



Press Release – For Immediate Release (09.04.14)

KIRKBY COLLABORATIVE OF SCHOOLS WINS PRESTIGIOUS COMMUNICATION AWARD

The Kirkby Collaborative of Schools and 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust are celebrating after winning the **Commissioning Award** at the **2013/2014 Shine a Light Awards**. The team were rewarded for their innovative work supporting schools to improve the language and communication skills of children aged 4-7 years old.

The Awards, held in London on Thursday 3rd April and hosted by Broadcaster and Health Campaigner, Anne Diamond, are run by Pearson Assessment in partnership with The Communication Trust to honour individuals, teams, campaigns, communication friendly settings and communities that have excelled in their support of children and young people's communication.

The Kirkby Collaborative of Schools and 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust were joint winners of the *Commissioning Award* for their involvement in the *A Chance to Talk* (ACTT) project alongside the Reading Borough Council Children's Commissioning Team.

A Chance To Talk is a whole-school commissioning model for supporting speech and language development that ensures language rich school environments, targeted support for children with delayed language and specialist interventions for children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) by Speech and Language Therapists.

In Kirkby, the impact of *A Chance to Talk* has been widespread. Nearly 80% of children with SLCN met the majority of their individual targets, the number of referrals to the Speech and Language Therapy Service has reduced and children made on average 50% more progress in reading at Key Stage 1 exceeding progress expected nationally.

When the *A Chance to Talk* pilot ended in 2012, Kirkby schools commissioned a continuation of the model ensuring that more staff are trained to recognise and understand SLCN and support is given to 'hard to reach' families whose children would not otherwise get into clinic to receive Speech and Language Therapy Support.

Jill Dancer, Performance Manager, 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Steve Dixon, Kirkby Collaborative Development Manager said: "We are honoured to receive this prestigious Shine a Light Award in the Commissioning Category for the A Chance To Talk in Kirkby initiative.

“It is a reflection of the hard work completed by staff working for the 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Community Health Services and The Kirkby Collaborative of Schools over the last four years. The initiative has resulted in improvements in the speech, language and communication skills of all children in primary school aged 4-7 years including those with additional needs in this area.”

Chris Hall, Managing Director of Pearson Assessment and Shine a Light Award Judge, says: “Congratulations to the Kirkby Schools Collaborative and 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust for winning this prestigious award. Joint commissioning is one of the best ways to offer children’s speech, language and communication services to prevent children slipping into the organisational gaps between education and health departments.

“At a time where health and SEN services are going through significant reforms, the Kirkby Collaborative of Schools and 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust success focuses attention on what can be achieved through commitment, joint working, a successful model and the involvement of third sector organisations. Their important work will help to motivate and inspire others.”

For the full list of Shine a Light winners and highly commended finalists, visit www.shinealightawards.co.uk

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For Further Information

For more information, or to arrange an interview with representatives from the Kirkby Schools Collaborative and 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, please contact Laura Smith or Charlotte Hussey at Consilium Communications by emailing lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk / chussey@consiliumcommunications.co.uk or call 07766651366.

Notes to editors

About the Shine a Light Awards

- The Shine a Light Awards are sponsored and organised by Pearson Assessment in partnership with The Communication Trust.
- The Awards are designed to promote and celebrate good practice in speech, language and communication for individuals, groups and settings which work with children and young people, particularly those with SLCN.
- The awards form part of the legacy of the National Year of Communication (*Hello* campaign) and have become a key event in the speech, language and communication community’s calendar.
- Nearly 80 applications were received with 16 winners and 13 highly commended finalists picking up coveted awards at a glittering ceremony hosted by Anne Diamond.
- 17 judges were involved in the Shine a Light Awards including Janet Cooper, Founder of Stoke Speaks Out, Peter Sutcliffe, Editor of SEN Magazine, Virginia Beardshaw, Chief Executive of I CAN, Sean Stockdale, Editor of Special Magazine, Kamini Gadhok, Chief Executive of the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT), Diz Minnitt, Milton Keynes Youth Offending Team and Hilary Berry, Headteacher at Over Hall Community School.
- For further information and to view the film of the ceremony and the full list of judges, visit www.shinealightawards.co.uk

About the A Chance to Talk initiative

- A *Chance to Talk* is an initiative, which improves the communication skills of 4-7 year olds in primary schools. This accelerates progress in language for children with delayed language, and those with SLCN. The initiative offers a model of commissioning support for all children’s speech, language and communication over three waves. It operates across clusters of primary schools building their capacity to work with children’s language.

- It has been developed by children's communication charity I CAN, The Communication Trust and the Every Child a Chance Trust.
- *A Chance To Talk* was piloted between September 2010 and July 2012 across four areas (Rochdale, Whitby, Kirkby and West Kent) in clusters of eight primary schools, 32 schools in total, representing a total of 8,308 children aged 4 to 7.
- For more information, visit <http://www.ican.org.uk/achancetotalk>

About Pearson Assessment

- Pearson Assessment is the world's largest commercial developer and distributor of educational assessments and psychological testing materials with over 90 years history of commitment to researching and developing products to a reliable high standard.
- Pearson Assessment is dedicated to the pursuit of professional excellence, leadership, and growth through acquisition, development, publication, and the maintenance of quality assessment tools in order to anticipate and meet the needs of its customers.
- Pearson Assessment have sponsored the Shine a Light Awards since their launch in 2011, as part of the *Hello* campaign (National Year of Communication).
- For more information, visit www.pearsonclinical.co.uk or follow @PsychCorpUK #SAL2014

About The Communication Trust

- The Communication Trust is a coalition of nearly 50 leading voluntary sector organisations, which raises awareness, influences policy, promotes best practice among the children's workforce and commissions work from its members.
- It has an extensive advisory group, which includes the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, Association of Educational Psychologists and the General Teaching Council.
- For more information about the Trust visit www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk or follow @Comm_nTrust #SAL2014