

**Minutes of an Education Theme Group
 held at the Blakenall Village Centre
 on Monday 27th February 2006 at 7.00pm**

In Attendance

Mick Taylor	-	Education Theme Chair / Patch 4 Representative
Debbie Marshall	-	Patch 12 Representative
Shaun Fitzpatrick	-	Patch 15 Representative
Graham Morris	-	Patch 11 Representative
Paul Wright	-	Patch 23 Representative
Peter Smith	-	Patch 24 Representative
Tom Perrett	-	Independent Chairman

Officers

Bob Marsh	-	Education Theme Manager
Joseph Cheminais	-	Administrator
Gail Beeley	-	Youth Worker

Partners

Sue Wedgwood	-	Education Walsall
John Price	-	Walsall Education Business Partnership
Pauline Griffiths	-	Prospects Education Service
Pauline Pegram	-	College of Continuing Education
Jan Owen	-	ContinYou

Guests

Vicki Pagan	-	ERS
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2. Apologies

Ian Robertson	-	Local Councillor
Kath Phillips	-	Local Councillor
Roy Jones	-	Patch 13 Representative
Jean Jevons	-	Community and Voluntary Sector Representative
Kalpana Patel	-	Prospects Education Service

Agenda Item		Action
3.	Notes from the previous meeting The notes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.	
4.	Matters Arising from the notes There were no matters arising from the notes.	
5.	Progress Report on Community Strand Projects <u>ContinYou</u> Jan Owen outlined that the project now has office space in the BiC and that interviews for the vacancies advertised were held on Friday 24 th February. The group was informed that there had already been referrals to ContinYou made from School-based groups. <u>College of Continuing Education</u> Pauline Pegram informed the group that the College of Continuing Education is looking to work with teenage clients as well as establishing 'out of hours' numeracy and literacy classes. PP outlined that there was an illiteracy stigma which needed to be addressed.	

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	<p>It was suggested that if people could be offered other courses to get them through the door and then literacy and numeracy problems could be addressed. PP stated that courses that parents and children may undertake together i.e. cooking, could be effective in achieving this.</p> <p>TP expressed the opinion that adult literacy courses need to be advertised more widely to have significant impact on the community.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Reports Learning Champions, 'You Can Do It!', Nursery Plus and Learning Interventions</p> <p><u>'You Can Do It!'</u> Pauline Griffiths updated the group on the current progress of 'You Can Do It!' project.</p> <p>The group was informed that 'Learning Walks' have been popular and that schools were looking to continue these with parents. 2 Headteachers, 20 Staff, 20 Pupils and 2 School Councils as well as Parents have been involved in the project. A further 6 people have been trained using the Training Manual.</p> <p>The group was also given an update on the production 'Urban Voice', which, it is hoped, will help impact confidence issues that parents may have in relation to education or employment.</p> <p>It was outlined that the You Can Do It! scheme has been effectively established throughout Millfields Nursery, which did well in its Ofsted inspection.</p> <p><u>Learning Champions</u> Lin Parkes updated the group on the current progress of the 'Learning Champions'. Will be brought to the board at a later date</p> <p><u>Nursery Plus/ Learning Interventions</u> Report tabled.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Discussion Paper on Funding Priorities in School Strand</p> <p>BM updated the group on the current Education Theme funding priorities.</p> <p>It was outlined that there are currently a number of bids against NDC funding. These included 'You Can Do It!' and 'Celebrating Success'. The group was also informed that the Learning Interventions Project had provided funding for two learning mentors from the Looked After Children Service to aid two children from the New Deal Area.</p> <p>BM stated that the group must decide how it wishes to proceed with the funding. Two options were tabled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Follow a formula approach based on £X per pupil; or ii) Target specific children/ problems with the group establishing various schemes that can be taken up by the schools if they so wish. <p>PS outlined concerns that if money is given directly to schools, it may not be applied directly to New Deal pupils. TP stated that it is imperative to ensure that any money given to the schools by New Deal is applied correctly through monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>BM pointed out that if the Theme Group were to commission projects through the top-sliced approach, these may not be suitable for all of the schools, and that some pupils will therefore miss out.</p> <p>JP suggested a 'Guided School Approach' in which schools are given guidance in relation to how New Deal funding is applied.</p> <p>The group agreed that the formula approach should be carried forward. It was suggested that the group could create a 'menu' of projects to guide the schools, rather</p>	

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	then commissioning specific projects.	
8.	<p>Project Proposal – Access to ICT in Schools</p> <p>BM gave an overview of the project to the group.</p> <p>‘RM1’ laptops are to be purchased which are more robust than normal laptops. BM also informed the group that the laptops will be engraved with the New Deal logo which would help to increase security and promote New Deal in the Schools.</p> <p>The group was informed that the number of laptop computers allocated to the secondary schools for the loan scheme will be proportional to the numbers of New Deal pupils they have on roll.</p> <p>TP stated that by providing computers for New Deal pupils could indirectly affect non-New Deal pupils by freeing-up ICT resources.</p> <p>After lengthy discussion as to various aspects of the project the group unanimously agreed that the project should be taken to the Approvals Sub-Committee meeting to be held on the 14th March 2006.</p>	
9.	<p>Project Proposal – Virtual High School</p> <p>BM gave an overview of the project to the group.</p> <p>TP stated that outcomes and outputs need to be set-out before the projects are implemented.</p> <p>VP outlined that it is important that children don’t miss out because schools are unwilling to cooperate with New Deal.</p> <p>There were also concerns raised in terms of New Deal duplicating funding which the government should provide by statute.</p> <p>Pauline Griffiths was asked to declare an interest on behalf of Prospects since a case was being made for further extending ‘You Can Do It!’. It was pointed out that schools could ‘purchase’ ‘You Can Do It!’ directly should they wish and that ‘You Can Do It!’ and ‘Celebrating Science’ would be on the menu of opportunities.</p> <p>The group agreed that the project should be taken to the Approvals Sub-Committee meeting to be held on the 14th March 2006.</p>	
10.	<p>Project Proposal – Blakenall Improvement Fund</p> <p>BM gave an overview of the project to the group.</p> <p>The group agreed that the project should be taken to the Approvals Sub-Committee meeting to be held on the 14th March 2006.</p>	
11.	<p>Any Other business</p> <p>It was requested that papers sent out for future meetings are numbered so that documents relating to each agenda item may be identified.</p>	
12	<p>Date and time of the next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Education Theme Group will be held on Monday 8th May 2006 commencing at 7.00pm at the Blakenall Village Centre.</p>	