

National Executive Committee Work as Practitioners: April 2012 Update

The following reports are taken from the minutes of the National Executive Committee meeting held on the 23rd March 2012.

Luke Abbot – Projects in Sussex are going well. Five primary schools are working in a triad where they all work with Mantle of the Expert (MoE) in each other's schools and at the end they share the work. An head teacher from Sussex is going to speak at the conference in Redbridge.

The Kent network of primary teachers using MoE is going really well and there is an open invitation to attend a day in Kent on 24th May 2012.

The work in Denmark is very interesting because they are streets ahead of us in terms of their education. However, they understand Drama as performance but not as tool to learning. Six schools from Redbridge have been to Denmark. The Redbridge authority on the whole is very high-flying (a lot of Pakistani students who are encouraged and pushed by their parents) and one of the criticisms is that they are not pushing the kids enough so they are looking to Europe to see if there is anything they can learn there.

He is going over to Palestine again next week. They run a two-week programme at the Qattan Foundation. The Palestinians are working very hard at translating into Arabic anything NATD produces.

Paul Bateson – Hywel Roberts asked Paul to run a session on Philosophy for Children (P4C) to NQTs which he had never done before and he was really pleased with being in the position where people asked him information about how to deal with children. He has also been working on Gifted and Talented work at another school. Paul has just recently had Ofsted in and was rated as a Good which he is pleased with as the school is classed as 'Notice to Improve'. He was using a mini-mantle within his lesson and he said what was interesting was the first day that Ofsted were in they had a 'bad day' and the school approached the creative department for lessons and out of the creative department the lessons were all graded Good or Outstanding.

Pavla Beier – Has been to Germany to begin the collaborative project she mentioned at the last meeting. The company are very well known in Germany. They have done their first three days of devising and sharing ideas. The Blahs are launching a new website in the next couple of months. It will be more 'blog-like' where people can share ideas and comment. The reason they are taking this direction is because they are very process-driven and they want to encourage more dialogue with practitioners.

Her MA was on Child Studies and Child Development and Maggie notes that this could be something that is explored at conference as so many teachers are missing that understanding of how children develop.

Maggie mentions a book called *Why are they so Weird?* – a very readable book about child development.

Gemma Grubb – Is in contact with Alister from Prodigal Theatre and Urban Playground about hosting some people from DAH Teatar (Serbia) and Teatret OM (Denmark) at her flat while they are in Brighton for the Brighton Festival. Hopefully some exciting opportunities for workshops of Serbian theatre styles and Parkour (Urban Playground) will come from the visit.

Liam Harris – Still directing Sweeney Todd. The Brook House project at the Gatwick Detention Centre will commence on April 2nd. They are working with Sean Tan's *The Arrival*.

He met people running an event at the Brighton Festival and will speak at their 'Roundtable' event on the subject of 'Art as a vehicle for the promotion of Human Rights'.

He has just finished a placement in a school in Britannia Village in London. They had an Arts Mark visit which he said was interesting as he thought it would be about the Arts as a humanising process but it is more about the product rather than the process.

He is working with Tender as part of his work at Uni. It's a charity that deals with domestic abuse and sexual violence. The project will be toured around primary schools.

Maggie Hulson – Antuneil (ex-student of Maggie's school and current teacher at Gladesmore) has written a play that Maggie has written the teacher's pack for. The play is called *Life After Death*, which is about how two families survive after a stabbing. He is working with the Y9s at Gladesmore on this and working through video to do some of the work. Ruth wonders whether this is something that could be on our website or that our website links to. Maggie to check with Antuneil about this.

Ryan Nolan – his play was really enjoyable and took over his life for a bit but it was sad because there is not much of a call for theatre in Wales. He is working in two schools at the moment. One is a school for children with special needs and the other is one for kids prone to severe aggressive outbursts. With his theatre company he is working on two projects one based on Home and one based on the novel *Sophie's World*.

Matthew Readman – The Odyssey is ongoing and he was at the school this morning rehearsing and he's interested to see that the kids are very reluctant to use their home languages in the performance. The other theatre projects that he mentioned at the last meeting are still ongoing. Next week he is working in school with Y7s creating TIE for Primary Schools. Liam mentions Tamasha Theatre Company who work with language in theatre.

Ruth Saxton – Spoke about her school. She is having lots of positive experiences with the class but as the school is in special measures the atmosphere is very tense amongst staff and she is finding it difficult to maintain a positive stance.