



For Immediate Release: 26.03.18

COMEDIAN ADAM HESS PUTS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT AT NATIONAL AWARDS

The winners of the **2018 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 (22nd March 2018) by learning company Pearson, in partnership with The Communication Trust.

The awards, which took place at Pearson's headquarters in London, were hosted by stand-up comedian, actor and TV writer, Adam Hess, who struggled with dyslexia and an immense fear of public speaking when he was younger.

17 individuals and teams across 10 award categories were recognised, as well as children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Winners included:

Jonathan Bryan from Chippenham – Young Person of the Year

Inspirational 12-year old Jonathan has severe cerebral palsy, is quadriplegic, oxygen-dependent, and also non-verbal. He has shown sheer dedication and determination in developing his own communication skills and also raising awareness of profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

Through the support of his family, and his use of a low-tech eye gaze system (an e-tran frame), Jonathan is now in mainstream secondary school. He has personally established the *Teach Us Too* campaign, which urges professionals to recognise the unlocked potential of their pupils and not teach to labels. His documentary, *Locked-in Boy*, recently aired on CBBC, and his autobiography is being published later this year.

Pip St John from Blackburn – Communication Champion Award

Pip's impact in and around Blackburn has been outstanding: she has shown incredible dedication to enhancing the communication skills of children by training school staff and sharing advice and information, whilst overcoming a personal battle with stage 3 breast cancer. Pip has created the Pre-Teaching Vocabulary (PTV) programme which aims to help children needing extra language support. She has made this an entirely free resource, and it is accessible online to anyone who needs it.

Stoke Speaks Out in Stoke-on-Trent – The SLCN Innovation Award and the Pearson Outstanding Achievement Award

Awarded for their innovative Early Communication Screen (ECS) to improve the school readiness of children from two to five, Stoke Speaks Out has positively impacted thousands of local children. Commissioned by the Local Authority, and written by Clinical Lead Speech/Language Therapist Janet Cooper and her team of speech and language therapists from Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust (SSOTP), the ECS is designed to be used by Early Years practitioners to identify early language delay and measure children's progress over time. Almost 7,000 children have been screened so far, with more than 1,800 regional practitioners trained to use the programme to date.

Adam Hess, Host of the 2018 Shine a Light Awards, said: "The dedication of teams and individuals to improve the communication skills of children and young people is humbling. As a child, I struggled greatly with dyslexia and an immense fear of public speaking, if it wasn't for the support I received when I was younger I wouldn't be in the position I am today. It has been a complete honour to host these awards and I would like to congratulate all the winners and commended finalists. They should be very proud of what they have achieved."

Some other amazing winners included:

Children's House Nursery in Stratford, London – Early Years Setting of the Year

Located within an area of high deprivation, over 90% of children at Children's House Nursery start with significant speech and language delays. Remarkably, by the time they move on to primary school, these same children leave with the levels of skill expected for their age. The nursery's success is due to a combination of numerous initiatives including special 'Stay, Play and Learn' sessions conducted before children even start at the nursery, as well as commitment to ongoing staff training, and dedicating time to developing strong parent/carer relationships.

Pendle Primary Academy in Nelson, Lancashire – Primary School of the Year

Pendle Primary has invested in its own speech and language therapist (SLT), who works closely with parents, staff and NHS specialists to discuss children due to start in reception. This approach ensures that pupils receive the correct support in the crucial first years of their journey through full-time education. The academy prides itself on its whole-school approach, which includes using signs and symbols alongside visual timetables and special indoors 'Communication Spaces'.

Isaac Newton Academy in Ilford, London – Secondary School of the Year

Given that 62% of students at Isaac Newton Academy use English as an additional language (EAL), their successes in this field to date are impressive: last year saw them placed in the top 1% for Year 11 progress! The school partners with a speech and language specialist as well as a school counsellor. This is in addition to having their own team of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) staff who monitor the development of beginner EAL students.

Sharon Hague, Senior Vice President, Schools, Pearson, said: "Our warmest congratulations to the winners, highly-commended, and commended finalists of the 2018 Shine a Light Awards. Through our innovative clinical assessments, Pearson is committed to supporting those working to help people overcome challenges in speech and language."

“For six years we have run these awards as we believe it is so important to recognise and celebrate the incredible, but often unsung, work being done across the country to change the lives of children and young people by helping them to develop their communication skills.”

Octavia Holland, Director of The Communication Trust, said: “Congratulations to everyone who triumphed at the 2018 Shine a Light Awards. These awards highlight the very best practice that is taking place in settings across the country. The winners and highly-commended finalists have shown what can be achieved when expertise, enthusiasm and dedication are given to children and young people who struggle to communicate. We would like to say a huge thank you to Pearson for their long-standing support.”

In total, 17 awards were presented by Adam Hess following a process where a judging panel whittled down the applications received. This panel included 19 key representatives from across the education and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) sectors, as well as previous Shine a Light Award winners.

Representatives included Jonathan Douglas, Director at National Literacy Trust; Kamini Gadhok MBC, Chief Executive at RCSLT; Bob Reitemeier CBE, CEO of I CAN; Lesley Munro, Education and Speech and Language Therapy Manager at Pearson Clinical; John Parrott, Chair of Communication Consortium at NAPLIC and Victoria Roe, Secretary and Deputy Chair, SMIRA.

The **Shine a Light Awards** have grown in popularity since their launch during the National Year of Communication in 2011 (known as the *Hello* campaign). To date, the awards have celebrated the work of over 140 teams and a wide range of individuals, including young people with severe and complex SLCN.

In the UK, over one million children and young people have some form of long-term and persistent speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) that can impact them early, severely and for life. 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:

Award	Winner	Highly Commended	Commended
The Katie Rough Memorial Award	Libby Hill, Uttoxeter	Rachel Peck, Cambridgeshire	

Child/Young Person of the Year Award	Jonathan Bryan, Wiltshire	Siena Castellon, London	
Communication Champion of the Year Award	Pip St John, Lancashire		
Youth Justice of the Year Award	Manchester Youth Justice, Manchester		
Early Years Setting of the Year Award	Children's House Nursery School, London	Juice Nursery Ltd, Altrincham	
Primary School of the Year Award	Pendle Primary Academy, Lancashire	Longmoor Community Primary, Merseyside	Bridgewater Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne
Secondary School/College of the Year Award	Isaac Newton Academy, London	London South East Colleges, London	
SEN School/Group of the Year Award	Pontville School, Lancashire	The William Henry Smith School, West Yorkshire	
SLCN Innovation of the Year Award	Stoke Speaks Out		
Pearson Outstanding Achievement Award	Stoke Speaks Out		

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 over 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 and healthcare calendar.
- The judges involved in the 2018 Shine a Light Awards were:
 - Bob Reitemeier, CEO of I CAN
 - Diz Minnitt, Speech and Language Lead, Association of YOT Managers (AYM)
 - Hilary Berry, Chair of Cheshire West and Chester Primary Heads' Association
 - Janet Cooper, Early Language and Communication Strategy Lead at Stoke-on-Trent City Council and past Shine a Light Award winner
 - John Parrott, Chair of Communication Consortium at NAPLIC
 - Jonathan Douglas, Director of National Literacy Trust
 - Julie Steele, Speech and Language HLTA and Local Champion
 - Jonathan Middleditch, Young Person of the Year 2015
 - Kamina Gadhok, MBE, CEO of Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT)
 - Lesley Munroe, Education & Speech and Language Therapy Manager at Pearson
 - Liz Tyler, Director of Learning Services, UK Schools at Pearson
 - Malcolm Reeve, Managing Director of Firmament Education Ltd
 - Octavia Holland, Director at The Communication Trust
 - Peter Sutcliffe, Editor of SEN Magazine
 - Shane Dangar, Communication Champion 2013/14
 - Theresa Redmond, Lead Professional Advisor, The Communication Trust
 - Vicky Roe, Deputy Chair of SMIRA
 - Wendy Lee, Director of Lingo Speech and Language Therapy and Consultancy
 - Zoe Peden, Co-founder of Insane Logic

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.

- 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 over 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 partnership 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