



# Witherslack Group

## Group Office

14 Main Office, Kirkby Lonsdale, via Carnforth, Lancashire LA6 2AE

Tel: 01524 273 131 Fax: 01524 273 741

Email: [admin@witherslackgroup.co.uk](mailto:admin@witherslackgroup.co.uk) Website: [www.witherslackgroup.co.uk](http://www.witherslackgroup.co.uk)

newsletter

Spring 2009

## DOUBLE FOR CEDAR HOUSE

Cedar House School is celebrating the double after staff were awarded the Team-Teach Gold Standard.

The school in Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria, has joined its sister school, Witherslack Hall, in receiving the award, which is one of the UK's first accredited training frameworks, specifically for professionals working with young people, who display challenging behaviour. The Gold Standard Award recognises best practice in terms of policy and procedure. It comes just months after Cedar House was the first special school in the country to receive the Government Standard for Customer Service Excellence. This is awarded by the Cabinet Office to people working in public services, who demonstrate excellence in delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude.

Gillian Ridgway, Head Teacher at Cedar House School, said: "I am very proud of my staff who fully deserve this latest award and delighted that their dedication and professionalism is recognised in this way."

"We have been involved with Team-Teach for more than nine years and have learnt such a lot about positive interactions between staff and pupils. The training has

been invaluable and will serve our staff and pupils well for the years to come."

Presenting the award, George Matthews, Director and Founder of

Team-Teach Ltd, said: "I was highly impressed by the staff at Cedar House and the way in which they interacted with their pupils. This school, like Witherslack Hall, makes outstanding provision for students' health, welfare and safety."

Jim Bowers, Proprietor and Managing Director of the Witherslack Group, said: "This is the second school in the Group to be presented with the award and I hope others will follow suit. The Team-Teach approach is one we are encouraging across our portfolio of schools and care homes."

Cedar House is a 38 week residential and day special school which caters for boys and girls aged between 7 and 16 with complex learning needs and challenging behaviour.



*Head Teacher Gillian Ridgway with Team-Teach Gold Standard Award*

## OFSTED OUTSTANDING PROVIDERS

Cedar House and Witherslack Hall School have been placed on Ofsted's outstanding providers list. The schools are two of the eight schools and six children's homes within the Witherslack Group, which provides a diverse day, residential and 52 week system of education and care for children with special needs.

The Witherslack Group was founded in 1972 in the South Cumbria/North Lancashire area and the Group has expanded into the South Lancashire/Merseyside area in the last 10 years, more recently into Oxfordshire, and in the near future Durham.

The Group educates and cares for up to 300 children and young people from the age of 4 to 19. At present it provides services for around 65 Local Authorities from across the United Kingdom.

## LEADING THE WAY

Witherslack Care and Education Initiatives (WCEI) is opening a new, highly specialised children's home and learning facility.

The Grange is based on a 10-acre site on the outskirts of Durham City and will provide a fully integrated service consisting of 52 week care, education and therapy. It is designed for young people with complex learning difficulties and challenging behaviour for whom a smaller facility with high levels of support and a highly personalised provision is required.

The home provides high quality living accommodation and specialist care for up to seven young people. The Grange also has a Learning Centre with a curriculum tailored to the needs of each individual and linked to planned therapeutic input.

Mike Davey, Managing Director, WCEI, says "The Grange is a groundbreaking facility. The highly personalised approach reflects our determination to provide meaningful outcomes for each young person which will help prepare for positive life opportunities."



*The new Grange specialised children's home*

# HANSEN LAUNCHES BELLE VUE



*Left to right Judith Brown, Head of the Centre; Cllr Geoff Roberts, Vice-Chairman, West Lancashire DC; Alan Hansen; Eileen Roberts, Vice-Chairman's Lady and Jim Bowers, MD of The Witherslack Group*

BBC television football pundit and former Liverpool captain, Alan Hansen, has cut the ribbon at a new independent assessment and development centre for children with communication difficulties in West Lancashire.

Belle Vue House in Ormskirk is part of the Witherslack Group's growing portfolio and provides independent professional assessments for children of any age.

The centre provides a range of assessments designed to find out

exactly how a child communicates. The assessments investigate speech, language and social communication, literacy, numeracy and cognitive ability. The team are also trained in the diagnosis of autism and the centre offers customised packages for accredited training and outreach services.

Judith Brown, Head of the Centre said: "This is an invaluable facility for parents, schools and local authorities in the area and beyond."

"Our team of therapists,

psychologists, teachers and consultant paediatricians will not only assess a child's strengths and difficulties, but also provide essential recommendations as to future placement and provision of care."

"Onsite accommodation is also available to those parents and children travelling long distances or whose assessment is better carried out over a two-day period."

Mr Hansen said he was delighted to be invited to open Belle Vue: "It is

vital that centres like this are available for children and families who need them. I'm extremely impressed by the building and I'm confident that the fantastic facilities will match the first-class standards of care and support which have become a hallmark of the Witherslack Group."

For more information about assessments or to receive a brochure please contact Judith Brown on 01695 578 558 or email [office@bellevuehousecentre.co.uk](mailto:office@bellevuehousecentre.co.uk)

## SCHOOL GETS TOP MARKS

Westmorland School in Chorley has achieved an excellent grading by Ofsted inspectors. It is a primary day school for up to 32 boys and girls with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties with associated learning needs.

Ofsted graded the school 'outstanding' in how well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils; the quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the overall welfare, health and safety of pupils.

Sue Asher, Head Teacher at Westmorland School, said: "It is the dedication and commitment of my staff that has enabled us to achieve these fantastic results."

"Our children are very proud of their school and thoroughly enjoy lessons which has been acknowledged in the report."



*Sue Asher celebrates with pupils and staff*

# PUPILS BOX OFF NESTS

Pupils from Witherslack Hall School weren't flapping when it came to "boxing off" a project with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Children from the school in Grange-over-Sands were working with the RSPB at Leighton Moss to create a range of nest boxes and homes for a variety of birds, bats, hedgehogs and insects as part of the charity's 'Homes for Wildlife' programme.

The pupils sited the wildlife homes at the reserve with the help of their construction skills teacher, John Kneale-Jones and the lead field teacher, Maggy Lightfoot.

John Kneale-Jones said: "The pupils at Witherslack Hall have been members of the 'Wildlife Explorers', the junior membership of the RSPB, for a number of years, so we have formed a fantastic working relationship with the staff at Leighton Moss."

"The pupils learn so much about the protection of wildlife and thoroughly enjoyed taking part in this project."

Maggy Lightfoot said: "The RSPB is trying to inspire people of all ages to make a real difference for the range of wildlife that share the open spaces closest to them. The children have been a delight to work with and have helped us enormously. All the staff at Leighton Moss look forward to further projects with the school."



*Maggy Lightfoot, John Wilkinson, John Kneale-Jones and pupils*

## MORE PUPIL PLACES

Pontville School in West Lancashire has increased its overall provision and pupil capacity.

The School in Ormskirk has up to 15 new places available for KS2 (ages 7-11). This expansion of provision has been agreed by Ofsted and recognises the continued high quality of education and care offered by the school. The unit is specifically designed for pupils identified as having severe ASD. The school is also able to offer full / part time residential provision for primary aged pupils in a specialist-designated unit.

Primary provision includes specialist teaching, speech and language therapy, sensory integration, occupational therapy, educational psychology support and specialist classrooms.

For further information regarding assessment and admission, please contact The School Office on 01695 578734.



*Teacher Jemma Sillett and pupils*



## NEW NORTH WEST CARE HOME

Witherslack Care & Education Initiatives is expanding its provision in the North West.

WCEI is opening a new home, The Woodlands, in the Carnforth area in response to enquiries from local authorities.

The Woodlands is building on the success of Cumbria View Children's Home which, in a short period, has provided quality care and has been assessed by Ofsted as being outstanding.

The Woodlands will provide a home for up to seven young people with a range of complex learning needs and challenging behaviour. The young people will attend either Witherslack Hall or Cedar House Schools, themselves being assessed by Ofsted as 'outstanding schools'. In partnership with the schools, the home will provide an integrated high quality package of care and education.

Tony Sarginson has been appointed as Registered Manager and it is anticipated that The Woodlands will open this Spring.

For further information please contact WCEI on 0844 880 6520

## FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS AT CHILWORTH HOUSE

Chilworth House School, in Oxford, has unveiled its newly refurbished facilities at an open day for parents and pupils.

More than £100,000 has been invested in the refurbishment, which converted a 200 year old coach house into a new dining and assembly room and a meeting and training room. The school caters for pupils aged 5 to 14.

Bob Marchbank, Head Teacher at Chilworth House, said: "We are absolutely delighted with our new rooms which have enabled us increase our registration from 24 to 30 pupils."

"The children are extremely excited about being able to have hot meals on-site and the meeting and training room is a fantastic facility for in-house training and conferences."

"We are now looking to further enhance our provision by developing a secondary school within close proximity of Chilworth House, which will enable us to provide continuous education for our pupils and which will carry on the ethos of the Witherslack Group."



*Left to right: Mike Barrow, Director, the Witherslack Group of Schools and Head Teacher Bob Marchbank join Charles Mills from the Witherslack Group to cut the ribbon*

## NEW HEAD AT CUMBERLAND UPPER SCHOOL

Jackie Rhodes has been appointed Head Teacher of Cumberland Upper School in Blackburn.

Jackie joined the Witherslack Group in 2005 as Senior Teacher at Westmorland School in Chorley, becoming Deputy Head Teacher in 2006.

Prior to joining the Witherslack Group, Jackie had worked in a variety of mainstream and special schools teaching English and PE.

Jackie said: "I'm extremely pleased to be appointed as the new Head Teacher of Cumberland Upper School and look forward to working with the staff and the Group Management Team to build on the school's already excellent reputation."

Jim Bowers, Proprietor and Managing Director of the Witherslack Group, described Jackie as "an experienced, dynamic, and confident Head Teacher with all the leadership qualities needed to direct and inspire staff and pupils at Cumberland Upper School".

"I am certain that under her leadership the school will continue to go from strength to strength and that we will see even further improvements in the outcomes for young people and in the quality of education available at the school."

Cumberland Upper School opened in November 2007. It is a day school for girls and boys aged 11 to 16 who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties with associated learning needs.



## NEW LEADERS IN THE MAKING

JBE Training and Development says it will help managers in education and care settings to build stronger and more productive relationships with employees. The programme - 'Developing Emotional Loyalty' - is a new process that builds trust, confidence and genuine rapport between an employee and manager, establishes what the employee wants from their work and what the organisation wants from the person and their role.

Initial feedback shows it helps resolve organisational problems, positively influences productivity, reduces absenteeism and creates a positive atmosphere that improves customer satisfaction. JBE Training and Development is also securing funding for organisations participating in this and other Institute of Leadership and Management training.

To discover more contact Mark Bowes on 015395 67400, [admin@jbetraining.co.uk](mailto:admin@jbetraining.co.uk), [www.jbetraining.co.uk](http://www.jbetraining.co.uk)

### Witherslack Care & Education Initiatives

Derwent House, Mandale Business Park, Durham DH1 1TH  
Tel: 08448 806 520

### JBE Training and Development

Lupton Tower, Lupton, Kirkby Lonsdale LA6 2PR  
Tel: 01539 567 400

### Cedar House School

Kendal Road, Kirkby Lonsdale via Carnforth, Lancashire LA6 2HW  
Tel: 01524 271 181

### Chilworth House School

Thame Road, Wheatley Oxford OX33 1JP  
Tel: 01844 339 077

### Cumberland School

Church Road, Bamber Bridge Preston, Lancashire PR5 6AJ  
Tel: 01772 284 435

### Cumberland Upper School

4 East Park Road, Blackburn Lancashire BB1 8AT  
Tel: 01254 691 195

### Lakeside School

Naylors Road Liverpool L27 2YA  
Tel: 0151 487 7211

### Pontville School

Black Moss Lane, Ormskirk Lancashire L39 4TW  
Tel: 01695 578 734

### Westmorland School

Weldbank Lane, Chorley Lancashire PR7 3NQ  
Tel: 01257 278 899

### Witherslack Hall School

Witherslack, Grange over Sands Cumbria LA11 6SD  
Tel: 01539 552 397