



NEWSLETTER

BEST Newsletter January 2009

theBESTteams

PE Departments are talking about putting together a **BEST** Sports Team or mini Olympics across our schools or maybe to compete with other local trusts and schools. Working together across the learning community this would help the transition between Lower, Middle and Upper by integrating young sportsmen/women across the key stages.

Development of SWCC Nursery

Discussions have been taking place to develop a new site for the Nursery. Plans have been drawn up and it is possible that the old caretakers' houses on SWCC site will be developed. This project will be part of a larger capital development which includes the refurbishment / re-development of the old Shefford Lower School next to Robert Bloomfield and the new Shefford Lower School. An application for funding will be made shortly. The plans under discussion include the provision of Engineering workshops, offices, key worker accommodation and incubator units for (new) local businesses.

BESTcatering

The team at **BEST** will be meeting at the Crouchmore Farm Academy of Jean Christophe Novelli, celebrity chef, to discuss with his team the possibility of designing menus, training staff, and giving advice about growing a range of herbs and vegetables at **BEST** schools. Steve Kitchen – the JCN Academy Chef will be meeting with **BEST** in the first week of February and it is hoped that Robert Bloomfield and Shefford Lower School will be the first of many schools to benefit from this initiative.

childrenandfamilieservices

A new concept of delivering the pastoral system, being more integrated and covering all schools is being developed to provide seamless support across our learning community. The cross phase leadership partnership has met twice now and has a strategic plan in place. The group will meet again in February to look at ways of delivering this key strategy. If you would like to join this LP please get in touch with Cathy Bailey on CBailey@swcc.beds.sch.uk

Discussions are also taking place with LandshareC4 about using educationally redundant land in our schools to grow our own produce and to allow access and use by the local community – in the form of allotments. Inspired and run by Rivercottage's Hugh Fearnly Whittingstall, the idea would be for schools to provide the land and for local residents to use it in the same way as allotments are used now – either for a fee, by sharing produce or by maintaining the school garden and vegetable plot. If enough schools were interested in starting gardens, growing herbs and vegetables (for use in school kitchens) **BEST** would be very interested in finding partners to help schools develop the idea.

theco-operativetrustmodel

Talks continue with the Co-operative Group and the Co-operative College to look at the benefits of **BEST** becoming a co-operative trust. Discussions have been taking place with Cobbetts (the Co-op's legal team) and the steering group to find an appropriate trust structure. More detail will be given and discussions held at the next Pyramid Heads' meeting on the 5th February at SWCC. Details of those discussions and a copy of the presentations will be posted on the website in due course. The structure of **BEST** will be made public when the **BEST** Statutory Proposals are published in mid February and there will be a four week 'Representations' period for consultation. Governing Bodies will then meet to consider any representations and make the decision whether to become Founding Members of **BEST**. It is anticipated that the trust will be acquired by 1st April 2009.

raisingachievements

Looking to improve standards across Lower, Middle and Upper Schools. Al Mistrano and Sally Bakki met with the Etonbury cluster of school Heads and explained the developing role of Advanced Skills Teachers working across the phases and in particular in lower schools. He offered 'Thinking Skills / Maps' training for lower school staff and hoped that much more collaborative work on independent learning and different styles of teaching which are so successful at lower schools – Roecroft joined the long list of lower schools to be graded 'Excellent' by Ofsted and scored 1's in all categories.

engineering

Robert Bloomfield Middle School

have launched their engineering website

www.rbms.org.uk

And have a range of initiatives underway.