact Teresa Johnson on 02476 588 440.

## Congratulations!

Sandfield Close Primary School in Leicester and Mitchell Brook Primary School in Brent have both received the Share Quality Learning Certificate for the high quality work they are doing with parents.

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 ContinYou, Unit C1, Grovelands Court, Longford Road, Exhall, Coventry CV7 9NE.  
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Website: [www.continyou.org.uk](http://www.continyou.org.uk)

department for  
**education and skills**



**Learning+Skills Council**

## DIARY DATES

### Share events

#### Share Approved Trainer course

Venue: Coventry

Date: 15-16 December 2003

#### Share Approved Trainer course

Venue: Coventry

Date: 13-14 January 2004

#### Share Approved Trainer course

Venue: Coventry

Date: 26-27 April 2004

#### LEA/EAZ Network meeting

Venue: The Welcome Centre, Coventry

Date: 20 January 2004

#### LEA/EAZ Network meeting

Venue: The Welcome Centre, Coventry

Date: 28 April 2004

#### Annual Share Conference

Venue: NEC, Birmingham

Date: Wednesday, 10 March 2004

(Please note that the Education Show follows the Share Conference at the NEC from 11-13 March.)

### ContinYou events

#### Active Dads Conference

Venue: The Barbican Centre, London

Date: 28 January 2004

#### Community briefing – Older People's Needs

Venue: Friends House, London

Date: 3 March 2004

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

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Building learning communities

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