



Press Release – For Immediate Release (10.04.14)

WREXHAM AND FLINTSHIRE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICES WINS PRESTIGIOUS COMMUNICATION AWARD

Wrexham Youth Justice Service & Flintshire Youth Justice Service in North Wales is celebrating after winning the **Pearson Award for Best Continued Practice in Youth Justice** at the **2013/2014 Shine a Light Awards** for their work ensuring that more young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) in the criminal justice system are identified and supported.

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 speech, language and communication work across both services has demonstrated continued commitment and enthusiasm to supporting young people with SLCN by developing and growing the service significantly after Wrexham Youth Justice Service were highly commended at the awards in 2012 being crowned *Youth Justice Award* winner at last year's awards.

Amy Ballard, Speech and Language Therapist who works across both services, said: "We are delighted to have been awarded the *Pearson Assessment Award for Continued Best Practice in Youth Justice*. We feel very proud that our services for young people with SLCN have been recognised nationally.

"Receiving this award inspires us to continue to support our young people and acknowledges the challenges and hard work by the entire team. It was great to meet other finalists who have motivated us to continue to improve our services. "

The project now funds a full-time Speech and Language Therapist and SLCN training has been prioritised with all members of the Youth Justice Service including police, case holders, prevention working, housing and victim liaison officers and child and adolescent mental health workers.

Screening tools have been developed and a communication policy is now in place ensuring all new staff members receive SLCN awareness training. Since the project began in 2011, over 120 referrals have been received, with Flintshire referrals increasing by 95%. Both services prioritise speech and language in its strategic planning.

Chris Hall, Managing Director of Pearson Assessment, said: “It gives me great pleasure to congratulate both Wrexham and Flintshire Youth Justice Services for winning the *Pearson Award for Best Continued Practice in Youth Justice*. This is a fantastic achievement.

“Through the communication project, the teams are adopting very effective strategies and policies to identify and support young people with SLCN that impressed the judges. We are delighted that through the Shine a Light Awards we can shout about Wrexham & Flintshire’s efforts and go on to 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 either Wrexham or Flintshire Youth Justice Services, 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 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