

Welcome

Welcome to the Surrey Heath Confederation of Schools Winter newsletter!

As I write, the snow is still on the ground and many of us continue to struggle into work – and the children and families struggle to get to school. Despite this challenging start to the year, a great deal is going on at our schools and children's centres. This newsletter gives you a glimpse of just some of the work being done within the Confederation.

The New Year brings some changes in the Confederation Team as we extend a very warm welcome to Dee Seaney, our new Family Support Worker specialising in SEN ASD. Find out more about Dee's role and her background in the article in this edition of the Newsletter entitled: *Getting to Know...Dee Seaney*

At the end of December we said farewell to Elaine Thurlow, Family Support Worker. We would like to thank Elaine for her work with the Confederation and wish her much success in the future.

Last but not least, a request that you mark your calendars for the SHC EXPO 2010 to be held on 18 March from 7 – 9pm at the Holiday Inn, Farnborough. Again, more details about the event and its format can be found in the newsletter section *Coming Soon...*

With my best wishes for a healthy and happy 2010.

Jan Church
Chair
Surrey Heath Confederation of Schools

Chobham & West End Children's Centre Thanks Supporters

Chobham and West End Sure Start Children's Centre opened its doors in March 2009 and had a very successful 2009 thanks to the strong support it receives from Surrey Heath Confederation staff, the four schools in its "reach area" - Holy Trinity, Bisley, Valley End and the centre's home school Chobham.

Commenting on the growth of the centre, Liz Beck, manager, said, "The solid support given to the centre by the schools and the Confederation from the start has had a huge impact. The various staffs have generously given up their time to sit on our committees, in particular our Operational Committee, and together with other professional agencies and parents play a crucial role in shaping the services we offer. We are very grateful for the way they have promoted our work and for their encouragement and support." She continued, "The Confederation's Family Support Worker, Nicky Gumbs, helped us complete our very first Parenting Puzzle course in the Autumn and we are fully booked for the next course scheduled

to run in the Spring Term. We still have places available for the Summer Term when the course will be running in the evening. We hope that working parents and fathers might be particularly interested in this adjusted timing."

Anyone who wants to participate in the Parenting Puzzle course should contact the centre on 01276 855675.

The centre continues to run its popular Play & Learn sessions for families with under fives at Bisley Village Hall on Thursdays from 9.30 – 11.00am, and at Chobham Community Centre on Mondays from 1.45 - 3.15pm. There is also fun for the Under Ones on a Wednesday at Chobham Community Centre between 1.45 – 3.15pm. This session runs alongside the Health Visitor Clinic on the first and third Wednesday in the month.

Looking ahead the centre will be starting a baby massage class and will be running lots of fun activities in the holidays and offering parents some interesting training courses such as children's first aid.

Chobham and West End sure Start Children's Centre

A Sure Start Children's Centre



Getting to Know.....Dee Seaney

Dee Seaney joined the Surrey Heath Confederation of Schools as a Family Support Worker in October 2009. In this article, Dee gives us a snapshot of her work experience and a feel for how she's been settling into her new role.

Dee explains, "I have worked in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) sector since 1992, working in both mainstream and special school settings. Over the past five years, I have had an interesting role working with families in their homes and then liaising closely with other agencies to set up the best support network for the families I've been involved with.

Since my appointment with SHC I have undertaken an initial period of training and shadowed my fellow Family Support Workers on their daily visits. After the October half term the referrals started to come in, and within a month there were 18 assigned to me. In the short time I have been with the Confederation I have been welcomed warmly by both families and schools and the staff at Carwarden House and Portesbery School have been very supportive – extending resources and their expertise when I needed it.

The feedback I have received so far on the specialised SEN ASD role is very encouraging and at the same time it has highlighted the issues families and schools are most concerned about. Behaviour is a real worry especially for the infants and the transition onto junior, and in time the transition to secondary schooling. To give you a sense of the need, I already have meetings arranged to discuss transition arrangements for three families and have no doubt these numbers will increase as placements are received.

In terms of my goals in this role, I hope to work more closely with the children's centres. The work they have already done in establishing relationships with parents of our youngest

children and local communities is fantastic. Therefore continuing to connect, build, support and promote proactively seems to be the most appropriate route to take.

Dee will also be taking the lead on the Family Support Worker Drop In Sessions. New dates for these in 2010 will be published later.

Surrey Heath Confederation Introduces SEN Support for Surrey Heath Schools

The Surrey Heath Confederation of Schools took a significant step towards increasing its support for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in October when it launched the Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO) Network. The majority of Confederation schools were represented at the Network's first meeting facilitated by Dianne Pickford.

The SENCO Network aims to:

- Meet the core offer of Extended Services on the Every Child Matters Agenda
- Provide high quality professional development for all practitioners
- Bring together an understanding of and an efficient and effective application of the National SEN Strategy using:
 - 4S consultancy support
 - The expertise of the Surrey Heath SENCO body
 - Provision, advice and support from Surrey County Council STEPS services.

At the October launch meeting the SENCO Network developed *joined up* and integrated working on the key issues that affect both children with SEN and those working as a SENCo. Karen Woosnam, head of SCC North-West Area Senior Lead Specialist Teaching Team (LLS and BS), and Lesley Chandler, CAF area implementation Manager North of Surrey, were both present at the meeting. As a result important aspects are being worked on more collaboratively by the SENCOs in Surrey Heath and a common understanding is developing to ensure the appropriate provision reaches the individual child.

Following the meeting a number of topics are in the discussion arena within the Surrey Heath SENCo Network including; Specialist Teaching and Educational Psychology Service (STEPS) processes, the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP), the SEN Self Evaluation Tool and CPD for SENCOs, teachers and teaching assistants.

The Network will meet again on Thursday, 4 February 2010. The meeting will focus on supporting SENCOs in schools and currently the outline agenda includes: STEPS representatives, the development of an Outreach Worker to develop specialist resources with TAs in mainstream schools, CPD for developing children's Emotional Literacy and Primary and Secondary Liaison Sessions to arrange meetings cross phase for the smooth transition of individual education plans.

Interested in reading more? Check out the Network Meeting Minutes available on the SHC website.

Get the Latest on the Learning Zone Project

The 'Learning Zone' is a Surrey Heath Confederation of Schools funded project aimed at helping parents support pupils with maths, from Reception through to Y6 and potentially beyond. The same questions often arise with parents: *What can we do to help our child? What strategies do you use now as they seem different to when I was taught? What should*

they know by the end of this year? The project aims to create an internet site, hosted by the Confederation, which will answer these and many more questions.

The new site will offer:

Activities: A range of internet games, worksheets or activities that link directly to the *I can statements*. Now, when parents are given targets at Parents Evenings, differentiated support will be available online and targeted specifically at their objective.

Stages in Learning: A generic calculation policy will be shared and split up into the four operations. For each operation, there will be animated clips, bringing to life the methods we teach in class. Hopefully this will clear up the confusion over chunking and the grid method!

Frequently Asked Questions: Collated from staff and parents, we have answered the most common questions parents ask.

Resources and Vocabulary: A place for parents to download frequently used resources, lists of vocabulary their child should be using each year and a glossary of key words. In time, this section may grow further!

The project will near completion by Easter and will be shared with all Maths Coordinators in the Summer Term. In the meantime, if you are interested in more information or have ideas to contribute, please contact Tom May at Ravenscote Junior School on tomm@ravenscote.surrey.sch.uk

Surrey Family Information Service Offers Free Outreach Service

The Family Information Service (FIS) gives parents and prospective parents high quality, accurate and timely information about all services for children aged 0-19 years old (up to 25 years old for young people with special needs).

Parents can contact Surrey FIS for free advice, guidance and information on a variety of topics, including holiday and after school childcare, parent friendly organisations, parenting advice and support as well as financial support.

FIS' newly launched Parent Know How directory - www.surreycc.gov.uk/parentknowhow - gives immediate online access to local and national services and facilities that might be of benefit to them in their parenting role.

The FIS Outreach Worker is available to attend school events. At previous school open days she has handed out information about FIS and Parent Know How and answered questions on a variety of issues such as childcare, tax credits, parenting classes and transition support.

If your school would like to find out more about Surrey FIS and how it can help your parents, or would like to order copies of the Parent Handbook contact your FIS Outreach Worker, Sarah Crabb on 01372 833084 or sarah.crabb@surreycc.gov.uk (Please note that these contact details are for school use, parents are given different contact details.)



Signposting to Extended Services Made Easier for Schools

To help school staff more easily direct parents and carers to the resources available to them related to childcare, access to services and specialists, family learning and parenting support, the Surrey Heath Confederation of Schools has developed an Extended Services Signposting Guide – a sample of which is attached with this Newsletter.

Schools and Children's Centres can print this out and distribute to relevant staff, receptionists and others handling general enquiries to ensure effective signposting to services.

If you have suggestions or improvements to the ES Signposting Guide or would like help to develop a customised version for your school and its local partners then contact Jane Oxford-Gurr, shc.adminassist@googlemail.com

This is the first version of the Guide so all comments and suggestions on its contents and layout are welcome – and needed – to make it as relevant and up to date as it can be. Don't hold back, send feedback!

SHC Project update! The following will hopefully provide you with a flavour of projects that have received SHC funding.

Portesbery Schools Runs Second Sibling Event

A number of primary aged siblings from schools in Surrey Heath took part in a special afternoon at the Portesbery School in December. This event built on the success of a similar afternoon that siblings had spent Samba drumming last term and was funded by Surrey Heath Confederation.

Portesbery School organised Zoolab, an external provider specialising in hands-on workshops featuring a variety of animals that include snakes, tarantulas, lizards, frogs, toads, scorpions as well as gerbils, rabbits, and guinea pigs, to visit so the children could handle a range of animals.

The siblings joined for lunch and had a chance to play with their brothers and sisters in the playground. They then had a sneak preview of the animals and got to understand how to handle them correctly. This also meant that they were able to support their brothers and sisters when it was their turn to hold the animals.

Throughout the afternoon each of the class groups had a Zoolab session which was made even more successful thanks to the care and guidance of their brothers and sisters. The event was supported by the Confederation's Family Support Worker, Dee Seaney.

The afternoon closed with a whole school assembly where the parents were invited to see what had happened throughout the afternoon and encouraged to handle some of the animals themselves.



Portesbery pupils and siblings getting to know some furry friends

Watchetts Parents Acquire New Skills

A part of the wider Community Cohesion programme, parents are thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to learn new ICT skills at Watchetts through a series of 10 week family learning courses. That is the feedback following a mid point evaluation of the EAL ICT project currently under way at Watchetts Junior School. The initiative has been made available to all families, although some families with additional EAL needs have been given additional encouragement to attend. Siblings from Kings International and Bristow also regularly attend the workshop where it is estimated that less than half the families on the course own or have regular access to a computer.

The programme is led by Leslie Semper, deputy head together with Dave Kimber, Watchetts' ICT manager, and has been designed to get learners started on the basics and then build week on week with more complex skills. Leslie has worked hard to keep the course flexible and challenging for participants and has provided extension activities each week for the more able.

The focus has very much been on developing real life ICT skills such as letter writing, leaflet design and card making. Not only have family relationships been enhanced through working together but also literacy skills, numeracy, coordination and typing skills, and of course creativity! Participants were delighted with their results, and keen to take printed work home.

Feedback from participants indicates that they have benefited hugely not only in terms of their learning but also their confidence and sense of achievement. This is reflected in the fact that many parents wish to continue to be involved in the course running this term and are starting to feedback their need for specific training support with CV writing and using programmes such as Outlook and Excel.

Parents Benefit from Christmas Cooking at Cordwalles School

Staff and parents at Cordwalles got to know each other and had the opportunity to talk informally during six informal cookery sessions aimed at involving parents in a non threatening activity in school. The theme for the project was cheap Christmas cooking and parents participated alongside the Head Teacher, a school governor, some school staff and SHC Family Support Worker.

The build up to Christmas is recognised as a particularly stressful time for STEP partnership families due to the pressure on finances. The aim of this project was to help support the development of parenting skills and the invitation was carefully targeted at parents with large families and those who find it very difficult to come into a school.

The time and hard work put into organising and running the course paid off as feedback was very positive. Attendance was very good with two parents attending all 6 sessions! Relationships with certain parents have improved significantly, particularly with regard to the level of trust and confidence they now have in the school.

Similar informal events which get parents working alongside school staff are planned based on the success of this first cooking course.

Raising Children & Young People – Family Links Update

Huge headway has been made in improving access to parenting programmes across Surrey Heath. Historically there has been a dearth of courses in the Borough Heath and referred families would have to travel to Woking or Guildford. Since making a decision to focus delivery on the Family Links Parenting Puzzle programme the Confederation has been able to work collaboratively with the Children's Centres, and more recently with Camberley Churches Together, to offer courses to meet parent demand. In particular we would like to thank Nicky Gumbs Confederation Family Support Worker for her unstinting enthusiasm in delivering Family Links programmes and supporting our partners within Surrey Heath.

There is now a good pool of Family Links Parent Group Leaders (PGLs) within the area and we are looking to establish a Surrey Heath network to encourage further cross working between Confederation, Children's Centres and Churches. There are a number of courses starting in the Spring term, some of which are fully booked already! It appears that we are beginning to break through the stigma of parenting programmes and we are attracting the 'hard to reach' parents as well as the worried.

Courses running this term:

- Wed 21 Jan 7.30-9.30pm No creche **PINE RIDGE CHILDREN'S CENTRE** Paula Stubbings 01276 401605 **FULL**
- Wed 6 Jan 9.30 am - 11.30 am Creche Available **BAGSHOT CHILDREN'S CENTRE BAGSHOT** Caroline Atkins 01276 473093
- Tues 12 Jan 12.30 pm - 2.30 pm No Creche **CHOBHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE CHOBHAM** Liz Beck 01276 473093
- Wed 20 Jan 9.15 am - 11.15 am **BRISTOWS CHILDREN'S CENTRE CAMBERLEY** Bristows Children's Centre 01276 691018
- Thurs 14 Jan 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm No crèche **ST FRANCES CHURCH CAMBERLEY** Surrey Family Links Office 01483 225596 **TBC**

SHAPE Establishes Extended Services Group

The Surrey Heath Area Partnership for Education (SHAPE), comprising Collingwood College, Kings International College, Tomlinscote School and Sixth Form, Gordon's School, Carwarden House School, Portesbery School and Farnborough College of Technology, has set up an Extended Services Group to look at how to provide additional non-curricular activities for students in the Borough's secondary schools.

A number of new initiatives are being investigated, including a martial arts course for selected students. The aim of the sessions, which will be held with black-belt instructor Master Bernard from Precision Martial Arts, will be to provide disciplined learning as well as teach martial arts skills.

A joint drugs awareness initiative has also been launched across the secondary schools. The introduction of testing for students suspected of having taken illegal substances has prompted schools to offer an information evening for parents and carers. This is being arranged for the early part of 2010, and will be open to parents from all schools within Surrey Heath.

The Extended Services Group is also to liaise with the newly formed Surrey Heath Youth Council (SHYC). Notes from the SHYC meetings are already regularly reviewed and where appropriate, actions taken forward within the schools.

The Group is also investigating the possibility of organising Saturday activities for students – more to follow on this initiative.

Did you know.....

The SHC project process and all related forms are on the SHC web site in the Secure Area. If you're not sure about who does what, or in what order or on which form then check out the documents.

Also available on the web site, again in the Secure Area, is the SHC Extended Services Audit Refresh completed in May and June 2009. This information is alongside the original audit results from 2007.

Coming soon.....

SHC EXPO 2010 – 18 March 2010

An invitation is extended to all staff and governors in the Surrey Heath Confederation schools as well as local councillors. We are also very pleased to be able to confirm that Surrey Heath MP Michael Gove will be attending. This will be a great opportunity to find out more about the work of the Confederation, how it supports families, the projects it funds and to meet organisations also involved in delivering Extended Services.

The EXPO will be held on the evening of Thursday, 18 March 2010 from 7-9pm at the Holiday Inn, Farnborough. You don't need to attend the whole time, just drop in for a short visit. Further details of the evening will be sent to schools and governors in February. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the SHC EXPO 2010 contact Sarah Sewell, SHC Project Manager.

Extended Service Disadvantage Subsidy (ESDS) Funding – April 2010

Disadvantage Subsidy funding will help schools provide a comprehensive range of high quality extended services, and ensure that these are accessible to those children and young people

from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who would otherwise be excluded due to their inability to pay. The Confederation's ESDS working party attended a briefing on 04 December and is in the process of developing entitlement criteria which it hopes to present to Confederation schools shortly.

SHC Literature

In response to an increasing number of requests for information about the work of the Confederation and the Confederation's desire to better communicate about its work three communication items have been developed:

- Surrey Heath Confederation flyer – talks about the work of the Confederation, outlines what is on offer in the area of Extended Services and lists the 31 schools in SHC and highlights the children's centres.
- Family Support Team flyer – outlines the role of a Family Support Worker, the referral process, and the other services the FSWs provide.
- Surrey Heath Confederation poster – an A4 poster for schools to display on noticeboards and in Reception to highlight that the school is a partner in the Confederation and is working to provide *local solutions to local issues* in the area of Extended Services.

Supplies of these materials will be provided to all schools in the confederation as well as being made available at children's centres, doctor's surgeries, libraries and other community venues.

Keep checking the Surrey Heath Confederation website for information on forthcoming events, case studies, childcare listings and much more www.surreyheathconfederation.co.uk

The Confederation Project Manager may be contacted at Cordwalles School, Berkshire Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 4DR. Telephone 07809 397811

Please send articles for this publication to:
shc.pmanager@googlemail.com

Local Solutions to Local Issues

To bridge together the unique qualities of each educational setting within the confederation to the greater benefit of the wider community and the individuals within it