



Press Release – For Immediate Release (15.11.18)

BRITISH COMEDY TREASURE, SALLY PHILLIPS UNVEILED AS 2019 SHINE A LIGHT AWARDS HOST

Sally joins Britain's Got Talent winner, Lee Ridley, to lead line up for next year's premier speech and language awards ceremony, with nominations to enter open now at www.shinealightawards.co.uk

British comic actress and writer, Sally Phillips, has been revealed as the host of the **2019 Shine a Light Awards** taking place in London on Thursday 21st March 2019.

Run by Pearson and The Communication Trust, the seventh Shine a Light Awards will celebrate the hard work and determination of children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

The awards also seek to recognise the incredible contributions of teams, schools, settings and individuals across the UK who champion innovative work and excellence in supporting children and young people's communication development.

Sally, who starred in three Bridget Jones films and *The Decoy Bride*, is a mother of three boys. In 2016 fronted acclaimed documentary *A World Without Down's Syndrome?* about her eldest son, Ollie, who was born with Down syndrome.

Sally will be joined by Britain's Got Talent winner, Lee Ridley (also known as the Lost Voice Guy) who will be performing at the award ceremony. Lee has cerebral palsy and uses alternative and augmentative communication (AAC), via voice software on his IPAD, to communicate and express himself.

Sally Phillips said:

"Hosting the 2019 Shine a Light Awards is an absolute privilege for me. The nationwide shortage of speech and language therapists has meant I have seen for myself the huge difference expert intervention and support provides for children, like my son Ollie.

"Our ability to convey our thoughts and feelings in a multitude of forms is what makes us fundamentally human. For children and young people, the ability to communicate will have a profound impact on their future, so it is vital that we as a nation ensure all children have the opportunity to express themselves.

"I'm looking forward to meeting the professionals and teams who are dedicating their time to helping the next generation to learn and achieve. I'm sure I'll be inspired by the remarkable children and young people who show that with hard work and passion, anything is possible!"

Comedian Lee Ridley said:

“I may not be able to speak but I most certainly have a voice! I am thrilled to be part of the Shine a Light Awards because I am proof that with support, determination and a sense of humour, you can achieve what others may think is impossible.

“My disability doesn’t rule my life and I will never forget my English teacher who told me that I can achieve my dreams. It is so important to celebrate those all around the country who are supporting children and young people with any kind of speech, language and communication difficulty to realise their dreams too.”

The 2019 Shine a Light Awards features the following categories:

- The Katie Rough Memorial Award for innovative or excellent practice when working with children and young people affected by Selective Mutism
- Early Years Setting of the Year Award
- Primary School of the Year Award
- Secondary School or College of the Year Award
- SEN School or Group of the Year Award
- Child / Young Person of the Year Award
- Youth Justice of the Year Award
- SLCN Innovation of the Year Award
- Communication Champion of the Year Award
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication of the Year Award
- Outstanding Achievement Award
- Journalist of the Year Award

Robert Reilly-Craig, Head of Clinical Assessment at Pearson, said:

“Hosting these awards with our long-term partner, The Communication Trust, is a highlight of our year. We are thrilled the Shine a Light Awards has firmly cemented itself as a key event in the healthcare, speech, language and communication communities calendar.

“The awards highlight the incredible work of individuals and teams who work tirelessly to help change the lives of children and young people with SLCN. This matters as their important work too often goes unrecognised despite the fact that SLCN affects over one million children and young people in the UK. The team here at Pearson love reading through the hundreds of nominations each year and we can’t wait to read the nominations for 2019.”

Maxine Burns, Speech and Language Advisor at The Communication Trust, a coalition of over 50 organisations dedicated to supporting children and young people's speech, language and communication, said:

“The Shine a Light Awards gives children and young people, and those that support them, the opportunity to be recognised. The Awards provide a crucial platform to showcase best practice and innovative work in the field of speech, language and communication.

“This fundamentally matters as the *Bercow Ten Years On review*¹ on the state of provision for children’s SLCN in England showed that we still need to tackle poor understanding of SLCN and insufficient resourcing impacting children and young people’s educational outcomes. We are delighted to be partnering with Pearson once again and would like to encourage schools, settings and individuals across the country to celebrate all they have achieved and enter the awards.”

The awards website is open for applications and further details on how to apply can be found at www.shinealightawards.co.uk. Applications close at **11:59 pm on 20th December 2018**.

The Shine a Light Awards ceremony will take place on **Thursday 21st March 2019**.

-Ends-

For further Information

For more information, please contact Lisa Church or Laura Smith at Consilium Communications on lchurch@consiliumcommunications.co.uk / 07467 945661 or lsmith@consiliumcommunications.co.uk / 07467 945848

Notes to editors

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 communities calendar.
- The Awards are open to nominators in the UK, who are eligible to make a nomination in accordance with the criteria set out at www.shinealightawards.co.uk
- Nominations may be submitted for Children/Young People with SLCN, individuals, organisations and or settings who work with people with SLCN and SEND, within Justice settings and agencies, primary schools, secondary schools and FE colleges and residing in the UK who satisfy the criteria set out at www.shinealightawards.co.uk
- Read about previous winners and highly commended finalists at <https://www.pearsonclinical.co.uk/Educationnews/shine-a-light.aspx?tab=5>
- For more information, visit www.shinealightawards.co.uk or follow the hashtag #awardsSAL

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.
- Pearson Clinical offers innovative and comprehensive products and services to meet our varied customers’ needs. With assessments for psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and SENCOs, our customers are found in a variety of settings, including both school and clinical settings (private practice, hospital/medical and justice).
- Pearson Clinical has been noted for gold-standard assessment contributions in cognitive/ability, memory, neuropsychology, behaviour, personality/psychopathology, achievement and speech/language.
- Pearson’s 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 #awardsSAL

¹ <https://www.bercow10yearson.com/>

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