



Godalming Confederation of Schools



**2nd Newsletter for all staff working in schools and
other pupil settings**

**Newsletter
March/April 2008**

Message from the Confederation Director

Dear colleagues, Welcome to our 2nd newsletter!

This term has been really busy for everyone but I just want to take a moment to remind you about some of the things that we have been doing and what we are planning for next term! Please contact me or email me with your comments, particularly if you have any thoughts about where else we should be focusing our attention.

Thank you very much to everyone who was involved in sending out and counting up responses to the extended services questionnaire for parents and carers! Overall we had a good response certainly not bad for a first shot, but there is clearly more face to face consultation to be done. We are currently analysing the results as they are part of the evidence we need to help prioritise our work.

*The confederation website www.godalmingconfederation.org.uk will be going live on 24th April when schools return after the holidays. It won't be complete but it will contain a lot of useful information for parents and carers and it will be able to signpost many local facilities and amenities. The staff page won't be finished and this is an area where we particularly need your input. Please contact me (details below), **Heather Butterworth at Witley Infant School** or **Sarah Meanwell at Loseley Fields Primary School** with your ideas. I am particularly pleased to welcome Heather as our "Webmaster" and Sarah our admin officer this term, but please bear with us if you can't contact us immediately as we all work part time!*

This term, we say goodbye and good luck to Sue Sayers, Headteacher at the Chandler School and a founder member of our Steering Group. Sue is off to lead and amalgamate two schools in Woking and will be greatly missed. However, we warmly welcome her interim successor, Tim Burgess and we wish him well. Sue's place on the Steering Group will be taken by Hilary Loder at Moss Lane and on the Transition Group by Carolyn Holmes at Busbridge Junior.

Next term we will be responding to the parental questionnaire and getting to grips with transition across the Confederation. There will be a focus on CPD and leadership at all levels and please mark 24 October in your diaries as a Confederation INSET day, outline details below.

Best Wishes to everyone for a good post-Easter break

Sue Dasey

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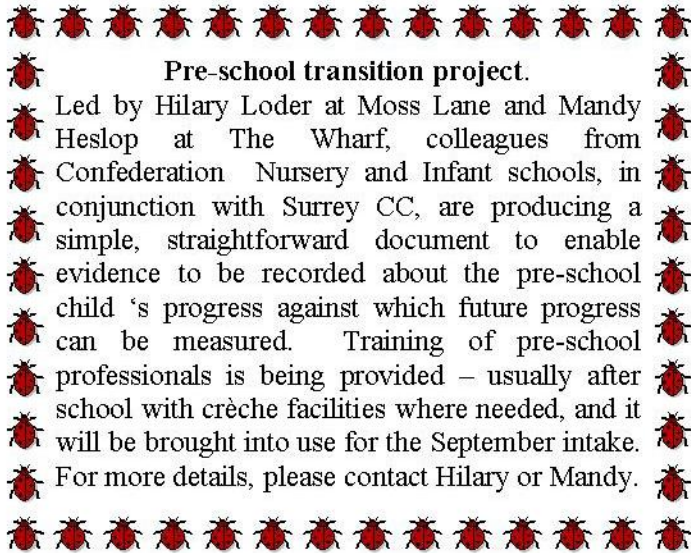
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- Our extended services launch took place very successfully
- on 14 January at Loseley Fields Primary School and
- Children's centre. Baroness Estelle Morris was our keynote
- speaker. She particularly stressed for example the key effect
- that parents have on their children's learning and well-being
- and the effect of early intervention before the age of 22
- months on children's progress through their school lives.
- Some 100 people, a mix of school, community, local
- services and voluntary sector representatives attended.
- People shared information and pledged further help to the
- Confederation
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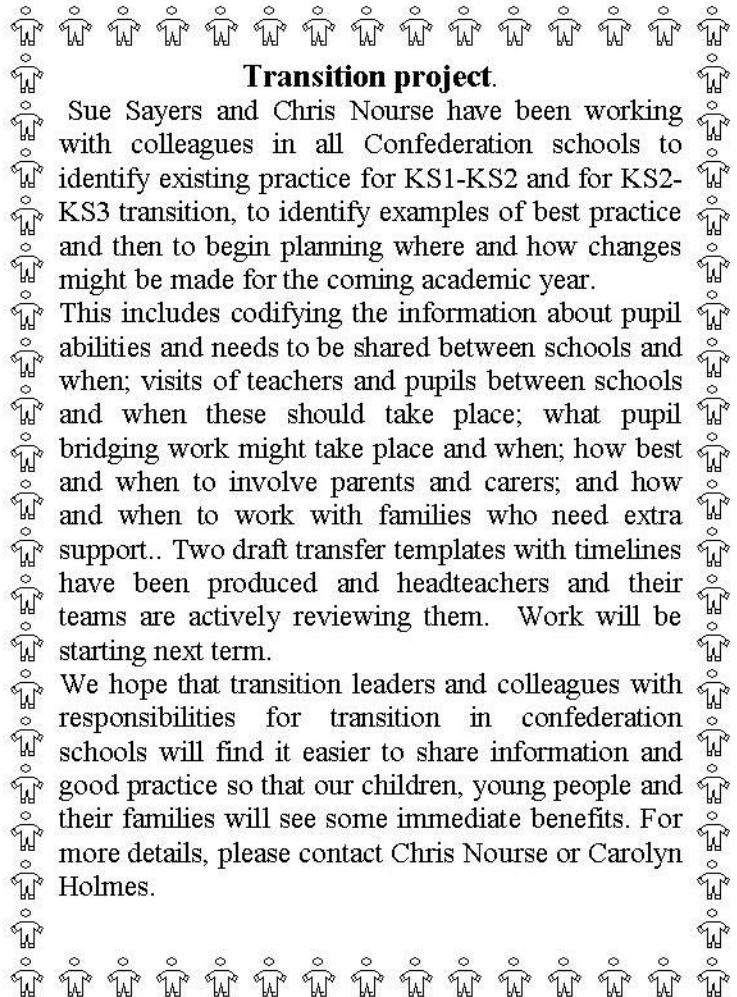
Loseley Fields Children's centre
opened officially in April and now offers
a range of facilities, ranging from
childcare, access to health visitors, youth
clubs, and advisory services to a range of
facilities for use or hire by the
community.
Look out for information about music
sessions for 13- 17 year olds in May.

Brief Update on our projects so far.

Cross phase writing project. Here the Literacy coordinators and English teachers from 14 of our 16 schools meet regularly to plan, level and assess pieces of work across differing genres. Last term the subject matter was a creepy castle and pupils of all ages wrote a narrative piece, samples of which were levelled and assessed by the coordinators at a joint moderating meeting and discussion. This term the subject matter is a letter to a book character. The main aims are to improve the quality of the assessment of writing by providing networking and CPD opportunities for literacy leaders to share good practice. At the same time the aim is to promote a love of writing by creating individual pupil writing portfolios, from Nursery to year 7. Schools will shortly be receiving piles of smart blue plastic envelopes for pupils' work. We have been able to buy these much more cheaply than normal because of our confederation bulk order. Ann Tann from St James Elstead and Teresa Bullen from St Edmunds, Godalming lead this group. The group next meets on 22 April at Broadwater. For more details please contact your literacy coordinator



 **Pre-school transition project.**
Led by Hilary Loder at Moss Lane and Mandy Heslop at The Wharf, colleagues from Confederation Nursery and Infant schools, in conjunction with Surrey CC, are producing a simple, straightforward document to enable evidence to be recorded about the pre-school child's progress against which future progress can be measured. Training of pre-school professionals is being provided – usually after school with crèche facilities where needed, and it will be brought into use for the September intake. For more details, please contact Hilary or Mandy.

 **Transition project.**
Sue Sayers and Chris Nourse have been working with colleagues in all Confederation schools to identify existing practice for KS1-KS2 and for KS2-KS3 transition, to identify examples of best practice and then to begin planning where and how changes might be made for the coming academic year. This includes codifying the information about pupil abilities and needs to be shared between schools and when; visits of teachers and pupils between schools and when these should take place; what pupil bridging work might take place and when; how best and when to involve parents and carers; and how and when to work with families who need extra support.. Two draft transfer templates with timelines have been produced and headteachers and their teams are actively reviewing them. Work will be starting next term. We hope that transition leaders and colleagues with responsibilities for transition in confederation schools will find it easier to share information and good practice so that our children, young people and their families will see some immediate benefits. For more details, please contact Chris Nourse or Carolyn Holmes.

Swift and Easy Referral.

Developing more swift and easy referral to access to all services, including Child and Mental Health services(CAMHS) by identifying and tackling children's and families problems as soon as possible. We are talking to the CAMHS team and we are looking to appoint more Home-School Link Workers across the confederation for example. For more details, please contact David Andrew and Hilary Loder, the group leaders.



 **Confederation website.**
We are working hard to get our website up and running after the break. This will be one of our main communications tools, both for signposting information and we hope to provide a password-protected area where you can share and discuss issues of interest to you. You will be able to access all confederation school and children's centre sites, together with many other national and local sites. Heather Butterworth at Witley, working with Sue Dasey, is our "Webmaster". Please contact Heather, Sarah Meanwell or Sue Dasey.



Consultation. Responses to our first questionnaire to parents and carers, asking them what they wanted from the confederation and based very much on the Government's "Core Offer" (see first Newsletter) were received at the beginning of March. The percentage return varied between schools – almost 50% in two infant schools, to 5% in one of our secondary schools. These are now being analysed but it is clear that more clubs and activities in sports, ICT, Cookery, music drama and dance were a favourite



request. We will be using the results of these to help us start planning future work. We are well aware, however, that there is some way to go before we can truthfully say that we know what all our community wants.

One of our next steps is to consult pupils more directly and we will shortly be asking school councils for their views.

We are planning to hold a **Confederation INSET Day on 24 October**, venue to be decided, and we will be asking you for comments next term too.

Leadership, CPD and other training and development. Surrey CC is directing its Leadership and CPD strategy through confederations to enable schools and their staff to share responsibility for sustaining and developing leadership by working together to manage leadership sustainability. Headteachers and Confederation Managers were invited to a series of strategy meetings at the end of March and each confederation is nominating a "Catalyst" Headteacher to work with the confederation manager to take action forward.

In the meantime, we are benefiting from our own shared CPD opportunities on an ad hoc basis. Some of you will already have attended joint child protection, first aid or fire training opportunities. Shirley Ferguson will be running ELKLAN training for some TAs in the Autumn and we expect to be offering more opportunities next term. Please let your Headteacher and/or Sue Dasey know if you have any suggestions for others. The point is that we can arrange bespoke courses for groups of staff across schools or for single schools, sometimes at reduced costs and sometimes through confederation or other sources of funding.



What other areas should we be thinking about? Do please do let us know what you think



Some examples could be:

- Are you a SENCO or Subject Leader wanting to speak/meet professionally with other confederation SENCOs or Subject leaders?
- School Bursars, Business Managers or Admin Officers wanting to discuss benefits of working with more than one school.
- How could new colleagues, including teachers & TAs benefit from induction training at more than one school?
- Are there any skills you could share? Or any that you are looking for?