

# Learning Matters

News and information for staff in educational settings

Spring term – February 29 2008

Welcome from Terry Parkin

## Feature article

- Solution focused brief therapy: what teachers need but don't know

## All staff

- Children looked after: who counts? (ALL)
- Family information service launched (ALL)
- Whatever website launched (KS3, KS4)
- Skills for care (ALL)
- Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Month (ALL)
- Human rights award programme (ALL)
- Saving Londoners' Lives (KS3, KS4)
- 14 to19 reform roadshow (KS3, KS4)
- Support schools network meeting (ALL)

## Activities for pupils

- Frog Day (ALL)
- Reading Champions (ALL)
- World Kidney Day (ALL)

## Environmental schools

- One Line (ALL)

## Courses/training/conferences

- Supporting new arrivals: strategies for induction and achievement (ALL)
- Schools administrators conference (ALL)

Articles covering national curriculum key stages as per following codes

**EYF:** For early years foundation

**KS1:** For key stage 1 staff

**KS2:** For key stage 2 staff

**KS3:** For key stage 3 staff

**KS4:** For key stage 4 staff

**ALL:** For staff across all stages

## **Welcome from Terry Parkin**

Welcome back to another busy half term. The JAR began with HMI joining us for their research phase this Wednesday February 27 for three days. By Friday lunchtime we will have a better idea about the priorities for the inspection proper, but attainment in general as well as the achievement of vulnerable pupils remain the key issues at this stage.

The primary capital programme is well underway and colleagues have been invited to a meeting on Friday March 7 to help us formulate the final proposals. The pace here is ridiculously fast and I would like again to thank colleagues who have cleared space in their diaries at very short notice to help work up our response. If you would like more information, or to confirm attendance, please get in touch with my colleague Fiona Russell on 020 7525 0348 or [fiona.russell@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.russell@southwark.gov.uk)

Targets were received from all secondary schools on time but around a quarter of primary schools missed the DCSF deadline for return. I have asked colleagues in governor services to be more proactive in this area next year but the targets for maths at key stage 2, if met, would show an eight percent improvement.: Colleagues are showing real step changes in their expectations for outcomes in maths. The picture in literacy is one of improvement but much less ambitious – around a two percent improvement. We will be exploring with you why there is such a difference in expectation and ambition.

Finally, we are looking to appoint senior advisers to both the primary and secondary teams. Should staff, including headteachers, wish to be considered for a secondment, we would welcome that conversation. We know from the returns relating to practice with borderline pupils at key stage 2 there is much outstanding practice in this borough. Capturing and disseminating it will be key aspects of these roles.

Have a very good half term.

Regards

**Terry Parkin, deputy director children's services, education**

## **Solution focused brief therapy – what teachers need but don't know** (ALL)

You all at some point must have had that one disruptive student in your class where no amount of detentions or teacher/student talks resulted in better behaviour?

Have you been in a position where you have wanted to help your student achieve better results but have been unable to get through to him or her?

Solution focused brief therapy helps bring out the best in young people without focusing on what the problem of the young person is, but by looking at the intended goal. For example, gaining better results in class. What would be better for the young person if they achieved better results? What would it feel like to do better in class? How would it impact their other work? What would be better at home for them? Solution focused brief therapy's purpose is to be curious about the young person, ask questions and use specific tasks and exercises to help bring out a better way of looking at the goal in question, whether it is to stay focused through a whole lesson or reducing bad behaviour during free periods and break time.

Southwark employees have recently finished training in the solution focused brief therapy approach. Eileen Murphy Consultants led this training. This consultancy has over 20 years experience of working with children, young people, adults and families and have worked successfully across boroughs all over the UK. Eileen Murphy the trainer talks about the training: "Phrases like 'catching people doing something right' can be seen as a bit glib or lightweight – but nothing encourages better behaviour, increased skill level or new thinking quicker than someone noticing even the smallest of success and building our confidence in that moment." Therefore this training does not just concentrate on the motivation to achieve but builds confidence in the young person.

The attendees of this course included staff from St Saviours and St Olaves Primary School, Harris East Dulwich School, Notre Dame School, St Thomas the Apostle College and Harris Bermondsey School. This eight-day course helped staff become fully immersed in this approach and on the final day, teachers told us how they would use this training in their work.

"This is fresh, something new for me and an effective way to move forward with any young person, no matter how difficult their situation."

"This training does not add to your workload but only allows you to think differently about how to approach a situation with a young person. I hope to use this with some of my students who I feel will benefit from this."

"Trying to implement change requires this strategy – it should be mandatory for all workers."

At the end of this training, certificates were given out by Annie Shepperd, chief executive of Southwark Council. Annie said she recognised how important this type of training is, especially in reducing teenage pregnancy, as it can raise self esteem in young girls, to help them cope better with peers pressures. Southwark now has its first batch of qualified solution focused brief therapy practitioners who all agree that this training should be invested in and developed in all areas of Southwark.

**For further details of this training, please contact Eileen Murphy Consultants on 020 8542 9310.**

Written by Ruma Islam, Southwark children's services

## **Children looked after: who counts? (ALL)**

Southwark teachers responsible for children looked after in their school, are offered bespoke training by Moira Leydon, deputy manager of the education project team.

Even if there are only one or two looked after children in your school, it is really important to ensure that your designated teacher has time allocated to the role.

This way, the CLA child will have someone with a strong remit to maintain an overview on attendance, standards and wellbeing.

Understanding the sometimes complex needs of CLA and being able to respond to these needs one-to-one is important. Working with colleagues – the class teacher, the attached teaching assistant, the learning mentor, the tutor, the SENCO and other agencies – will make a difference to the child's capacity to learn.

One of the most important times when the child's voice is heard is at PEP time and review time, usually six months apart. Then, it is really important that the designated teacher is given time to meet with the child beforehand and talk about what is going well and what is going less well. This ensures that the child is not overwhelmed. If such two-way discussions become the norm, then it becomes possible to address issues early on before they become real problems, affecting concentration and learning capacity.

---

Contact Ann Shapiro on 020 7525 7937  
Email [ann.shapiro2@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:ann.shapiro2@southwark.gov.uk)

## **Whatever website launched (ALL)**

Communicating with young people in Southwark just got easier with the launch of the [Whatever website](#).

The website has been developed by young people working with communication and design professionals. Much of the content has been written by young people and Whatever will feature the creative work, such as music, drawing and writing, of many of Southwark's talented youngsters. The site features events, activities, advice and information, ways for young people to get their voices heard, a talent gallery and a fun and freebies section.

We are now working on the Whatever magazine, which will work hand in hand with the website to provide the essential tools for us and our partners to reach young people using a voice they will respond to.

These platforms will support the use of other innovative ways of communicating with young people, including, through text messaging and a monthly e-newsletter.

So, if you have an event, activity or service that you want to promote to young people, make Whatever your first call.

---

To discuss or contribute content or ideas please contact Elissa Muller 020 7525 3839.

## **Family information service launched (ALL)**

The children's information service has been relaunched and will now be known as the family information service. It provides free guidance and advice for Southwark's parents and carers and all those working with children and young people.

The family information service offers free impartial advice to parents or carers of children from pregnancy to the end of their teens, including help with choosing a nursery or looking for a youth club.

Other information available includes:

- childcare, education, health, leisure, family and parenting support
- tips for keeping children safe
- free early learning for three and four year olds
- working in childcare
- balancing childcare, work and training
- help towards childcare costs
- signposting to useful contacts
- parental leave and flexible working.

Cllr Caroline Pidgeon, Southwark Council's executive member for children's services and education, said: "This is a real boost for Southwark parents and those who work with children and young people. They can now call one number to find out the answers to their questions."

View the [family information service flyer](#)

---

For further information contact the family information service on 0800 013 0639  
Email [family.info@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:family.info@southwark.gov.uk)  
Web [www.southwark.gov.uk/familyinfo](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/familyinfo)

## **Skills for care**

Skills for Care is funded by the Department of Health and aims to modernise the adult social care workforce by developing opportunities that will support quality services and meet the changing needs of people who use services.

The South East London region of Skills for Care is currently working to generate practice learning opportunities for social work students, undertaking the social work degree. We are now identifying new placement opportunities in statutory social work teams and in health and education settings for September 2008.

How can providing a social work student placement benefit your team?

- High quality short term worker
- Practical help
- Energy, enthusiasm and new ideas
- Potential future recruit
- Continued professional development
- Placements vary from 40 to 115 days

Placements need to be able to provide learning opportunities that will enable social work students to meet the National Occupational Standards. We can provide advice on how your organisation may be able to meet these requirements.

---

Contact [claire.o'donnell@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:claire.o'donnell@southwark.gov.uk) regarding placement opportunities with adults, and [helen.moss@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:helen.moss@southwark.gov.uk) regarding placement opportunities with children, or call **020 7525 1585**.

## **Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Month (ALL)**

The DCSF designated the month of June as Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) History Month.

The month will:

- explain the history and culture of the communities
- challenge myths
- breakdown barriers
- celebrate the richness that these communities bring to our everyday lives
- encourage schools to participate
- highlight any GRT, who are achieving well or have skills that might be showcased during the month.

Lord Adonis writes: "I have endorsed a national Gypsy Roma and Traveller History Month in June – the first will be in 2008. This will offer us all the chance to raise awareness and explore the history, culture and language of these communities, which is not usually included in the curriculum for all pupils. We can challenge myths, tackle prejudice and be in a position to offer a balanced debate about the issues. We will all be able to celebrate the richness that Gypsy, Roma and Travellers communities bring to our everyday lives through their many and varied academic and artistic achievements."

Visit the [Gypsy, Roma & Traveller History Month website](#)

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

View the [GRT inclusion document](#)

---

Contact David Cannon on 020 7525 2859  
Email [david.cannon@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:david.cannon@southwark.gov.uk)

**For all staff**

## **Human rights awards programme (ALL)**

The Impetus Awards recognise creative and innovative work by young people who use ethical values and human rights to respond to contemporary, challenging and contested issues in our society.

Projects do not have to be finished 'highly polished' pieces of work. A submission can be a work in progress. Previous work that has achieved an Impetus Award includes projects that tackle racism and bullying, fair trade community events and fund raising activities.

In order to achieve an award the young people must fill in an application form (available to download from the website). All applications are then assessed and a selection of groups from across the UK are picked to take part in the two day celebration event held in London in October that includes a meal out at Pizza Express, participating in team building workshops, a trip to Madame Tussauds and a showcase on the second day where the young people share their work with each other and an audience.

You may already be carrying out work in this area that is eligible for an award or may be interested in starting up something new. Contact the Impetus team on 020 7405 5709 if you would like them to come and run workshops introducing human rights or assist you to plan a project.

All the information you need, including the submission form, is available from the [Impetus website](http://www.impetusawards.org.uk) [www.impetusawards.org.uk](http://www.impetusawards.org.uk).

The deadline for submissions is May 31 2008.

---

Contact Lorna Robins Youth Programme Officer, Institute for Global Ethics on 020 7405 5709  
Email [lrobins@globalethics.org.uk](mailto:lrobins@globalethics.org.uk)  
web [www.impetusawards.org.uk](http://www.impetusawards.org.uk)

## **Saving Londoners' Lives (ALL)**

Saving Londoners' Lives (SLL) is a partnership project aiming to increase the number of people in the capital with emergency life support (ELS) skills. ELS is the set of actions needed to keep someone alive until professional help arrives. Whether someone has had a heart attack, is choking or bleeding, the prompt action of a bystander can make the difference between life and death.

It is never too early to start learning ELS and young people in primary and secondary schools are our key focus: we teach them to be ready, willing and able to step in when the need arises. School is an ideal environment in which to learn ELS within the existing curriculum. The ELS programme can be carefully tailored to the individual requirements of each school, and enables schools to establish flexible delivery of ELS skills to their pupils.

Teachers and other school staff receive free instructor training in ELS from St John Ambulance equipping them to deliver the British Heart Foundation's (BHF) Heartstart UK programme to their pupils. They are supported by medical students from the five London medical schools who are specially trained by the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

View [teachers leaflet](#)

---

To join the scheme or request more information contact Mary Smith, SLL schools officer on 020 7258 7075  
Email: [mary.smith@london.sja.org.uk](mailto:mary.smith@london.sja.org.uk)  
Web [www.savinglondonerslives.org.uk](http://www.savinglondonerslives.org.uk)

**For all staff**

## **14 to 19 reform roadshow (KS3,KS4)**

The reforms for 14 to 19 education are fast approaching. By 2013 every learner aged 14 to 19 will be entitled to choose a mix of learning which motivates, interests and challenges them best. The reforms are designed to give all learners the knowledge, skills and attitude they need to succeed in education, work and life.

In Southwark, we understand that these changes can only be achieved through the hard work of all our partners. Working in partnership we plan to develop an educational experience that meets the needs of all young people. This means focusing on raising achievement and participation now, as well as working towards the longer term reforms of both the curriculum and the way in which it is assessed.

To ensure that the messages around 14 to 19 are clear and that everyone has an opportunity to be part of these changes the 14 to 19 team have put together a 14 to 19 reform roadshow.

This is a one hour presentation that will provide an overview of the national 14 to 19 strategy and what we are doing locally to meet the challenges presented to our schools.

To book the roadshow, please register with Augustina on the details below.

---

Contact Augustina Adenowo on 020 7525 5285

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

## **Schools support network meeting**

The next schools support network meeting will be held on Tuesday March 4 at Ilderton School, 9.30 to noon.

### **Agenda**

9.30am to 10.30 am : Anti-Academy Alliance speaker

10.30am to 11am: Networking and tea

11am to 11.45am : Transitions – Place 2 Be speaker

11.45am to noon : Future group topics

---

Contact Juliet Boas on 020 3228 8700

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

## Activities for pupils

### Frog Day (ALL)

Frog Day takes place on Sunday March 9

**Where:** Centre for Wildlife Gardening, 28 Marsden Road, Peckham SE15 4EE

**Time:** 12.30pm to 4.30pm

As winter turns to spring, something curious is happening in London's gardens. Frogs, toads and newts are coming out of their sleepy hibernation and are heading to the nearest pond with only one thing on their minds. Soon, wildlife ponds will be bubbling over with amorous amphibians, as the spawning season begins in earnest.

During Frog Day families can join in lots of froggy fun, including the Life Cycle Survival Hopping Game, find the frogs challenge and create their own mini pond scene and froggy feet, and listen to toad tales. There will be tea and tasty toad cakes available for all.

Expert advice on wildlife ponds will be available at the water's edge, whilst watching the busy frogs. Anyone who wishes to build a wildlife pond and encourage these gardener's friends, can find lots of information in our free Wildlife Gardening packs. Frogs and toads are one of nature's most efficient pest controllers, they eat lots of slugs, flies and mosquitoes

---

Contact Tracey Neil on 020 7252 9186.

Web [cwg@wildlondon.org.uk](mailto:cwg@wildlondon.org.uk)

### Reading the Game (ALL)

Reading the Game is a scheme to promote reading, writing, speaking and listening for all ages through the motivational power of sport.

The scheme encourages boys and their families to engage in more reading through quizzes, penalty shootouts, prizes and a readers league. This is linked to a national initiative, which asked 20 Premier League teams to nominate a reading champion to recommend his favourite book. The football/reading connection is a national initiative called [Premier League Reading Stars](#) that we're adapting.

**Where:** Rotherhithe Library

**When:** First Saturday of the month

**Time:** 10.30am to noon

**Target:** Children aged seven and over, accompanied by a parent or carer

---

For further details contact Emma Harris on 020 7525 0717.

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

### World Kidney Day: March 13 2008 (ALL)

The purpose of World Kidney Day is to raise awareness about the importance of our kidneys – an amazing organ that plays a crucial role in keeping us alive and well – and to spread the message that kidney disease is common, harmful and treatable.

The main job of our kidneys is to remove toxins and excess water from our blood. Every day our kidneys filter and clean 200 litres of blood – a quantity that would fill about 200 bottles or 20 buckets! Besides this impressive, daily feat, kidneys also help to control our blood pressure, to produce red blood cells and to keep our bones healthy.

Kids Kidney Research has put together a information pack with a selection of fun and exciting ideas on how to mark this important day.

Available for download from the website

- Parent and teacher information pack – explains why the kidneys are important, how they function and how to keep them healthy. Includes a selection of links to websites that provide information about specific kidney diseases.
- Activities sheet – a range of children’s activities, ranging from practical water based activities, to on-line interactive quizzes and hydration calculators
- Information sheet – ways that you can support Kids Kidney Research, a charity that funds research into children’s kidney disease
- Feedback form – let us know what you think of our pack!

Further publicity materials can be downloaded from the World Kidney Day website.

Schools around the country will be marking the day by raising awareness of kidneys and the function they perform. Send us photographs of your activities on World Kidney Day and we will publish them on our website.

View World Kidney Day [parent and teacher information](#), [school information](#), [activities](#) and [feedback form](#).

---

Contact Liz Sutherland, Trustee, Kids Kidney Research on 01483 892496  
Email [liz@kidskidneyresearch.org](mailto:liz@kidskidneyresearch.org)  
Web [www.kidskidneyresearch.org](http://www.kidskidneyresearch.org)

## Environmental education

### One Line (ALL)

The council has a new sustainable services team and we're bigger and better than before.

We're here to help teachers

- Achieve bronze, silver and even green flag awards for eco-schools
- Win £2,000 through London Schools Environment Award (LSEA)
- Deliver award scheme and curriculum linked sessions
- Get free compost bins and recycling collections for your school

Book us in to take your pupils on a journey into space, to find out why they should reduce, reuse and recycle. Or bring them to our waste depot – discovering where their rubbish goes will amaze them. These are two of our most popular activities, to find out more [on our webpages](#):

[www.southwark.gov.uk/YourServices/educationandlearning/projects/EnvironmentalEducation/](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/YourServices/educationandlearning/projects/EnvironmentalEducation/)

We also offer tailored sessions of your choice. Don't have time to prepare and deliver a lesson about composting? Not sure how to link waste and recycling to the maths curriculum? Then contact the sustainable services team to discuss your needs.

We can help you through information and support provision. Need to know how you are already fulfilling Eco-schools and LSEA objectives? Want to know how your eco-team can reduce the schools water consumption?

---

To book activities or support sessions contact sustainable services on 020 7525 2372.

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

## Courses/training/conferences

### **Supporting new arrivals: strategies for induction and achievement (ALL)**

Southwark children's services ethnic minority achievement team are providing training for primary school teachers and other key staff on supporting new arrivals: strategies for induction and achievement.

**When:** Wednesday March 12 2008

**Time:** 9.30am to 3.30pm

**Where:** Southwark Learning and Business Centre,  
Cator Street, London, SE15 6AA

The aims of the course are to:

- understand the diverse backgrounds and needs of new arrivals, and possible barriers to their wellbeing, learning and achievement
- support participants to recognise and build on children's existing experience, knowledge and skills
- outline key strategies for integrating new arrivals and supporting them to fully participate and achieve in the classroom.

---

Contact Paulette Houslin on 020 7525 5088 for more information or to book a place.  
Email [paulette.houslin@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:paulette.houslin@southwark.gov.uk)

### **School administrators conference**

Come to the summer school administrators conference.

**When:** April 30 2008

**Where:** Millwall, Zampa Road, SE16 3LN

**Time:** 9am to 4.45pm

---

For more details contact Linda Walden on 020 7525 5081

## Minutes and correspondence

### Education management team minutes

Southwark Council children's services education management team meeting minutes [January 18](#) 2008 and [January 30](#) 2008.

### Letters and documents

Letters and other documents for staff in education settings from the local authority are all available on the Southwark Council website. Please check the [correspondence page](#) regularly for new mail. We will send you a list of all new correspondence every Friday, either here within Learning Matters, or by email to school headteachers on the weeks when Learning Matters is not published.

## Next edition of Learning

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>
<b>March 11 2008</b>	<b>March 14 2008</b>
<b>Easter break</b>	
<b>April 22 2008</b>	<b>April 25 2008</b>
<b>May 6 2008</b>	<b>May 9 2008</b>
<b>May 20 2008</b>	<b>May 23 2008</b>
<b>Half term</b>	
<b>June 3 2008</b>	<b>June 6 2008</b>
<b>June 17 2008</b>	<b>June 20 2008</b>
<b>July 15 2008</b>	<b>July 18 2008</b>
<b>Summer break</b>	

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.