

“Age to Age in Stories and Songs”



‘Age to Age in Stories and Songs’ is an inter-generational project, suitable for primary school pupils (yr 5 & 6) and users of an older peoples’ day centre in the same area. Reminiscences gathered from the older people are worked into songs by the school pupils, and then sung to the people whose stories inspired them.

This successful project took place during September and October 2008 with year 5 pupils from Birch Hill Primary School and St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School and the residents at Ladybank Care Centre in Birch Hill, Bracknell.

The first stage of the project consisted of two visits to Ladybank by a storyteller/reminiscence worker to gather stories and memories from residents. The reminiscences were then turned into stories and told to the children at the two schools.

In the second stage, which was run as a 6 week after school club at St Margaret Clitherow and a 6 week lunchtime club at Birch Hill, the storyteller told the stories to the children, who then turned them into folk music, guided by the song writing workshop leader. The song writing was carried out on a whole group basis and the melodies were derived from English folk songs.

The final session on 11th November 2008 was a performance for pupils and parents at both schools when the songs were recorded. This was followed by an emotional performance at Ladybank, where the residents were entertained with the songs inspired by their life stories.

Song – Married on Christmas Day – Birch Hill Primary school

Clara, looked back on her 95 years and confessed to not having been a particularly ‘good’ girl. She remembered her childhood exploits, and her passion for swimming with relish. Even her wedding day – the last wedding for many years to take place on Christmas Day and on a Sunday – was not without incident ... and entirely in character! The song was set to a widely-known traditional tune, associated, appropriately, with versions of a song about a group of rogues.

For more details of songs that were written and the people who inspired them look at the case studies on the Extended Services web site.

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/extendedservices

A CD has been produced for everyone involved in the project. Parents can purchase a copy with all the proceeds going to the charity ‘Age Concern’.

We welcome Imke Wilson to the Extended Services team. Imke replaces Tina Stevenson who left at Christmas to join the Graduate Teacher Programme, based at Sandy Lane Primary School. Imke worked previously for a community charity in East Reading that provided information to the community and ran study support activities for pupils in local schools.

Short Mat Bowls

Another Extended Service inter-generational project has begun in Sandhurst with the launch of a Short Mat Bowls club for young people. The club is open to any young person in Sandhurst and is led by members of Sandhurst’s own Short Mat Bowls club.

The club runs for an hour every Monday from 3.45pm and has already proved to be very successful with a regular number attending each week. The existing club members have been able to pass on their techniques and teach the younger people the aims of what is a very tactical game.

This is another example of children and young people working with older members of the community, building relationships that will last into the future.



The Rowans Children's Centre - Case Study

The Family Outreach Worker (FOW) received a referral to work with profoundly deaf parents who wanted support for their two year old hearing son. At the first meeting (with a translator present) it was decided that the FOW would be able to support the family by offering the mother and child some play activities and ideas in their home. This would also involve the FOW speaking to the child and offering him a hearing world and language skills. The family also attended the Margaret Wells Furby Children's Resource Centre for family support where he was able to play with peers and gain social skills.

The Oaks Children's Centre - Case Study

A lone mother with a learning disability was introduced to The Oaks by her health visitor. She was encouraged to attend and staff worked hard to help her feel included. Over the months she attended regularly. Concerns were raised regarding her ability to live independently with her children and she stopped attending the centre. The health visitor reported that she had left her children with her mother. However, after Christmas she turned up in reception seeking support. The centre manager and health visitor arranged a meeting with the mum and a duty social worker who had already met with her. The centre manager accompanied the mum to the meeting. The social worker advised that she contacted a solicitor for legal advice and gave the mum a list of names. The mother didn't understand everything that

Langley Hall - Case Study

A young mother who was living with her partner and their 2 year old daughter (with another child due) was advised by her health visitor to come to a parenting course as she was having difficulties with her daughter's behaviour (temper tantrums and shouting) and not enjoying time with her.

The child's behaviour was very demanding and the mother would let her have her own way. The child constantly had a bottle in her hand and the mother had to have spare bottles wherever she went to avoid a scene.

Mother and daughter were shouting at each other with the mother speaking to the child as an adult. The three main areas of concern for the mother were: sleeping, behaviour and potty training.

Although the mother was initially reluctant to attend the course, she only missed 2 out of 10 sessions, when having the baby.

During the sessions the mother reflected on her own behaviour. She realised it was she who needed to

The FOW worked with the family and noticed a great improvement in the child's language and social skills. She also noticed that his concentration on structured activities improved. The FOW also helped the mother with gathering information about suitable pre-schools.

The FOW had concerns regarding possible communication difficulties when taking on this case but they have managed very well with basic sign language and notes. The FOW, mother and child have built a good relationship with each other.

had been said to her. The centre manager arranged for an advocate to contact the mum to support her through the process offering the centre as a venue and additional source of support.

In the autumn a mum was attending the centre with her children. It became apparent that she was struggling. A health visitor went out to her home to offer assistance. Through discussion it transpired that she was having relationship difficulties that were being made worse by her cramped housing conditions. Suggestions were given by the centre staff to help address some of the relationship difficulties she was experiencing. Childcare was offered so that she had a little time to herself. She reported that she was feeling more positive and better able to cope.

change and not her daughter and began to have a better understanding of her daughter's developmental level.

She made a decision during the play session that she was going to use the art and craft boxes that her daughter had been given as a gift and reported back how she was pleased with her daughter's response and surprised how much fun they had together.

During the 10 weeks of the course, the family were doing more together and the mother was able to defuse situations before they got to a tantrum stage.

On the last session the mother wrote:

"I feel I have learnt to understand my daughter. I have learnt to enjoy her as a person. I was struggling with her temper, now I know how to defuse a situation. I look forward to a Monday night and learning more about how to be a better parent and growing as a parent

I haven't been judged and it was good to learn I wasn't the only one going through it."

Family Support Advisers

An exciting new scheme started in September 2008 when Family Support Advisers (FSAs) started work in many of Bracknell Forest's schools. There are currently 16 FSAs in post, working across 21 schools with more starting work after the Easter break.

The FSAs have real influence on positive outcomes for children - by encouraging parental involvement in the school and its activities, developing parenting skills and supporting families with information, advice and guidance.



Five of our FSAs at a recent networking event.

This is a 'A Day in the Life' account of one Family Support Adviser...

As soon as I walk into the office a teacher is asking me to contact two families who have received help during the previous night's parents' evening. I take some details and contact both families; talk about issues such as confidentiality and data protection, asking them to sign the authorisation and permission forms I will send home with their child. Gather as many details as I can about the family and the issues surrounding the child, also ask for verbal permission to see their child today, which I get. I prepare the paperwork for these families including completing the Client Detail sheet. Later in the day I see both children and explain why I am seeing them. Use a 'getting to know you game' to put them at ease and at the end of the session give them the forms for their

Birch Hill Extended Services Room

Through the Council's Extended Services budget, funding was available in 2008/09 for the refurbishment of spaces so that Family Support Advisers (FSAs) could work more effectively.

Birch Hill Primary School took advantage of the funding to develop their medical room into a space that could be used for extended services and family work as well.

The room is small, so the task was quite a challenge.

parents to sign.

The Headteacher has e-mailed me a query from a parent. I contact the parent to find out more details – spend some time trying to find the information mum has asked for and get back to her later in the day. I have had some success but need to spend more time looking at other avenues of support.

Finish typing up my notes on a CAF form and forward this to the class teacher to complete, print off a completed Early Intervention Team referral, make arrangements for both parent and child to sign this at the end of the day and put this in the post. I make some phone calls, a couple to families to check with progress and a return call to a social worker who is also working with one of my client families.

Check in with some of the children I regularly see – only 2 (of 6) needed to talk with me today. Spend some time talking and, more importantly, listening to these children.

Set up room for self-esteem group, all girls from years 3-6. This group focuses on building confidence, self-esteem and self-image. We start with show and tell, this is a time we share something good that we have done or achieved this week. We also work on our 'my life' books – these are all about the most positive aspects of our lives and how we feel about them and end by playing team building/confidence building games.

Before meeting with a parent at the end of the school day I make sure all my paperwork is up-to-date. After the meeting I set up a table of information for parents evening. I have information about holiday clubs from the CIC, workshops from Solutions Together and courses from the Open Learning Centre. I also have some general information about transition for parents of Year 6 pupils. For most of the evening I make myself available in the school reception area greeting parents and handing out information but I also made appointments with three families to catch up and see how we can move forward with their issues.

Minor refurbishment and refurnishing achieved the necessary aim.

Head Teacher, Alan Harding stated:

"I'm really pleased with the way that the medical room has turned out - it's a huge improvement.

I don't quite know how we put up with the old room. Next project - my office!"



Cycling for Year 6 pupils in North Bracknell



When considering its priorities for the year in 2007/08, the Priestwood, Bullbrook and Warfield Area Steering Group identified that it would like to provide opportunities for the children in the area to cycle at The Look Out Discovery Centre.

Schools were asked to nominate the children who would benefit most from the trips. Everyone agreed they were a huge success. As a result, a programme of trips were organised through Wellington Trek which involved groups of eight Year 6 pupils being taken to 'The Look Out' after school and cycling round a challenging route with a Ranger and a supervising teacher.

In 2008 three schools took part, undertaking four cycling sessions each and the teachers and children who took part really enjoyed themselves. The rides were challenging and often very muddy, with black bin bags proving a very handy accessory for the return journeys to school!

This year the trips will be run again and six schools will be involved, so it is hoped even more local children will benefit and enjoy this great opportunity to get out into the 'wilds' of Bracknell Forest.

School for All - communities and schools working together in Birch Hill, Great Hollands and Hanworth

The aim of this project was to produce a DVD for Great Hollands, Birch Hill & Hanworth cluster of schools, to promote the range of services available in and around schools. The digital media centre at South Hill Park led by Martin Franklin was commissioned to produce the DVD on behalf of the Great Hollands, Birch Hill & Hanworth Extended Services Area Steering Group.

A DVD is a more effective method of engaging parents/carers and is more likely to be watched than print media is read. It also provides an opportunity to show the range of services on offer in schools and the range of people that are using them.

The content focused on schools in the cluster and aimed to engage parents/carers in their children's teaching and learning and promote local services and facilities. Schools in the cluster are continually extending the services they provide for the whole community (not just parents) by offering a range of services such as Citizens' Advice Bureau drop ins, lunch clubs for older people, parenting workshops etc.

Prior to the start of filming two workshops took place at South Hill Park for eight selected pupils from the five schools in the cluster. The workshops were one video and one graphics workshop:

The pupils that attended the workshops also acted as hosts at the filming sessions in their schools.

Filming took place at the schools in the local area during June and July 2008. The DVD was completed and distributed to all families in the area during November 2008.

Feedback from DVD Workshop

'I've learnt how to use a video camera and edit movies and construct movies. I loved today. It was very fun'

'Fun, learnt how to use editing software. Enjoyable. Got to work with new people'

'I enjoyed today lots. I enjoyed learning new things and meeting some new people'

'I've had a lot of fun. I have learnt a lot and I can't wait till next time'

'I've really enjoyed doing this and I made some new friends'

'I have learnt how to edit a film on the computer. I really enjoyed it'

Feedback from Graphics Workshop

'It was really fun, better than the other workshop'

It was great. I learnt so much. Thank you so much'

It was fun learning how to use Photoshop and edit photos'

'IT WAS COOL!'

'It was great and I learnt a lot about graphic designing on computers'.

'It was really fun. I enjoyed drawing over the people'

Building on Success: a National Conference on the Extended Schools' programme Liz Norris, Headteacher, Sandy Lane Primary School

Tracey Moyes, Headteacher of Fox Hill Primary and I were invited to attend the National Conference for Extended School Services. The conference started with a performance by Kingsdale Secondary School's drumming band, showcasing their fantastic abilities acquired through their drumming club.

Beverley Hughes, the Minister for Children, gave a passionate plea for schools to seek to overcome the initial difficulties in order to ensure that schools become places of extended opportunities for children and young people. A number of keynote speakers went on to give personal accounts of their journeys to become fully extended schools offering a wide variety of experiences and opportunities for young people.

Success stories always included the close working together of different agencies such as health, sporting clubs, arts and performing theatre groups. Such accounts also included evidence of improved standards within schools in externally assessed measures. Professor Leon Feinstein from the Institute of Education provided evidence to show that where schools had offered support, especially to families that were difficult to engage, there were significant improvements in attainment within the school.

At the beginning of the afternoon, Beverley Hughes was joined by Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families. A number of questions followed his short presentation. A round table discussion invited delegates to share their success stories and these were fed back to the whole conference. Excellent practice included Lunch Clubs for disadvantaged families; joint working with health

services; school nurses holding clinics for students on a variety of subjects; Family IT clubs.

These personal school stories included anecdotal student stories of success with benefits for both school, students and in many cases, communities too.

Finally, Dame Kelly Holmes, in her role as School Sport Champion, talked passionately about the effect extra-curricular activities had in helping her to realise her



dreams of becoming an Olympic champion. She was compelling about the need to encourage outside sporting club coaches to come into school to realise the talents of young people who would not be able to access these clubs through normal routes.

Finally, in addition to all these success stories, the whole conference was bowled over by a young student delegate who described her very challenging personal life in care and went on to describe how her school's extended services had enriched her life, adding value and helping her to believe in herself, leaving her with aspirations of becoming an accountant with a desire to gain all the necessary qualifications. We were left in no doubt that she would succeed!

New Government Funding to provide activities for disadvantaged pupils

A pilot project is to be undertaken in 2009/10 to provide access to recreational activities for children and young people from economically disadvantaged families.

Children at seven schools in the area south of Bracknell town centre will be eligible for the funding if they meet certain criteria.

In 2010/11 there will be funding for the scheme to extend to the whole Borough. Further details will be provided in a future newsletter.



Funding to support promotion and publicity

It is clear that getting information to parents and the community is central to the successful implementation and take-up of services. Word of mouth is always one of the most effective methods. The Council has recently made funding available to schools specifically for promotion and publicity. Some of the ways in which the funding is being used include:

- improving websites to reflect fully the extended service on offer
- putting up external noticeboards, or electronic versions of these.
- producing posters and fliers.

Additionally, schools' information on the national Directgov website, www.direct.gov.uk has been developed to show whether the school is offering the full core offer of extended services, and an explanation of what this means.

Fox Hill Primary School - Evaluation of Year 6 'Tug of War'

The children of Year 6 began the academic year of 2008-2009 in a very negative manner. For much of the previous academic year there had been changes in their daily routines which had led to a lack of stability. The children often expressed dissatisfaction about their time spent in Year 5 and were under the impression that Year 6 would be similar.

Since October the children have been receiving 'Tug of War' coaching with Simon Mitchinson. He began by teaching them the physical skills required in 'tugging', which led on to discussing the mental strategies involved. This combined with the stability of school staff has enabled the children to make a noticeable positive change to both their behaviour and academic success.

Mr Mitchinson has provided an alternative approach to instilling self belief, teamwork and competitive fighting spirit within the children. This has had an enormous impact on the children who have low self esteem, lack purpose and often have deep-rooted issues from their background.



The children were initially slow to respond to the anticipated outcomes however through the continued programme, consistency and reinforcement throughout the day the

children are now applying the skills to their daily lives. They also express themselves in more positive terms.

Mr Mitchinson has demonstrated to the children that hard work and never giving up are the key to

success. He has become a positive male role model for children who sometimes lack this in their own lives. The children have a very good relationship with Mr Mitchinson and apply his traits when encouraging and congratulating each other on their efforts and achievements.

The children's class teacher commented, "In my opinion, I believe that the service provided to the Year 6 children has been beneficial to the school, the class and the children's attitude, behaviour and learning environment. To continue this progress I believe that it is important to reinforce and reward the children daily using the techniques taught.

It is important for the children to achieve success in what they do. They have experienced this through 'Tug of War' and now also through representing the school in competitive teams where the children have used the techniques without instruction."

Feedback from some of the children:

It's cool.

Tug of War is my favourite part of the week and I have been able to apply what Coach has said to my school work and my life. I am going to be the best I can at all I do.

Tug has helped us come together as a class, so we have a better attitude and team spirit now.

Young People with Special Needs - Transition Project 2008

During the year 2008 the young people involved with the transition project have further developed their skills in their transition from school to college. The programme has included budgeting and money management, travel training, relationship building, personal safety in relationships and with strangers, participation in age related activities.

There have been many successes. One young man is now living independently and has his own flat. Two of the young women have joined a gym and are now going out more. Five young women who, due to their age, should be finishing with the group this year tested all they had learnt on a trip to Gibraltar.

All of the young people have gained accreditation through Youth Achievement Awards for Life Skills. They have increased in confidence and parents have informed the team that they want to do more things on their own and are losing some of their dependency on them.

For some the concern is what they will do now they are too old for the transition group. There does not seem to be anything for this age group that offers the activities these young people want, at present. The youth service do work with special needs young people until they are 24, but additional funding will need to be sought for this group to be able to continue their journey towards independence.

What's New in Children's Centres

The Family Tree

Everything is in place for a move to **Langley Hall**. In the interim, sessions which are based there have continued to develop. New activities include **Young Parents Café**. This session is run by the young parents themselves.

SpRATS (Support Remedies and Toddler Solutions) run in conjunction with the local Health Visiting Team. **MAD Academy**, developing activities, music and movement for both children and parents. **Breast-feeding Café**, to support mums who are keen to continue breastfeeding.

The Development at Meadowvale is now complete, with just the finishing tweaks and furniture to be delivered. 'The Acorns' as it will be known is due to be opened on the 27th April and we will be running two sessions a week there.

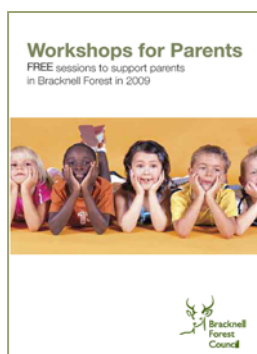
The Maples

Breast-feeding Café has been set up to run in parallel with the baby weigh in clinic at Whitegrove Community Hall.

The Chestnuts

All sessions that are provided are held in local community halls, church halls and other community buildings. **Sessions Available...Bumps and Babies** and **Breastfeeding Cafe** - both at Crowthorne Parish Hall.

Parenting workshops



Bracknell Forest Council is putting on free parenting workshops this year.

The Council's Extended Services team has organised the free events for the community at various venues throughout the borough. Workshops on offer include:

- **Raising self esteem** on Thurs 30 April from 9.30am at Wooden Hill Primary School.
- **Pre teens: not quite there yet** on Thurs 7 May from 7pm at Garth Hill College.
- **Sibling rivalry** on Tues 12 May from 9.30am at Ascot Heath Infant School.

The Oaks

There are many activities taking place across the week such as **Drop-in Sessions** with SALT, Stay and Play, Well Baby Clinic, Young Parents and Baby and Toddler Information and Advice Session plus **appointment only sessions** with CAB, Shelter and Health Visitors.

The Rowans

Some of the services at this Children's Centre include **drop-in Sessions**: Baby Yoga, Stay and Cook, Breast-feeding café, Toddler group, Bumps and Babies with Shelter and an Antenatal Clinic on **appointment only sessions**.

The Alders

A weekly **drop-in session** takes place at The Spot, Sandhurst Youth Centre. There will be a range of activities as well as guests such as a Speech and Language Therapist, Health Visitors and access to the Alders Outreach Worker.

For more information on all Children's Centres go to: www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/childrenscentres or contact the Children Centre Managers:

- Cath Lowther** (The Rowans and The Alders)
Tel. 01344 312807
- Sandra Woodward** (The Oaks and The Chestnuts)
Tel. 01344 317026
- Louise Clark** (The Family Tree and The Maples)
Tel. 01344 317028

- **Transition to secondary school** on Thurs 21 May from 7pm at Cranbourne Primary School; Wed 10 June from 7pm at Garth Hill College; and Tues 23 June from 7pm at Edgbarrow School.
- **Parenting teenagers** on Thurs 24 September from 7pm at Edgbarrow School.
- **How to have fun with your pre-school children: the wonder of play'** on Mon 5 October from 9.30am at The Rowans Children's Centre.

Parents are welcome to turn up to any of these sessions but bookings are preferable by either phoning or emailing on:

- 01344 353133
- parent.support@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Additional parenting support for families with children aged 0-5 years is available at all Children's Centres.

For further information on Extended Services In and Around Schools or Children's Centres, contact:

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01344 354067
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