



at KS3

Work on developing Share at Key Stage 3 has begun! A technical working group comprising interested parties, such as teachers, advisers, parents and consultants, has been established. Its first meeting was in January. As might be expected, lively debate took place and a number of very pertinent questions were asked: 'What are the key messages to parents and pupils?' 'How can we make effective use of ICT as a tool throughout the project?' 'What kinds of activities are going to motivate and reward the teenagers and their parents?' and, critically, 'How will Share at Key Stage 3 continue to express the values which have been so important in Key Stages 1 and 2, but at the same time be relevant to the needs of young adults?' 'What features of Key Stage 1 and 2 should be retained and which should be replaced at Key Stage 3?'

Consultation has also taken place with Year 7 pupils in one of the pilot schools in Coventry. Pupils gave their views on the Share bag and the type of Share activities proposed, and on what form the badger logo should take.

KS3 trials

Trialling the materials will take place over two terms, starting in September 2000. The trialling will:

- provide valuable evidence on the appropriateness of the materials
- show how effectively Share has been adapted for an older age group
- assess the impact of parental involvement on levels of achievement
- look at accreditation for parents
- identify teacher training needs.

An external evaluation will take place to ensure that much is learnt from the trial.

The recruitment of schools to trial the material has gone very well. Almost twenty schools from six LEAs and two EAZs are taking part. The range of schools includes middle, high, comprehensive and technology schools. Mixed and single-sex schools, urban and semi-rural schools and church schools are involved.

If you have any ideas for interesting activities to motivate and accelerate learning for 11 to 14 year olds, call Teresa Johnson on 024 7665 5700.

Stop press

Did you read the Times on 9 February 2000? Under a bold headline, *Why parents must not play Teacher*, Share received a very positive write-up. The views of Philip Jones, Headteacher of Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School in Leicester capture the Share philosophy well: *'There's little point in sending work home for children to do in silence and isolation. I tell parents that, for it to be of greatest benefit, it has to be oral, active and with your child.'* The article went on to discuss the positive approach to similar work in a secondary school. The commitment of the headteacher was very evident and he explained clearly why he thought it was beneficial for schools, parents and pupils to work in partnership. This bodes well for Share at Key Stage 3. *Watch this space!*



Above: Teachers & Year 7 pupils from Stoke Park School & Community Technology College, Coventry, discuss the KS3 Share logo and bag.



Left: Working on ideas for KS3 activities

Spotlight on N



Share is developing very successfully in the largest county in the country – Yorkshire. Share schools are benefiting from the local education department's commitment to continuing education projects, a commitment which is embedded in the Education Development Plan (EDP). The curriculum and advisory branch of the department is primarily concerned with raising pupils' achievement, and the community education section is keen to promote family literacy, parental involvement, accreditation and lifelong learning.

Active support for Share is very evident – the education department has been keen to identify funding, training, support, evaluation and extension needs. Previous continuing education work has been funded through the Standards Fund, but much of the money to implement Share has been provided through the Esmée Fairbairn Trust because Share meets the trust's criteria. This holistic approach is important in providing strength and stability and is vital in taking the project forward.

Key people providing support for Share include Stuart Gregory from the continuing education section. Stuart is out and about in the county arranging training courses, seeking those who would be suitable as approved trainers, providing resources for schools, and dealing with issues such as the legal implications of childcare and assessment procedures. As Stuart says: *'We are supporting Share because we believe that early intervention is preferable in the development of key and basic skills. The early feedback from headteachers, staff and parents is extremely encouraging. We will be able to provide support for accreditation through our network of community education district managers who are identifying tutors experienced in working with adults to support the school staff.'*

By September 2000, thirteen schools will have established a Share project. Some schools are already recording successes. North Yorkshire has recruited Angela Smith to support and evaluate the project because it wants to find out how successful Share is in their schools. Angela retired from the Advisory Service only last year and still has a deep understanding and knowledge of the schools and staff involved in the project. Although Angela has only been working with the schools for a few weeks, she says: *'Schools and parents are very enthusiastic about it and feel that it is already promoting a valuable partnership. The children are very keen to talk about their Share activities, and as a result, others are asking if they can be involved too. It's early days yet to say what impact it has on the children's learning, but there are indications that it is already making a difference.'*

This evaluation exercise will be particularly valuable because Yorkshire is a very large and diverse county and schools of all sizes and in all situations feature in the Share project. To travel from one Share school in Whitby to another at Langcliffe near Settle in the Dales would take three hours by car and that's on a good day!



Year 1 teacher Alison Smith introduces a Share activity.



Year 1 parents participate in a Share workshop.



...and baby came too!

Share

'on the ground'

... in Kirk Fenton

We welcome a new school to the Share family: Kirk Fenton Parochial C of E Primary School, Yorkshire. Headteacher Marilyn Tulloch says: *'We looked at many projects which promoted work with parents but I was keen that whatever we started we would be able to sustain over time and Share met that criterion.'* Kirk Fenton School is set in a rural landscape. Children attend the school from a number of nearby villages. Most of them travel to school by bus and this adds an extra complication to running the Share project, as not all parents have access to transport.

Kirk Fenton takes its commitment to Share seriously. Share features in the School Improvement Plan that outlines the criteria for success. The school has drawn up a Share Agreement that outlines the 'rights' of children, parents and teachers in that order. The school team involved includes the Year 1 teacher, Alison Smith, and the school secretary, Judy Pearce.

The school decided to open the project to all Year 1 parents. Recruitment has been very successful and fifteen parents regularly attend the fortnightly sessions, with others attending when they can. Alison used a variety of ways to recruit parents. *'I wrote letters but also followed up with phone calls and personal contact. We also offered childcare support and met individual needs on a one-to-one basis.'* Although the project has only been running since January 2000, Alison can already see some success – pupils have been enthusiastic about taking part and many creative ideas have come from both parents and children.

Jenny Dickins sat in on a meeting of the group in March and was very impressed by what she saw. Alison and the parents

Marie and her daughter Lucy enjoying Share together at Rothwell Primary School, Leeds



reviewed the story writing and shopping activities which they had completed with their children and a lively discussion took place, with parents offering explanations and support to each other. Parents had been very creative in developing activities at home: William's mum knows he gains most from short activities; a 'café' helped Ellen to learn to use money correctly; Timothy's number and counting skills had improved; and Natalie wrote a shopping list for the ingredients for a cake, bought the ingredients, and made and ate the cake.

The Share group at Kirk Fenton is lively and purposeful. There are very good relationships which means that everyone feels able to discuss the work and the progress their children are making. Is Share helping children to learn? Yes! Parents report great success in increasing their children's confidence with writing.

And what do the children think? They enjoy the work and have very definite ideas about how they want their stories and poems to develop. The care they take over presentation is good evidence of this. And brothers and sisters? They are just as keen to get involved!

... & in Rothwell

Rothwell Primary School near Leeds is also a Share school. The impressive display of Share work includes models of playgrounds, games and rooms, all beautifully made and presented. One parent, Marie Quarmby, is enthusiastic about the work she and her daughter Lucy have been doing. Marie is finding Share very helpful and Lucy is greatly enjoying it. Recently, Lucy and her mum have worked on the story of *The Sun and the North Wind* and Lucy read the story to Jenny confidently. Parents and staff at Rothwell are so enthusiastic about Share that they are hoping to continue it next year.



Share work on display from Year 1 at Rothwell Primary School

It's a man thing

Our annual survey of Share revealed that 24% of the adults attending the Share sessions were men. This led to the development of CEDC's *It's a man thing* project which seeks to involve fathers directly in the education of their sons and daughters.

Improving the achievements of boys and finding ways to involve men in the education of their children is a concern shared by many. Excellent poster and advertising campaigns involving national figures such as footballers have been successful in promoting reading as a 'cool' thing for men and boys to do. However, direct involvement by men in supporting schooling remains a challenge, which is why *It's a man thing* has been developed. Trialling took place in Derbyshire, Dudley, Hereford, Bradford, Coventry, Newham and Portsmouth. Teachers in Dudley described the project as 'barrier breaking' and although there is some additional work for teachers because the project is often run in the early evening, the benefits are clear.

The project pack

The *It's a man thing* pack, in its bright red box, consists of three adult and child activity



books, a reading diary, a library record, a favourite books record sheet, a pen and an audio tape. The tape is a particularly useful tool in promoting literacy. Written and performed by Nick Toczec, it contains pithy poems, family-based stories and repeating rhymes that everyone can join in with. Since the project is aimed specifically at men, issues such as recruitment, groupwork skills, session times and activities are planned with this in mind.

But does it work?

The acting head teacher of Pottery Primary School in Belper, Gill Hutton, says: *'Yes – all the men we recruited stayed with us during the whole project. A real success was the improved relationships with some men who had previously only come to school to complain. The tape and the practical nature of the activities seemed to be particularly motivating. I also found that linking activities to everyday events, such as watching television, worked well. We plan to run this project again because it certainly enabled us to work with men more successfully than any other project we have tried.'*

Dudley ran successful projects in four schools. At Foxyard Primary School, teacher Ken Hughes found that increased access to information technology was a great motivator. In another school, the teacher and the dads and lads all went to a football match. Deputy Headteacher Alison Pell ran the project at Thorns Primary School in Dudley and found that football was a good recruitment vehicle for both boys



Teacher Ken Hughes successfully ran the project at Foxyard Primary School, Dudley.



and fathers. She was able to offer the boys some football skills training while she met with the adults to review and plan new work. At the start of the project only one father read to his son regularly, so Alison involved men such as her husband and son to provide positive male role models and was able to widen everyone's view of reading to include newspapers and magazines as well as books.



Alison Pell with Year 5 pupils who took part in the *It's a man thing* project

Everyone had enjoyed working in the project, not only because of the football coaching, but also because of the extra time the pupils were able to spend with their dads. As Joshua said, *'Children mostly spend their time with their mums, so it was good to spend time with my dad.'*

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: Sue Beckett, Lisa Capper or Teresa Johnson at CEDC, Woodway Park School, Wigston Road, Coventry CV2 2RH.

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