



R.A. Check-in 9 SEPTEMBER 2016



Welcome back everybody. We do hope you all had a great break and are fully geared up for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead this academic year. We hope you are excited about all the things happening this month. We have lots of plans and support in place for this year. Do get in touch with us if you would like any particular support, training or resources.

Welcome as well to our new Head-teachers. We look forward to working 'with' you:

- Sarah Gower Jones at Hollywood Park
- Catherine Eardsley at Offerton Hall Nursery
- Katie Lowe at Reddish Vale Nursery
- Michelle Smart at Adswold Primary
- Jakki Rogers at Bredbury Green
- Lee Hardy at Didsbury Road
- Emma Hill at Ladybridge
- Gill Holmes at Lum Head
- Debbie Grindrod at St George's
- Paul Towey at St Mary's Catholic Primary Stockport
- Katherine Muncaster at Tithe Barn
- Lynne Fox at Bramall High

The Theme this month is Learning Circles



Learning Circles are really taking off across Stockport Family.....

What is a learning circle?

A learning circle is a group of individuals with a common interest who meet to learn from each other, and others, about a topic. Learning circles are flexible and built upon the idea that every member has something to contribute and that every member has something to learn.

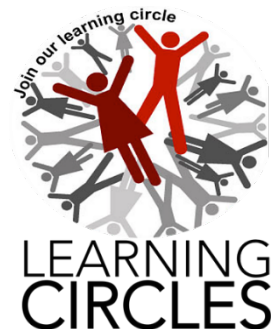
What are the characteristics of learning circles?

- Sit in a circle with no obstructions blocking the view of other participants
- Are led by a facilitator who helps to manage the deliberation process
- Only after everyone has had a chance to speak is the floor opened up for discussion
- Look at an issue from different points of view
- Act as a vehicle to discover, share and express knowledge
- Start where people are and encourage growth
- Involve a spiralling process of reflection and action
- Average length of time for a learning circle may be 1-2 hours without interruption, but length will depend on the topic or the needs of the group

What is the process for learning circles?

There are 3 stages of a learning circle

- ✓ Check in



This is the start of the session/meeting. It is usually in the form of a go-round. It is a good way to find out how everyone is feeling. It also establishes good listening and readiness for the session/meeting. It is a non-threatening start to the session.

✓ Main focus

This can be to introduce a new topic, skill or learning, problem solving, action planning, decision making, collaboration, relationship building, trust and debriefing.

✓ Check outs

This happens at the end of a learning circle and it is a time for reflection and also celebration. It is good to use positive sentences. It is an opportunity for assessing learning misconceptions and identifies next steps

Who should lead a learning circle?

Anyone can facilitate a learning circle. The main role of the facilitator is to assist and support the discussion and other processes of the circle. The facilitator is not expected to be an expert on the topic or issue any more than anyone else in the circle. Their most important tasks are to be organized and to ensure that the logistics support the success of the circle, including room set up. The facilitator follows the procedures of the circle and keeps the discussion focussed on the issue, making sure that no one person dominates.

Key Contacts and further information Children's Services Workforce Development Team Tel: 0161 474 5657
Stockport Safeguarding Children Board Tel: 0161 474 5657

September's think piece

The Art of Difficult Conversations –

- Always model respect even if you aren't receiving it
- Aim to keep it position neutral
- Praise in public, criticise in private
- At the right time and the right place
- Don't mirror their behaviours



September's 'circles'

quote on



Which is why I work with the lovely Cath & Sarah!



RA:-What's going on in September!

- **July 3 Day RA training** 3 day training courses in Autumn 16 are virtually fully booked- there may be some slight adjustments but we will be looking to book in some new Spring & summer dates-look out for these for your future bookings.

Showcasing the work going on at Hazel Grove Primary School - Developing restorative approaches @ Hazel Grove Primary. Thanks to Anna and her team.

The story so far...

Staff training in restorative approaches during 2015-2016 with three staff twilights, training for support teams and 3 key staff members completing the 3 day RA course

First step to embedded RA was to invest in weekly circle time sessions in all classes

Due to development of circles in school, staff made the decision to use these as a support for transition for all children in school.

During June & July children all moved up to their new classrooms for a weekly circle session with the member of staff who would be teaching them next year. These sessions were used for children and staff to share information about each other and to start to build relationships ready for the new academic year.

So what? Well take a look at this feedback from...

Staff: 'The start to the September term has been much calmer and smoother than previously experienced.'
'One of the more anxious pupils in my class has returned quite confidently and settled much quicker than expected. His parents have been very positive about his start to this year.'

Pupils: Year 6

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Reception children

'I was nervous. After circles I felt better'

'I got to see my new classroom!'

'I felt a bit nervous but after circles I felt not nervous at all.'

Year 3

'I felt happy coming into Year 3 because of the Circles.'

'I felt like I got to know the class and teacher better in Circles. I enjoyed the energiser games we played.'

'It was nice to know I had my friends around me, which made me feel better about Year 3.'

Parents: 'My child has been chatting about his new teacher all summer holidays. What they like, what they are interested in & this has made coming back to school so much easier for him and for me.'



This month Sarah will be busy working 'with';

- Whole day INSET RA training for Mersey Vale
- Half day INSET sessions for Norris Bank, St Bernadette's
- Half day INSET building on last year's RA success at Ladybridge Primary & Vernon Park Primary
- Staff Meetings building on INSETs & 3 day training at Mellor Primary, Mersey Vale, Norris Bank & High Lane

- SLT training session at Harrytown
- Restorative INSET day at Werneth High school with Mark Finnis
- September 3 day Training course with Cath
- Training for TAs and Midday teams at Bridge Hall
- Circles sessions for Year 6 at Ladybridge
- RA Champions training sessions with Harrytown Year 10 Peace Council, St Thomas's Heaton Chapel Year 2's champions , St Ambrose Year 6 class and Bridge Hall Year 5 class.

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From our Spanish Senorita Cath..... Hola, this month I shall mainly be:

- Delivering a well-attended (chair of govs to lollipop man ...a first for me!) full day INSET at All Saints, Marple - at start of an exciting journey for them, I think.
- Delivering a series of 3 staff meetings at St Matthew's, Edgeley (again at the start of their 'journey')
- Meeting up with various schools who attended our July 3 day, to plan their next step e.g. Woodley
- Planning the first 1 day introductory session, to be jointly delivered by social care and our team!
- Delivering (jointly with Sarah) a full morning's session to train Harrytown's Peace Council in Yr7/8 with restorative skills and language then delivering an introductory session to Harrytown's SLT!
- Delivering the first 3 day of 2016-17
- Launching the Restorative Stockport website...watch this space...

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From Jenny ..on her last leg..

- Training at Rose Hill Training & at Ladybrook.
- Visits to schools including Prospect Vale, St George's, Bredbury Green, Adwood
- Organising, running & sorting paper work for Early Years/SEN group
- Flood Recovery (don't ask!)
- Working on developing the Early Years SEN toolkit for the end of the year
- Developing this year's Show case offers
- Digital by Design
- writing the check in working on developing coaching materials developing assembly pack,
- presentation for unions
- Jenny Curzon jenny.curzon@stockport.gov.uk 07800618609



Also...we wondered if you would like to check out twitter to see how some schools use it as a platform to promote restorative success e.g. Dial Park Alex Park. Lots of schools have twitter but use it for a purely academic focus (e.g. lane End - but when Cath mentioned DP's James' use of twitter for RA purposes to Lane End's James (keep up) he got all excited and said he was going to do the same!!)

Also our website is nearly up and running watch this space!!!!

Cheers from your Education RA team

Cath, Janette, Jenny & Sarah

