



Press Release – For Immediate Release (07.04.14)

## **SHEFFIELD COUNCIL WINS PRESTIGIOUS COMMUNICATION AWARD FOR THIRD YEAR IN A ROW**

Sheffield City Council is celebrating after winning the **Working Together Award** at the **2013/2014 Shine a Light Awards** for their work delivering a city-wide literacy strategy to develop the speech, language and communication skills of children and young people aged 0-19.

The Every Sheffield Child Articulate and Literate (ESCAL) team were unveiled as the winners of the *Working Together Award* in recognition of their work with Sheffield's Speech and Language Therapist team to establish innovative speech and language practice across 15 primary schools in the Sheffield South East Learning Partnership (SSELP).

The Awards, held in London on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

43 languages are spoken in SSELP schools and nearly 50% of pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding. The ESCAL strategy included a focus on equipping practitioners to meet the language needs of bilingual learners and valuing mother tongue where the percentage of children from Black and minority ethnic groups is double the national average.

SSELP schools have received a comprehensive toolkit of resources to support children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and mentoring on areas such as Autism and Down's Syndrome.

850 practitioners have attended training and four SSELP schools have gained ESCAL's externally validated Communication Friendly Schools Quality Mark. End of Key Stage data shows early signs of impact with a significant 9% rise over the year compared with 1% nationally.

SSELP schools have taken part in a range of activities and initiatives including a Mad Hatters Tea Party for nursery children, a 10 week creativity project for schools on speaking and listening and pupil participation in talk activities including ESCAL City Talks and debates in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

Anne Fox, Director of The Communication Trust and Shine a Light Award Judge, says: "Congratulations to the ESCAL team for winning this award introduced for the first time this year."

At a time where health and SEN services are going through significant reforms, ESCAL's success focuses attention on what can be achieved through commitment, joint working, a multi-disciplinary team and a great deal of energy. Their important work will help to motivate and inspire others."

Janet Cooper, Founder of Stoke Speaks Out and Shine a Light Judge, says: "The entries for the Working Together category were of a really high standard. Teams were able to demonstrate a genuine commitment to children through working together. Congratulations to ESCAL who have continued to keep SLCN high on the agenda in Sheffield despite these austere times."

"The ESCAL team was able to evidence significant impact on children's speech, language and communication through a joined up approach. There is still a huge need nationally to invest time and energy in supporting our children and young people to become skilful communicators and the Working Together award acknowledges the effort teams are making."

For the full list of Shine a Light winners and highly commended finalists, visit <http://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk/Educationnews/shine-a-light.aspx>

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#### **For Further Information**

For more information, or to arrange an interview with representatives from the Every Sheffield Child Articulate and Literate (ESCAL) team, please contact Laura Smith or Charlotte Hussey at Consilium Communications by emailing [lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk](mailto:lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk) / [chussey@consiliumcommunications.co.uk](mailto: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.
- More than 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 <http://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk/Educationnews/shine-a-light.aspx>

##### **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](http://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](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk) or follow @Comm\_nTrust #SAL2014