



March 2014 Enewsletter

[Click here to view this online](#)

Contents

- [Literacy Inspiring Maths](#)
- [Beyond Reach?](#)
- [Out and About](#)
- [Dyslexia Survey](#)
- [Who You Gonna Call?](#)
- [Vocational literacy and numeracy learning](#)
- [Response to Intervention \(RtI\)](#)
- [Our summer CPD programme](#)
- [Office changes, and missing emails](#)



The Philippa Blog – Literacy Inspiring Maths

Thank goodness for longer evenings, Croci, daffodils and the dawn chorus for those of us lucky enough to have access to such joys. And much sympathy to those of you still struggling with the floods and sodden earth!

Perhaps the most persistent pattern discernable in the concerns of schools, colleagues and those who support them at the turn of the year has been the steadily increasing focus upon mathematics. I am rather excited by the idea that we can, together, enable all learners to succeed at GCSE and, in the Further Education sector, at level 2 including GCSE.

I have long been a fan of Alf Coles' wonderful [teacher research study](#) in which he describes how he was able to get a year 7 class, who would previously have rejected mathematics with the onset of Algebra, work as a community of mathematicians. He succeeded to the point where they were using and applying Algebra to solve and even create mathematical problems for each other at GCSE level after 15 weeks. Mathematics learning is probably the best served area of the curriculum in terms of well conducted large scale and practitioner research. Which is a useful reminder that evidence alone changes nothing - what counts is what teachers do with it.

In this Enews we highlight several ways in which this message is becoming embedded in the priorities of school and college leaders, teachers and their representative organisations. See how, for example, the Education and Training Foundation is consulting its members about what is needed to enable teachers to take up and make use of what we know about best practice.

Beyond Reach?

Philippa spent a fascinating lunch time on a panel with Sir Michael Barber, Geoff Mulgan and Ruth Puttick of NESTA, Jonathon Shaples of EEF, and over 50 leaders of education charities and businesses focussing on the role of evidence in “helping business do and account for doing good” at the launch of the “[From Good Intentions to Real Impact](#)” report last week. It echoes CUREE’s recent experiences in working with a number of charities and umbrella trusts who are all wrestling with moving beyond excellent monitoring and evaluation of reach to evaluating actions and changes resulting from their work. They see this as an important first step towards evaluating impact and



they are – mostly - moving in this direction as a result of rising expectations about evaluation and impact data from funders. It feels as though the research and evidence informed practice and policy tide is rising. Evaluation of actions and impact and moving beyond participation is challenging – but when it is well designed, so that the evidence being collected is useful for doing the day job as well as for answering evaluation questions, it can also be an important driver of development. If we get this right, for once, many of the education ships will rise with the tide.

Out and About

It’s been a busy couple of months for CUREE, particularly given that we moved offices at the end of January (on which more anon). Besides the additional work this required, CUREE has been present at a number of interesting events.

UCET (Universities Council for the Education of Teachers) CPD Committee – 18th February
Philippa and Professor Ian Menter, head of the Education Faculty at the University of Oxford, explored ‘Emerging findings relating to CPD from the BERA/RSA Inquiry’. Click here for a link to the page on our website: <http://www.curee-paccts.com/news/2014/02/ucet-cpd-committee>

CfBT Lincolnshire Headteachers Conference – 28th February
‘Fit for purpose: making research and evidence work for all your learners’ was an interactive keynote session with over 70 heads for Lincolnshire schools. Philippa was bowled over by the energy and enthusiasm of this collaborative group of school leads. She was also lucky enough to witness the LAFTAs, Lincolnshire LA’s own youth film-making awards festival, with a judging panel which included students as well. More information about the Lincolnshire heads conference can be found on the website: <http://www.curee-paccts.com/news/2014/02/lincolnshire-leadership-conference>

ASCL Closing the Gap Conference – 4th March
“Focussing on skilled disappearers; meeting the needs of pupils who may really be here in name only”. This has workshop focused on an area that has been intriguing us for some time and we are starting to assemble some interesting and useful evidence surrounding it. Watch this space for

future developments about skilled disappearers, and check [here](#) for more information.

NAMA Conference – 7th March

Philippa will be presenting a keynote on: “Insinuating excellence in professional learning”. She will also be taking part in a book signing whilst there. To find out more about NAMA, click [here](#)

IEE Conference – 20th and 21st March

Philippa will also be in attendance at this conference.

Dyslexia Survey

CUREE’s work with the Dyslexia SpLD Trust is moving forward and we are beginning to uncover some really interesting and promising nuggets of evidence, both about what the Trust is doing particularly well, and about where they can still find ways to improve and expand their services. Evaluation work



of this kind is often challenging, as the recent “From Good Intentions To Real Impact” event shows, but the pay-off for soldiering through these challenges is often significant, even transformative, for all the participants.

Part of CUREE’s work with the Dyslexia Trust involves a series of surveys of parents, and education professionals, in particular but not exclusively those who work regularly with learners with Specific Learning Difficulties relating to literacy. The surveys are now live and

we are seeing an encouraging response rate (over 150 people have already filled out the practitioner survey, for example). But the more responses the better the information we have access to, and so we would be extremely grateful if you would take 10 minutes or so to fill out the survey [on Survey Galaxy](#) . To spur you on, this survey also contains links to a number of free resources to support working with children and young people with Dyslexia and other literacy-related learning difficulties.

Who You Gonna Call?

CUREE’s recent article in *Professional Development Today* “Who You Gonna Call? – Using specialists effectively”, explores the implications of the growth of school focused and led support for Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL). Here are some nuggets to mull over.

Most teachers’ experience of CPD is in-school/ college. There is a big increase in whole school CPD twilight and one day session. However only a third of the 1,000 plus teachers across the 30 organisations we have worked with say they find such activities useful. Key problems that teachers see with whole-organisation CPDL approaches include:

- *Emphasising general pedagogic approaches without helping teachers work out what they mean for their students*
- *Insufficient analysis of teachers’ development goals at whole school level to identify CPDL programme priorities so there is a poor match between activities and needs*
- *Failing to practice what is being preached e.g. using transmission via PowerPoint to extol the*

virtues of increasing independent learning for students or failing to differentiate for teachers' different starting points whilst encouraging personalised learning in lessons

What does seem to work well? "Making the specialist role of departments and/or phase leaders explicit and central to contextualising whole school CPD is powerful for helping teachers contextualise new knowledge and strategies and apply them to a particular subject or phase..." And we were particularly taken by the school that provides a ten minute taster session for all twilight CPD workshops at the start of the year!

Vocational literacy and numeracy learning- what do the professionals think?

The development of learners' English and maths skills, and the development of the workforce who support learners, are national priorities. The [Education and Training Foundation](#) is developing its Strategic Plan for the next three years and wants to ensure that the Plan is based on the sector's needs and robust evidence.

CUREE, with its partners emCETT (full title), have been commissioned by the Foundation to pull together the evidence for English and maths. You can say what you think in one of four ways:







- Complete our short [on-line survey](#)
- To sign up for the webinar or join us at one of the three regional events, please email [Jo Byrne](#)
- Tell us what you think on Twitter using the hashtag #ETF_emcon

But hurry – this work is urgent so get on to us now. For more information including our summaries of the research about effective Maths and English at Level 2/ GCSE click [here](#)

Response to Intervention (Rti)

The Rti trial, funded by the Education Endowment Foundation and supported by Achievement for All ran from summer half term to the end of term 2013. It focussed on Year 6 primary pupils that were not reaching Level 4 in English. Participating schools were very positive about its impact. Pupils made considerable progress in 5 weeks (as much as 6 month's progress for FSM children) including pupils for whom no other interventions had worked. But, the brevity and timing of intervention limited the results. Technical problems, for example with on line testing during the last week of the summer term for year 6, meant a number of control schools didn't do the second test so the comparison with control schools was "spoilt". Happily 120 other schools are now involved in trialling RTI as part of the Close the Gap test and learn on a more manageable timescale. Rti works by:

Table of comprehension interventions for which there is positive evidence

Intervention	Could be applied	Description
Improving reading comprehension through Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)  	 	Whole class peer tutoring is a system by which all pupils in a class are paired and work simultaneously. The focus of the paired activity in this intervention was comprehension strategy training.
Learning strategies curriculum for promoting reading comprehension 	  	The learning strategies curriculum focuses on developing pupils' understanding of text through using strategies such as: word identification, visual imagery, self-questioning, identifying vocabulary and paraphrasing.

- a) Supported close case analysis of block to progress for target pupils
- b) Matching interventions, known from previous research to be effective in that area to the needs of those children
- c) Using interventions at whole class, small group work and one-to-one levels of intensity and moving between these levels in response to progress data from the interventions

The teachers taking part were enthusiastic about the Rtl processes, tools and resources provided, overcoming initial suspicion that this was just what they did anyway. Singled out for comment were:

- The close case analysis tools which helped staff pinpoint persistent problems and which recorded the results in a clear and clever way
- The menu of interventions themselves and their supporting activities
- The online tests – which helped them diagnose problems in a more targeted way

If you would like to read the full results, you can find them reported [here](#) (link to RTI report on curee website). For more about how to get involved, click [here](#).

Our Summer CPD programme – Applying the evidence about effective CPD

As you can see this term has provided us with so many valuable opportunities for working with teachers and leaders around the country. We are constantly listening, learning and reviewing the CPD and professional learning events we provide as well as applying the evidence base around high impact CPDL, and we have updated the CPD section on our website on the basis of this, in preparation for the summer term. In the light of our research projects we are offering a workshop exploring Maths across the curriculum as well as a 2 day programme on Rtl for vulnerable learners. We know that one size does not fit all so we hope that you find [our latest offer](#) useful and informative. Do take a look and get in touch if you want to [learn more](#).

Office changes, and missing emails

On a final note, at the end of January CUREE underwent one of the most radical changes in its history- we have moved out of Copthall House, the building CUREE's office has been in since it was first set up, and into Eaton House nearby. This process was carried out over only two days and was a whole-staff effort (though some CUREE employees found themselves doing some office work typing furiously into laptops while perched on boxes of stationery!). CUREE is now settled in to its new home and enjoying the view.

As part of CUREE's office move we made the decision to migrate parts of our computer facilities to



'The Cloud' starting with email. This didn't go as smoothly as we hoped and planned- perhaps the recent weather generated some confusion over which of the many clouds on offer our system was supposed to end up in! In the transition, our e-mail system developed some "exciting" (read: "frustrating") new features, such as a tendency not to send or receive some e-mails successfully or to notify us that this has happened. If you have attempted to contact CUREE by email in the last month or so and have not received a reply or were expecting to hear from us, you may be a victim of this problem. We apologise profusely for any inconvenience caused by this. Please let us know if

you are expecting but haven't received an email.

Contact Us

8th Floor, Eaton House
Eaton Road, Coventry, CV1 2FJ
Registered in England No 4936927
Tel: 02476 524036
Email: info@curee.co.uk
Website: <http://www.curee.co.uk>

CUREE News is a product of CUREE Ltd. To unsubscribe, [click here](#).