



Press Release – For Immediate Release (24 March 2017)

GARETH GATES PUTS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT AT NATIONAL AWARDS

The winners of the **2017 Shine a Light Awards**, a national awards scheme that celebrates innovative work and excellent practice in supporting children and young people’s communication development, have been revealed today (24th March 2017) by Pearson, in partnership with The Communication Trust.

The awards, which took place at Pearson’s headquarters in London, were hosted by singer and theatre star Gareth Gates, who has spoken publicly about living with a stutter and the impact this has had on his confidence. 29 individuals and teams across 10 award categories were recognised, as well as children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), including:

Gregor Gilmour from Bury who won the *Young Person of the Year Award*

Gregor, aged 23, is a friendly, funny and generous young man who has cerebral palsy. He uses a voice output aid to communicate that is mounted to his wheelchair and accessed by a touch screen. Since leaving full time education, Gregor has become an incredible role model and mentor for young people across the North West forming a local communication aid user group and joining the board of 1Voice – a small national charity that provides support for children who use augmentative and alternative forms of communication (AAC).

Ann Shellard from Blackpool took home the *Communication Champion Award*

Anne has shown remarkable dedication in and around Blackpool to increasing practitioners’ knowledge and understanding of children and young people’s speech, language and communication development. Her work has ensured that every early years setting and Children’s Centre in Blackpool has an individual dedicated to ensuring best practice in communication. This has resulted in 82% of Ofsted reports over the past two years highlighting speech, language and communication as a key strength.

Gareth Gates, Host of the 2016/17 Shine a Light Awards, said: “It has been a complete honour to host these awards and congratulations to all the winners and highly commended finalists. 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 heartwarming to know that these outstanding individuals, teams and settings are helping children and young people across England to develop and achieve goals that may not have been possible otherwise.”

Some other amazing winners included:

Parkdale Primary School in Nottingham was awarded *Primary School of the Year*

Parkdale was praised for their communication friendly environment including cosy corners and uninterrupted play sessions. They have worked hard to ensure that speech and language interventions are implemented to the highest standard resulting in significant progress – listening and attention increasing from 16% of pupils at expected age level on entry to 86% on exit, with speaking increasing from 13% on entry to 87% on exit.

Tor Bridge High School in Plymouth received the *Secondary School/College of the Year Award*

Tor Bridge has shown sheer commitment to speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) through the schools Inclusion Department, which provides support for pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. They provide continuous staff training on SLCN and have opened a mental health café for students and staff.

Both Mable Therapy and the 'Thinking about Victims' ClearCut Communication resource were joint winners of the *SLCN Innovation Award*

Mable Therapy were recognised for their evidence-based, impactful and interactive online gaming approach to meeting the speech, language and communication needs of children in school as demands increase for teachers and NHS services.

The 'Thinking about Victims' ClearCut Communication programme, developed by County Durham Youth Offending Service (CDYOS), was recognised as a communication friendly resource, to be used with both the victim of crime and the young person who has offended. The programme helps young people to understand the impact of the offence, and supported CDYOS in gaining the Restorative Justice Council's Quality Mark.

Caspian Jamie from Manchester was also awarded the ***Pearson Outstanding Achievement Award*** for co-founding Twinkleboost. Over 1,300 individuals have been reached in the first 18 months by the innovative social enterprise, which equips new parents with strategies to support their child's communication development through fun, multisensory parent and child classes.

Chris Hall, Director of Clinical Assessment at Pearson, said: "Congratulations to the winners and highly commended finalists of the 2017 Shine a Light Awards. 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 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."

In total, 29 awards were presented by Gareth Gates to winners and highly commended finalists following a process where a judging panel whittled down the applications received. This panel included comedian Francesca Martinez, previous Shine a Light Award winners and key representatives from across the education and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) sectors.

In the UK, over one million children and young people have some form of long-term and persistent speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). The awards highlight the incredible contributions of teams, settings and individuals across England who support children and young people to achieve their full potential despite the challenges they face.

For further information about the Shine a Light winners and highly commended finalists, visit 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 / 07467 945661 or lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk / 07467 945848.

Notes to editors

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

	Winner/s	Highly Commended	Highly Commended
Pearson Outstanding Achievement Award	Caspian Jamie	N/A	N/A
Early Years Setting of the Year Award	Bishop Alexander L.E.A.D. Academy, Newark-on-Trent	Willows Nursery, Portsmouth	Bright Beginnings Childcare Centre, London
Primary School of the Year Award	Parkdale Primary School, Nottingham	Broom Barns Community Primary School, Stevenage	Hawthorn Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Secondary School/ College of the Year Award	Tor Bridge High, Plymouth	Hanley Castle High School, Worcestershire	William Ellis School, London
SEN School of the Year Award	Ashmount School, London	New Regent's College PRU, Hackney, London	Elm Tree Community Primary School, Liverpool Moor House College, Oxted
Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Award	Ingfield Manor School, Billingham	Pace, Aylesbury	1Voice – Communicating Together, Coventry
SLCN Innovation Award	Mable Therapy, Leeds 'Thinking about Victims' (ClearCut Communication), part of County Durham Youth Offending Service, Durham	'Closing The Gap' - a partnership project with Warwickshire 'time to talk' [™] and Bedworth Heath Nursery School, Warwickshire	
Communication Champion Award	Ann Shellard, Early Language Consultant, Blackpool	Caspian Jamie, Manchester	Jane Young, Nottinghamshire

Young Person of the Year	Gregor Gilmour, Bury	Charlotte Seth, Yorkshire	Connor O'Neil, Nottingham
Communication Commitment School of the Year Award	Easton CE Academy, Bristol	Knowle DGE Learning Centre, Bristol	Woodmansterne Primary School, Lambeth

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
 - Zo ë 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.
- 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 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 or follow @Comm_nTrust #awards_SAL.