

Shared Learning

Newsletter produced by ContinYou (formerly CEDC) for teachers and parents involved in CEDC's Share programme which encourages parents and children to learn together.

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Share news ...

Life in the classroom at KS3

Share at KS3 has just finished its pilot year and the NFER is writing up its evaluation report. The schools are all reporting that the scheme has been a great success, as the features in our previous newsletters have shown. In this edition, we take a look at a pilot school in Caerphilly and see what the teachers and parents think of Share.

Emma Davies, the parent liaison teacher and Share tutor, says: 'Time spent together discussing the topics leads to raised levels of attainment and an improvement in pupils' behaviour and attitude to work. It is also a chance for the parents to meet and talk. The idea is for young people and their parents to learn together at home, while giving the parents a chance to earn credits from the Open College Network. The activities are based around literacy, numeracy and ICT, giving parents a greater appreciation of school life and giving teachers an understanding of problems faced by parents and pupils.'



Photograph courtesy of Western Mail & Echo

Parents at Rhymney Comprehensive School enjoy their Share session

The mums involved believe it also strengthens their relationships with their children. As Irene Savage says: 'It is a chance to spend time actually talking to my daughter Zoe about different things. When children move up to the comprehensive school, you can lose contact with what they are doing in school and this is a good way of keeping in touch.'

Kim Jones, mother of Victoria adds: 'Share is well worth doing. It's very friendly and it's not like going back to school at all.'

Share also encourages the pupils to help their parents, as Susan Eynon, mother of Lawrence, notes: 'It's more than twenty years since I was in school. I had never used a computer before coming here, but now my son likes to show me what to do.' She also believes that her son has benefited too, 'My son was wary about joining a new school, but I think the fact that we have taken part in Share has helped him settle in and he has made eighteen months' improvement in his spelling in a matter of seven months.'

Re-writing Alberg

At Allanson Street Primary School, in St Helens, Year 4 Share parents and children made a banner for the Share regional conference, held in Liverpool. Children and parents in Years 1, 3 and 4 'brought the house down' by reciting a variation of Alberg's *Heard it in the playground*, which had been rewritten to describe Share in the school. Sue Taylor, the Share teacher, feels that Share is making a very positive impact. By parents and children working together, an exceptionally high standard of work is being produced. Also, since parents have a greater understanding of the school curriculum, much more support is given, enabling the children to achieve specific targets.



Year 4 Share parents and pupils at Allanson Street Primary School



Parents at Foredyke Primary School using their own resources with pupils

Share group forms PTA

At Foredyke Primary School, Hull, the formation of the Share group has led to parents coming into school, making their own learning resources and using these with small groups of pupils. Three parents are now attending accredited courses and one parent has become a Classroom Support Assistant. The group is also establishing a PTA and has been actively promoting the school to other parents. The LEA School Development Teacher, Sue Cornwall, has been so excited by the initiatives of the Share parents that she has asked to continue taking the Share group, even though she is no longer attached to the school.

from around the country



Grandmother, Betty McClean talks about her involvement in Share.

Family Learning Conference

In Northumberland, all the different Family Learning divisions came together to celebrate a very successful year. Susan Bickerton, from the Learning and Skills Council, spoke on the importance of Family Learning in Northumberland. The family learning programmes, which included Share, FUN (Families using Numbers) and FLAG (Family Literacy Action Group) were all represented and the Share groups all displayed the work they had shared with their children.

One grandmother, Betty McClean, spoke to the whole conference about her involvement in Share with her granddaughter, Roxanne: 'I never expected to be standing up here today!' She went on to say how she was learning to help Roxanne with literacy and numeracy through everyday activities, such as skipping and counting a bicycle wheel go round, and that she was now involving Roxanne's sister in Share activities.

A Share father, Tony Rowledge, also talked about his involvement. It started with just one visit to the Share session, but then he became hooked and now attends every week. He said: 'I've learned a lot and get more quality time with my daughter, Abby. I didn't realise how many ways there were to practise the three R's and keep the children interested.' Tony has now decided that he would like to go into teaching himself and is working towards accreditation, so that he can progress onto a teacher training course. As he says: 'I've got a lot out of this too.'

Share takes to the woods!

When Anthea Main, the Share Co-ordinator in Worcestershire, thought up the idea of a celebratory Share picnic for Share families and teachers, little did she expect it to snowball into three full days at Bishops Wood Environmental Centre!

Eight schools took part on the first day in July. Then, due to the demand, more schools came on a second day in July and another in September; fortunately, the weather was great for all three days!

All parents and children, including brothers and sisters of the Share pupils, took part in all three activities, which were based on using the different senses. 'Pond dipping' involved catching your own pond life and then investigating it with the help of Bob from the Centre.

The Skywalk activity took everyone into the woods to investigate shapes, using mirrors to reflect everything above head height. This was followed by the Earthwalk, during which parents and children collected different kinds of leaves and coloured petals, which were then stuck onto a sticky artist's palette.

After the second activity, a lively Share picnic took place outdoors,

organised by Anthea and Pam Townsend, the Headteacher from Batchley First School.

The third activity was the parachute game, led by Carly Baskeyfield from Lickhill Lodge First School. Children and parents, renamed as slugs, ants and so on, had to run and change places before the parachute fell to the ground!

At the end of the day, everyone agreed that it had been a fantastic event. The day also gave parents ideas of other activities they could try out at home – one parent was overheard saying: 'We could do this at home in the garden or on the way to school.'

Anthea concluded: 'What's really lovely is to see parents working with their children and finding out what children can learn from these kinds of activities. It shows we value what they're doing in the Share project.'

