



*Press Release – IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **OUTSTANDING BRISTOL LEARNING CENTRE HONOURED AT SHINE A LIGHT AWARDS FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPING CHILDREN'S COMMUNICATION**

Knowle DGE Learning Centre in Bristol has been highly commended in the Communication Commitment Award category at an awards ceremony in London for its continued commitment to developing local children's communication skills. The **2017 Shine a Light Awards**, run by Pearson in partnership with The Communication Trust, took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 and were hosted by singer and theatre star Gareth Gates.

The 2017 Shine a Light Awards is a national awards scheme that celebrates innovative work and excellent practice in supporting children and young people's communication development.

Knowle DGE is a specialist learning centre for young people with additional needs, principally in the areas of social, emotional and mental health, moderate learning difficulties, speech language and communication needs, and Autistic Spectrum condition at the communicative, higher-operating end of the spectrum. In order to help its students, Knowle DGE completed a communication audit to help identify priorities and to create an action plan.

The time and investment Knowle DGE Learning Centre has put in to its staff, and in turn its students, is having a great effect. Staff have the confidence to work with the speech and language therapists, and are able to produce one-page profiles outlining student's strengths and needs, which are shared with all staff; understand what SLCN looks like; and have strategies in place to support their students' needs.

Students have benefited from improved classroom environments, improved school areas with more use of visual support, and improved 'adult talk' with quality questioning and more use of visuals and adapted work sheets.

Kate Lee-Wells, Deputy Headteacher at Knowle DGE Learning Centre, said: "We are delighted that the effort we have made in improving communication for young people has been recognised at a national level.

"As a Learning Centre for young people with SEMH [Social, emotional and mental health needs] people often see 'behaviour' first and the importance of communication can sometimes be forgotten. At Knowle DGE we will continue to make communication a priority for all of our learners."

Gareth Gates, host of the 2017 Shine a Light Awards, said: "The dedication of Knowle DGE Learning Centre is outstanding. Being able to communicate with confidence is often taken for

granted but for many it is an everyday struggle. I have found my stutter crippling at times but I have learnt ways to manage my difficulties with the support of others.

“It is heart-warming to know that other children and young people across England are getting the support they need to develop and achieve goals that may not have been possible otherwise. Knowle DGE Learning Centre should be extremely proud of its award.”

Part of Knowle DGE’s plan was to ensure their class-based learning facilitators received specific training, including a series of twilight sessions on communication-friendly strategies, understanding levels of comprehension, visual support and timetables, as well as how to improve questioning in the classroom and tips on how to de-escalate behaviour, taking into account the student's comprehension levels.

Whole-day insets delivered by a team of Childspeech speech and language therapists were also organised for all staff, with teachers given the opportunity to attend regular ‘teacher surgeries’ with their Childspeech therapist to talk about specific students, helping them to produce individual programmes and profiles. Office staff, dining room staff and transport teams were also invited to receive communication training.

Chris Hall, Director of Clinical Assessment at Pearson, said: “Congratulations to Knowle DGE Learning Centre for its highly commended achievement. Its student-centered approach ensures that both staff and students receive the best training and teaching.

“This is the fifth year we have run the Awards and we remain blown away by the standard of applications. They give an amazing insight into the unsung work that is taking place across the country to improve the speech, language and communication skills of children and young people.”

Octavia Holland, Director of The Communication Trust, said: “Congratulations to Knowle DGE Learning Centre and everyone who triumphed at the Shine a Light Awards. They have shown what can be achieved when expertise, enthusiasm and dedication is given to children and young people who struggle to communicate. These Awards highlight the very best practice that is taking place in settings across the country. We would like to say a huge thank you to Pearson for their long-standing support.”

For further information about the Shine a Light winners and highly commended finalists, visit [www.shinealightawards.co.uk](http://www.shinealightawards.co.uk) and follow us on Twitter #awards\_SAL.

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#### **For further Information**

For more information, or to arrange interviews, please contact Lisa Church and Laura Smith at Consilium Communications by contacting [lchurch@consiliumcommunications.co.uk](mailto:lchurch@consiliumcommunications.co.uk) / 07467 945661 or [lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk](mailto:lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk) / 07467 945848.

#### **Notes to editors**

The full list of winners and highly commended finalists is as follows:

	<b>Winner/s</b>	<b>Highly Commended</b>	<b>Highly Commended</b>
<b>Pearson Outstanding</b>	Caspian Jamie	N/A	N/A

<b>Achievement Award</b>			
<b>Early Years Setting of the Year Award</b>	Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D. Academy, Newark-on-Trent	Willows Centre for Children, Portsmouth	Bright Beginnings Childcare Centre, Leeds
<b>Primary School of the Year Award</b>	Parkdale Primary School, Nottingham	Broom Barns Community Primary School, Stevenage	Hawthorn Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
<b>Secondary School/ College of the Year Award</b>	Tor Bridge High, Plymouth	Hanley Castle High School, Worcester	William Ellis School, London
<b>SEN School of the Year Award</b>	Ashmount School, Leicester	New Regent's College PRU, Hackney, London	Elm Tree Community Primary School, Lancashire  Moor House School and College, Oxon
<b>Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Award</b>	Ingfield Manor School, Billingham	Pace, Aylesbury	1Voice – Communicating Together, Coventry
<b>SLCN Innovation Award</b>	Mable Therapy, Leeds  Clearcut Communication (part of County Durham Youth Offending Service), Durham	Closing the Gap' - a project within Warwickshire County Council and South Warwickshire Foundation NHS Trust's 'time to talk'™ project, working in partnership with Bedworth Heath Nursery School, Warwickshire	
<b>Communication Champion Award</b>	Ann Shellard, Early Language Consultant, Blackpool	Caspian Jamie, Manchester	Jane Young, Nottingham
<b>Young Person of the Year</b>	Gregor Gilmour, Bury	Charlotte Seth, Yorkshire	Connor O'Neil, Nottingham
<b>Communication Commitment School of the Year Award</b>	Easton CE Academy, Bristol	Knowle DGE Learning Centre, Croydon	Woodmansterne Primary School, Bristol

### About the Shine a Light Awards

- The Shine a Light Awards are sponsored and organised by Pearson in partnership with The Communication Trust, a coalition of more than 50 organisations dedicated to supporting children and young people's speech, language and communication.
- The Awards are designed to promote and celebrate good practice in speech, language and communication for individuals, groups and settings that 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.
- The judges involved in the 2017 Shine a Light Awards were:
  - Octavia Holland, Director at The Communication Trust
  - Nicola Holmes, Lead Professional Advisor at The Communication Trust
  - Rosie Alouat, Project Support Officer at The Communication Trust
  - Emma Hickley, Head of Operations at The Communication Trust

- Christopher Hall, Director of Clinical Assessment at Pearson
- Lesley Munro, Education & Speech and Language Therapy Manager at Pearson
- Peter Sutcliffe, Editor of SEN Magazine
- Hilary Berry, Chair of Cheshire West and Chester Primary Heads' Association
- Anna Reeves, Manager of ACE Centre
- Malcolm Reeve, Executive Director for SEND & Inclusion at Academies Enterprise Trust
- Joy Rutter, Local Champion
- Bob Reitemeier, CEO of I CAN
- Janet Cooper, Early Language and Communication Strategy Lead at Stoke-on-Trent City Council and past Shine a Light Award winner
- Helen Fiddler, Interim Strategic Lead and Programme Manager at ESCAL
- Zoë Peden, Co-founder of Insane Logic
- Julie Steele, Speech and Language HLTA and Local Champion
- Norbert Lieckfeldt, Chief Executive of British Stammering Association
- Clare O'Rourke, Specialist Speech, Language and Communication Teacher at Peacehaven Community School and past Shine a Light Award winner
- John Parrott, Chair of Communication Consortium at NAPLIC
- Jonathan Douglas, Director of National Literacy Trust
- Wendy Lee, Speech & Language Solutions
- Shane Dangar, Communication Champion 2013/14
- Jane Comeau, Chair at PACEY
- Jill Duffy, SVP at Pearson UK Schools
- Bev Crisp, Family Outreach Worker at Whitby and the Moors and Communication Champion 2015
- Kamini Gadhok MBE, CEO of Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)
- Jonathan Middleditch, Young Person of the Year 2015
- Francesca Martinez, international comedian, writer and speaker.

#### **About Pearson**

- Pearson is the world's learning company, with expertise in educational courseware and assessment, and a range of teaching and learning services powered by technology. Our mission is to help people make progress through access to better learning. We believe that learning opens up opportunities, creating fulfilling careers and better lives. For more, visit [www.pearson.com](http://www.pearson.com).
- Pearson 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 #awards\_SAL.

#### **About The Communication Trust**

- The Communication Trust is a coalition of more than 50 leading voluntary sector organisations, which raises awareness, influences policy, promotes best practice among the children's workforce and commissions work from its members.
- The Trust's mission is to ensure that every child and young person is supported to communicate to the very best of their ability.
- The Trust works towards its mission by working in partnerships to build, skills, knowledge and confidence in the children's workforce, based on a foundation of good practice, robust evidence and effective policy and legislation.

For more information about the Trust visit [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk) or follow @Comm\_nTrust #awards\_SAL.