



Press Release – For Immediate Release (08.04.14)

WARWICKSHIRE *TIME TO TALK* PROJECT WINS PRESTIGIOUS COMMUNICATION AWARD

Warwickshire County Council and South Warwickshire Foundation Trust Speech and Language Therapy department is celebrating after their 'time to talk' team won the **Children's Workforce Award** at the **2013/2014 Shine a Light Awards** for their work supporting the development of early language and communication skills in babies and children across 39 Children's Centre and 120 early years settings.

Warwickshire's 'time to talk' project was unveiled as the winner of the *Children's Workforce Award* in recognition of their work supporting children through a network of 150 trained Speech and Language Champions.

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.

Through 'time to talk' Speech and Language Champions access a three-tier training programme, completing over 30 hours of training and ensuring speech and language has a high profile within their setting. Over 500 families have accessed newly-established speech and language drop ins and Champions ensure all children with severe speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) are identified promptly ensuring specialist support is accessed.

Warwickshire County Council and South Warwickshire Foundation Trust Speech and Language Therapy department work in partnership to enable 'time to talk' to build services around the child and family. Campaigns such as Chatter Matters Week offers top tips, leaflets, posters and activities supporting practitioners and families to develop the speech, language and communication skills of babies and young children in the county.

Alex Williams, Lead Speech and Language Therapist for 'time to talk', said: "Winning the Children's Workforce Award means a huge amount to us. We have always believed that the strength and success of 'time to talk' is its strategic approach and the commitment of our speech and language champions across the county.

"We are privileged to work with such dedicated practitioners and this award acknowledges the value of partnership and recognises the importance of supporting children at an early stage of their language development."

Anne Fox, Director of The Communication Trust and Shine a Light Award Judge, says: “Congratulations to Warwickshire County Council and South Warwickshire Foundation Trust Speech and Language Therapy 'time to talk' team for winning this prestigious award. At a time where health and SEN services are going through significant reforms, the success of *Time to Talk* focuses attention on what can be achieved by a small core team through commitment, energy, joint working and an effective model. Their important work will help to motivate and inspire others.”

Chris Hall, Managing Director of Pearson Assessment and Shine a Light Award Judge, says: “It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Warwickshire County Council and South Warwickshire Foundation Trust Speech and Language Therapy teams for their well deserved win.

“We have been blown away by this years nominations and seen some truly inspiring examples of work being carried out to support children and young people with SLCN. With the awards now in their third year, we are excited to have helped over 90 teams shout about their work 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 representatives from the Warwickshire County Council and South Warwickshire Foundation Trust Speech and Language Therapy, 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