

Educational Psychology Service Newsletter

February 2018

Welcome and Happy New Year!

Welcome to the February 2018 edition of the Educational Psychology Service Newsletter — our first edition of 2018!

In this edition, we look at Toe by Toe — a reading programme for children with difficulties reading (pg1) and the recent Autism Champions INSET day which took place in the Dunoon and Cowal area (pg2).

This issue will also focus on Stuart Craig, who has worked with the Educational Psychology Service for the last eight years. See this edition's "Spotlight" for a short profile (pg1).

We also have some staff update news (pg2), with Dr Anne Greig taking on a teaching role at the University of Strathclyde and Amy Begen starting with the service as a Trainee Educational Psychologist.

Amy Begen, Trainee Educational Psychologist

Spotlight on Stuart Craig

Based: In Cowal, also working on the islands of Bute and Mull

Qualifications: BSc(Hons) Psychology; MSc Educational Psychology

Areas of particular interest: Solution Focused Approaches, Literacy & Nurture

Prior to taking up study in psychology in his late 30's Stuart completed a Degree in Youth and Community Education. Following this he worked in a number of roles with children and young people with additional support needs; including a Residential Care Officer in a secure unit for adolescents (which he describes as never having a dull moment); a group worker with Inverclyde Council Social Work Department and a Project Manager with Inverclyde Community schools. During this time he ran group work programmes for children and young people from age eight to sixteen and led a youth club for children on the autism spectrum. It was while working in these roles, and in particular Community Schools, that he came into contact with and worked alongside Educational Psychologists, sparking his interest in the subject and the role.

Stuart graduated with an MSc in Educational Psychology in 2009 with a distinction in the practice element of the course and took up his post with Argyll & Bute Council in August of that year. He started working in schools in Cowal & Bute and has had central roles in the Authority Literacy Forum and in the Psychological Service's Validated Self Evaluation process. He is currently involved in fewer of the schools in Cowal than previously, now being more involved "out west" on the picturesque island of Mull.



Stuart Craig

Toe by Toe – Improving the literacy skills of learners

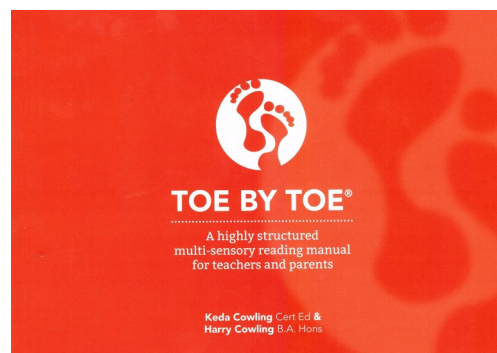
Toe by Toe is a structured reading programme for those children who have difficulties in reading. For the last number of years, following the administration of the Suffolk Reading Test with all Primary 4 children and along with sound teacher judgement and other assessment information, schools identified those children who would benefit from working through this programme. This is a well-researched approach that has been found to have a significant impact on the reading skills of learners.

During the EPS process of Validated Self Evaluation, the outcome of which was published in 2016, children themselves reported positively on their use of Toe by Toe. One child confirmed *'it just helps me understand words better'*. Toe by Toe materials continue to be made available to schools by the Education Service.

In preparation for schools requesting Toe by Toe books at the end of this academic session, the Educational Psychology Service has developed a brief guide to

administering Toe by Toe to ensure maximum impact for learners. This will be circulated to all primary schools at the start of next term.

If any school feels they would benefit from further training around Toe by Toe please contact the service.



Cowal Autism Champions – INSET Day for Support & Early Years Staff

The Cowal Autism Champions group recently facilitated a training day for support and early years staff from the Cowal cluster. Interest in the day far exceeded expectations, and with over 70 staff attending we eventually had to limit numbers!

The day was opened by Alison Munro, Dunoon Primary's 'champion' and closed by Julie McPhee and Lisa Bulloch, champions from Clyde Cottage (voluntary and local authority) nursery. Following a keynote by Sabrina, which introduced staff to the online professional resource (see www.getset4autism.org), a range of workshops were provided. Attendees then chose 4 workshops from:

- Lego Clubs (Sabrina)
- Autism Toolbox (Alison Currie & Ruth Sweeney, APTs)
- Comic Strip Conversations (Elaine Murray & Fiona Bradley, SLT)
- Autism & anxiety (Peter Cartwright, Primary Mental Health)
- Autism Diagnosis (Dr Caroline Clark, Community Paediatrician)
- Living with Autism (early years parent)

There was a real buzz of enthusiasm throughout the day, which was evaluated very positively. Workshops were all well received, and staff left with a combination of information about new strategies for supporting our children, and increased understanding about topics. The workshop "Living with autism" which was very informal and interactive was particularly well received and probably the most valued by those attending. The admiration and empathy staff had for the parent could be felt within the room. There is no doubt that such an open, honest, and positive discussion will have a positive impact on the young person themselves.

A number of staff commented that teachers would benefit from attending a day like this.... Cowal teachers, watch this space!



Dr Sabrina Collins, Educational Psychologist, Cowal

Service Updates

Dr Anne Greig has recently joined the MSc Educational Psychology programme at the University of Strathclyde as a Senior Teaching fellow on a Monday & Tuesday.

This adds to Dr Greig's extensive experience including, but not limited to, being on the editorial board of the Education & Child Psychology journal since 2005, as well as being an external examiner at UCL/Anna Freud for the CBT Certificate, Diploma and Master Programmes.

Dr Greig has worked in Argyll & Bute Educational Psychological Service since 2001 and will continue her work here for the remainder of the working week.

Amy Begen joined the service in September 2017 as Trainee Educational Psychologist. Amy is a student on the MSc Educational Psychology course at the University of Strathclyde and will be with the service on placement on a Thursday and Friday for the duration of the two year course.

In addition to this, Amy is working as a research assistant with the Educational Psychological Service on a one day a week basis, supporting research and developments across the authority. We are very pleased to have her as a member of the team in both roles.

The service is currently looking at developing a **social media presence** so watch this space!

Thank you for reading our newsletter. Any questions or feedback can be directed to: Roslyn Redpath, Principal Educational Psychologist, Argyll House, Dunoon, PA23 8AJ
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