

# Learning Matters

**News and information for staff in educational settings**

**Autumn term – December 14 2007**

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## Message from Terry Parkin

### Highlights from 2007 and looking forward to 2008

Many thanks to colleagues for what has been a very successful term. We started by reporting some of the very best results across the key stages seen in the borough and end with many of our primary schools identified in the top quartile for value added and one, Coburg, acknowledged as one of the very best in the country for achievement.

And we are beginning to work differently. A group of senior managers from schools visited Ontario to see the best on offer from North America and returned assured, but not complacent, about the good practice in Southwark. This in turn has led to a commitment from both the borough and the British Council to develop further our overseas links programme, not just so we can learn from the best international practice, but also that colleagues from abroad can come here to see the good practice in place. We have already received colleagues from New Zealand, and intend to support a return visit for our new Canadian friends in the summer. We hope our continuing professional development offers to schools have been more coordinated and coherent.

We gained two new academies at the start of the term, but also welcomed a record number of new headteacher colleagues into the borough. The fact that the heads' conference was our best attended, and the best ever received, in the light of this evolving situation, shows that our history of collegiality will overcome any changes in organisation here that might otherwise act against it.

And so to next term. The local authority inspection, the Joint Area Review, will test how much progress we have made since the end of the intervention, but performance data shows us to be one of the most improved boroughs in the country over the last three years. We intend to have the new structure for education within children's services finalised, and make the big move across to locality-based provision for the majority of our specialised services.

Thanks you again for your hard work and commitment this term. Have a very good break.

Regards

**Terry Parkin**

Dputy director of children's services – education

## Early years review

Following on from the Early Years Review, Southwark children's services has set up a reference group of early years practitioners to help shape the future for early years provision in the borough. The group is drawn from all sectors and includes colleagues from schools, children's centres and the voluntary sector.

The group is considering two major aspects of the review: how to develop a teacher-led approach to all foundation stage provision; and the resourcing implications of the minimum free entitlement (MFE), which, following the publication of the Children's Plan by DCSF, may well be extended to two year olds in some parts of the borough.

### Teacher-led provision

Children's services' early learning and achievement team has been working with Southwark schools and early years settings since spring 2006. The eight consultants have provided advice, support and training through the early learning networks, focusing on raising achievement. The early learning networks are open to all practitioners from schools and early years settings. This work is helping to strengthen the focus on learning for the youngest children in the borough. The next step is to get more teachers into settings working alongside early years practitioners so that children's learning and development can be planned and delivered in a way that will improve outcomes and ensure children are better prepared to meet the challenge once they begin school.

### Minimum free entitlement

If children's outcomes are to continue to improve we will need to ensure that the work that we do is effectively resourced. Currently schools and early years settings are funded on a different basis even though they are expected to contribute to the same set of outcomes. Latest government guidelines on funding set the following key milestones:

- 2009-10: MFE places must be counted on the basis of children actually taking up provision in settings – currently PVI settings are funded in this way, while schools are funded on places rather than pupils
- 2010-11: MFE places must be funded according to a common and transparent formula that applies across school and PVI settings. This does not necessarily mean that all settings get funded the same amount, but there would have to be a clearly demonstrated rationale for, say, funding schools at a higher level than PVI settings

Alongside changes to funding, the MFE is being extended from 12.5 to 15 hours a week for all children from 2010-11, and for some vulnerable children from 2009-10.

As a first step, the local authority is required to undertake a survey of the costs of providing the MFE in the private, voluntary and independent sector. Southwark has commissioned this survey and will use the results to report to the Schools Forum early in 2008. MFE funding is included within the dedicated schools grant, which the Schools Forum is responsible for allocating. The DCSF is also requiring the Schools Forum to review its membership to ensure that there is representation from the PVI sector.

Although this is an exercise with funding implications, the aim of the review of MFE is not to change the allocation of resources as an end in itself. The key driver has to be improving outcomes for children in the early years, a statutory duty for local authorities under the Childcare Act 2006. In particular, consideration will be given to the impact of any proposed changes on the quality and sustainability of nursery education in Southwark.

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For more information contact Mike Smith, assistant director 0 to 5 and community services, on 020 7525 2725

Email [mike.smith@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:mike.smith@southwark.gov.uk)

## Lifting the lid on the JAR

Southwark is undergoing a Joint Area Review (JAR) in spring 2008. This will be our first full inspection since the end of the CEA-led intervention and so marks an important milestone for the borough.

The JAR will focus on vulnerable groups as well as key areas for development identified in our annual performance assessment (APA).

The Joint Area Review is a single coordinated inspection of all publicly funded services for all children and young people in the area. It will evaluate the way local services contribute collectively to the outcomes achieved by children and young people growing up in Southwark, and looks in particular at the leadership and management of our services. This will be in the context of the Every Child Matters outcomes and it will review how we work together to support children and young people to:

- stay safe
- be healthy
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic wellbeing.

Schools and headteachers will play a key part of the JAR process. This might include:

- attending a discussion group or meeting with colleagues and the inspectors
- a visit from an inspector to your school
- contributing information held on children by your school. The inspectors, Her Majesty's Inspectorate, have right of access to schools and to children's files.

The JAR inspectors will be in Southwark the week commencing February 25 for a few days, and back on March 31 for two weeks, which is when staff are most likely to be directly involved. We will ensure you and colleagues are adequately prepared and supported prior to any meeting, and will ensure the Headteachers' Executive is kept fully in touch with the process.

The JAR includes inspections of the youth offending and youth services. It will take place at the same time as the corporate assessment (CA). The CA is an inspection of the whole council that will look at how effectively the council is working corporately and with its partners to improve services and deliver improved outcomes for local people.

For any further information, please visit our [webpages](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/jointareareview) at [www.southwark.gov.uk/jointareareview](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/jointareareview).

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Contact Sophie Charro, JAR manager, on 020 7525 3950

Email [sophie.charro@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:sophie.charro@southwark.gov.uk)

### ContactPoint

ContactPoint will be the quick, electronic way to find out who is working with a child or young person. It will make it easier for schools to deliver more coordinated support to children and young people earlier.

Southwark Council's ContactPoint team attended the School Administrators' Conference at Millwall FC on November 29 2007 to talk about the project.

ContactPoint, led nationally by DCSF, is a key part of the information sharing requirements of Every Child Matters to improve outcomes for children. It will involve all local authorities in England. It will be made available to authorised practitioners, and organisations involved in the first roll out of the system include schools within the borough, Southwark children's services department and Southwark Primary Care Trust.

Those accessing ContactPoint will be able to see various details including the name, address, gender and date of birth (or death) of a child, educational setting, doctors and other professionals providing services for the child.

Schools data for ContactPoint will come from the school census and the common transfer files (CTF), sent to Southwark children's services education department, when pupils transfer between schools. It is important that UPN numbers, names, and dates of birth are accurate, as this forms the basis of the data we need to send to the national system. For this reason, data quality will be a key focus for the project team and all participating local organisations.

The conference agreed that school administrators, along with headteachers, would be the point of contact for the project team, and help with letting their school know about ContactPoint.

The team is awaiting new project timescales from the DCFS, which are expected to be released in January 2008. Once received, we will be in touch with all schools regarding what we need to do and by when.

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Contact Jerzy Olechnowicz, ContactPoint programme manager, on 020 7525 3667 or Evette Crichlow, ContactPoint project officer, on 020 7525 3285

Email [contactpoint@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:contactpoint@southwark.gov.uk)

## Southwark schools directory: new edition

The [Southwark Schools Directory](#) provides the most up to date details – addresses, emails and telephone numbers – for headteachers in Southwark schools and educational settings. Please check the details of your setting are correct. Contact Nicola Knight, details below, to make any amendments. The directory will be updated every term.

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Contact Nicola Knight, communications officer, on 020 7525 3558

Email [nicola.knight@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.knight@southwark.gov.uk)

## Southwark's pregnancy unit: shows it's best!

Southwark's teenage pregnancy strategy team attended a Government Office for London event on December 4, where local authorities areas were asked to demonstrate examples of best practice in the areas of:

- implementing targeted work in hot spot areas to reduce teenage pregnancy
- using data to inform the development of local services
- work around sex and relationship education with BME and faith communities
- mainstreaming and commissioning services to support the reduction of unplanned teenage conceptions and support to young parents.

Southwark Council was chosen as first prize winner to evidence best practice in all areas.

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Contact Dorothy Okotie, teenage pregnancy coordinator on 020 7525 3835

Email [dorothy.okotie@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:dorothy.okotie@southwark.gov.uk)

## Safer surfing online

With computers and other digital gifts at the top of many children's Christmas wish lists, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is running an online safety campaign over the festive season.

As part of its campaign it's offering a sign up service on the [ThinkUKnow website](#) where parents can receive monthly email updates over the new year. These updates will include information on new technologies, emerging risks and safety tips to help keep children safe online.

CEOP would like teachers to tell families about the new service so they can learn more about keeping their children safe online. There's also a [registration area on the website](#) for teachers, with downloadable teaching resources.

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Contact Hannah Bickers

Email [hannah.bickers@ceop.gsi.uk](mailto:hannah.bickers@ceop.gsi.uk)

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

### **Magazine editors wanted**

Building on the success of the Whatever project in the summer to develop a new website for young people in Southwark full of activities, events, advice and work produced by young people themselves, we are now developing the Whatever magazine.

The magazine will be a development of the current young people's magazine project. The Whatever magazine will work alongside the Whatever website so that every young person in Southwark can access news, information, advice and fun things to do in the way they want to.

But it won't work without the active involvement and direction from young people.

#### **Young people's involvement**

We want to recruit an editorial team to run the magazine. The team will be made up of young people aged 13-19. Being part of the editorial team will bring many opportunities for young people including skills development, formal and informal recognition and meeting new people.

#### **Do you know any eligible young people?**

Teachers of subjects such as media and English are asked to encourage 13 to 19 year olds to consider this opportunity and get involved.

Further information is provided in the [briefing for young people](#) attached.

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Contact Elissa Muller on 020 7525 3839

Email [elissa.muller@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:elissa.muller@southwark.gov.uk)

### **Wanted: wannabee architects**

The Harris Federation of South London Schools is looking to recruit up to a dozen year 5 boys to take part in a 'design panel'. The group will get together to discuss the design of the new Harris Boys' Academy, which the federation hopes to get planning permission for next summer.

This is an excellent opportunity for some of those pupils who might end up attending the academy to have their say about the design and, at the same time, learn more about how buildings are designed and built.

The boys will meet with architects and teachers from the Harris Federation for a session in February and another one in April. Then, once the building work begins, they will be invited back to see how construction takes place.

If your child would like to take part, please contact [kevin.degroot@echarris.com](mailto:kevin.degroot@echarris.com) by Thursday January 11 2008. Places will be allocated by drawing applicants' names out of a hat. Those wanting to attend should be prepared to come with a parent or guardian to the Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich.

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Contact Michelle Hakim, director, 8hwe Ltd on 020 7611 5276

## Cash for young people to make a difference

The youth volunteering charity **v** has £1million to help young people to turn their ideas into realities by setting up local community projects.

**vcashpoint** is a youth fund designed by members of the charity's youth advisory board **v20** in partnership with HSBC Bank. It allows 16 to 25 year olds to apply for grants of up to £2,500.

From the first **vcashpoint** grants, awarded earlier this year, young volunteers are now:

- coordinating football training and a tournament for disadvantaged young people
- arranging fun and educational trips for children with special needs
- improving communal leisure areas on a housing estate
- developing a Chinese radio project.

Application deadlines for the next rounds of funding are:

- February 1 2008 (round two)
- April 25 2008 (round three)
- July 18 2008 (round four).

The next three rounds of **vcashpoint** are expected to generate between 300 and 400 youth-led projects. So, in order to support young people to make applications, **v** is providing youth workers a 'brainstorming' kit called Outside the Box. This is available on the website [www.wearev.com](http://www.wearev.com).

**v** is the youth volunteering charity set up in May 2006 to implement recommendations of the Russell Commission and inspire a new generation of young volunteers in England aged 16-25. It is supported by the Office of the Third Sector in the Cabinet Office.

Full application details can be found at [www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com).

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Contact Helen Dennis, public affairs and policy manager, on 020 7960 7022  
Website [www.wearev.com](http://www.wearev.com)

## Hands up for HeadsUp

HeadsUp is a website where young people can debate political issues and current affairs. But it's not just about talking, it's also about getting something done.

The debates organised by HeadsUp involve the UK's top decision-makers from government who want to understand the views and experiences of young Britain.

Every debate is supported by background information, quizzes, online polls and can be used inside or outside of school.

Visit the [website](#) to see a range of topical debates taking place next year and to see the HeadsUp evaluation report 2006-2007.

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Contact Barry Griffiths, project manager, Hansard Society on 020 7438 1214  
[www.headsup.org.uk](http://www.headsup.org.uk)

## Managing pupil mobility course for senior managers

**Date:** Thursday February 7 and Thursday February 28 2008

**Venue:** The Learning and Business Centre, Cator Street (off Commercial Way), Peckham SE15 6AA

**Time:** 9.15am to 3.30pm

This two-day course aims to develop an awareness of pupil mobility and the diverse needs of new arrivals, including those who are homeless, from refugee backgrounds, and who may be beginners in acquiring English. Participants will have opportunities for school self-evaluation and developing strategies for whole school approaches to managing mobility and ensuring that new arrivals are able to achieve the five outcomes of Every Child Matters. This course is delivered by Bill Bolloten and Tim Spafford, who are nationally recognised as experts in the field. See [flyer](#) for more.

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Contact Paulette Houslin on 020 7525 5088

Email [paulette.houslin@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:paulette.houslin@southwark.gov.uk)

## Achieving potential course

**Dates:** January 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30 and February 5 and 6 2008

**Venue:** The Learning and Business Centre, Cator Street (off Commercial Way), Peckham, SE15 6AA

**Time:** 9.30am to 4.30pm

Do you want to bring out the best in children and young people?

Southwark children's services is offering a free, eight-day course, to all professionals who work with children and young people.

The course takes a solution focused approach, which involves the mentor being 'curious' rather than 'prescriptive', asking "How will you deal with this?" rather than "This is what I think you should do".

See [flyer](#) for more details including how to book. Bookings on a first come, first served basis.

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Contact Lucy Vaughan on 020 7525 3554

Email [lucy.vaughan@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.vaughan@southwark.gov.uk)

## Teaching abroad seminar

**Dates:** January 19 2008

**Venue:** Imperial College, Kensington, London

**Time:** 2pm to 4pm

An opportunity to find out more about teaching abroad, when you can speak to people who have worked in international schools and find out more about living abroad.

Open to qualified and training teachers. Seminar organised by TIC Recruitment. See [flyer](#) for more information.

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To register contact TIC on 029 2059 7954 or 07906 353 863

Email [anne@annekeeling.co.uk](mailto:anne@annekeeling.co.uk), visit [www.ticrecruitment.com](http://www.ticrecruitment.com)

Have a merry Christmas and a peaceful, happy new year.

## Copy deadline

Learning Matters is distributed fortnightly on a Friday.

Please ensure copy is received by 5pm on the copy deadline date to ensure inclusion.

<b>Copy deadline</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
January 8 2008	January 11 2008
January 22 2008	January 25 2008

We would like to hear news and information from you. If you want to share good practice, have news and information or want to celebrate achievement, please use let us know.

Email us at [childrens.services@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@southwark.gov.uk)

Your feedback, suggestions and any comments are always welcome.

## Correction

In the last edition of Learning Matters, dated November 30 2007, we published an article warning about the drug crystal meth. We have been informed that this was a hoax.