

News from ROWA! - May 09

It's been a while since I sent out the last ROWA! ebulletin as I have been busy running our School Based Support service. We have now appointed a fantastic Project Manager, Carla Eyre, who has taken over this role with gusto.

We have seen many changes over the last couple of years in ROWA! - some good, some bad. We've lost some great staff and some funding streams. We've had to put our work with Travellers on hold and we've also lost our buses. A bit careless of us, to lose two huge bright blue double deckers! However, we have gained some wonderful new people and have been commissioned to run some exciting new projects. We have one more big change to go through very soon - moving offices. We're not sure exactly when or even exactly where to - but we know it's happening soon and we're all looking forward to it immensely - NOT!

Because it's been a while, I'll just let you know a little bit about what we're up to now - if you want to know more, you can always contact me or click on the underlined words to hyperlink to our website, or send an email to the Project Managers.

[Buddy Plus+](#) - this project recruits and trains volunteer mentors to work with young people to help them improve their basic literacy, numeracy and life skills, raise their self-esteem through a positive relationship with a mentor and so build up their confidence. We are always looking for mentors willing to help vulnerable children and young people, so if you are interested in volunteering, please contact tony@rowa.org.uk.

[Derbyshire Intergenerational Project](#) - ROWA! is now delivering the Intergenerational Project on behalf of Derbyshire County Council's Adult Social Services and Advisory and Inspection Service. We are currently working with groups around the County to develop new projects that contribute towards the improvement of social cohesion. Contact: gill@rowa.org.uk

[Family Learning](#) - in partnership with Derbyshire Adult Community Education Service, the ROWA! Family Learning team provides a wide range of programmes - including Early Start, Keeping up with the Kids courses, and Every Object Tells a Story - in schools, Children's Centres and other venues in Derbyshire. Contact: larissa@rowa.org.uk

[Workplace Skills for Life](#) - Along with Derbyshire Adult Community Education Service, ROWA! is managing a programme of workforce development - the GO Award - for DCC staff. ROWA! works at awareness raising with managers to gain their support in encouraging staff, without GCSEs in English or Maths, to brush up their skills and gain nationally recognised qualifications. Contact: patm@rowa.org.uk

School Based Support - Many of our courses have been reviewed and improved recently, and we are always keen to work with local schools to develop new projects. Most of our programmes - Better Words, Better Reading Partners, Talking Partners and Push On Writing!:

- are aimed at children who are struggling with their literacy skills - reading, speaking and listening, or writing;
- are designed for Teaching Assistants and Classroom Volunteers to deliver;
- complement Every Child a Reader/Writer

We are taking bookings for the following courses:

- Push On Writing at Bramley Vale Primary School, Derbyshire on 13th October 2009 (1 day) - *£100 per person.
- Better Reading Partners at Ripley Junior School (1½ days), date to be arranged - *£125 per person.
- Better Words at Heritage Park Community School, Norfolk Park, Sheffield (9 am to 12 noon), date to be arranged - *£110 per person.

(* Derbyshire, Derby and Nottinghamshire schools may qualify for reductions)

If you can host one of our School Based Support courses, you may be eligible to get FREE places for your delegates.

If you are running ROWA! programmes of Better Reading Partners, Talking Partners, Better Words or Push On Writing! with children in your school, please remember to forward to me the "End of Programme" reports, so we can maintain an up to date evaluation and keep an eye on how the programmes are doing. If you want me to send you an electronic copy of any of these, which you can email back to me, please contact gwen@rowa.org.uk to request one.

Also, if you would like me to put any of your children's writing on our website, particularly but not exclusively POW! work, you can email that to me, or send as a hard copy to the address below.

For all other School Based Support enquiries contact carla@rowa.org.uk

Our very popular writing INSET day for primary schools, All Write Now!, is still available, and we have also been working with a secondary school to develop a cross-curricula writing programme for KS3, called Write In Focus. Contact: carla@rowa.org.uk

ROWA!'s two Buddying schemes in [reading](#) and [writing](#) have both been reviewed and updated. They have also been used as the basis for two new projects: All Change! And Stick At It.

[All Change!](#): Inkersall Primary and Springwell Secondary schools have been partners in a piece of action research using Buddy Writing to help support Year 6 pupils through transition to Year 7. Contact: annette@rowa.org.uk

[Stick At It](#): a family based reading intervention using the best bits of Buddy Reading and Better Reading Partners, and incorporating motivational resources, has been developed and is being piloted with foster families in Derbyshire and Derby City. The pilot project will finish in May and we are holding a celebration for the families involved in June. We are now looking for funding to roll out this programme to support more vulnerable families in the area. Contact: annette@rowa.org.uk

[Quality in Libraries Award](#) - This award has undergone a comprehensive re-write to include the development of Skills for Life Awareness Training for library staff, Skills for Life Stock training and Reader Development training. It has also been adapted for a range of library settings, including in prisons, colleges, and secondary schools. We are now working with a local primary school to enable us to extend the offer to this sector. Contact: lynn@rowa.org.uk

NEW PROJECTS...

We are extremely pleased to announce the start of two significant projects:

PEEP in Children's Centres - ROWA! will be using the PEEP (Peers Early Education Programme) to enhance the literacy support for families using Children's Centres. Over the next two years PEEP will become available in every Children's Centre in Derbyshire, or as outreach support, so helping to improve the literacy readiness of pre-school children and developing literacy skills within their families.

Family Reading Matters - ROWA! has been asked to take part in the pilot of Family Reading Matters, a national initiative, managed by the National Literacy Trust and funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Family Reading Matters is piloting the difference that a dedicated strategic co-ordinator can make to supporting literacy in the home to benefit both children and their parents, with a particular focus on Early Years. We are still going through the recruitment process for our Co-ordinator and we are looking forward to seeing how this pilot project will unfold over the next year or so, both in Derbyshire and in the other three pilot areas, Wiltshire, Sheffield and Knowsley.