

# BFS News



5th Edition

December 2014

For more information about Bright Futures School please visit [www.brightfutureschool.co.uk](http://www.brightfutureschool.co.uk)

## Passion for Parents Award

Our Head of Development, Zoe Thompson, recently found out that she has been nominated for a 'Passion for Parents' award from POINT (our local parents' Forum). Zoe says that although it's her name on the nomination, what it really reflects is the excellent team-working at Bright Futures School, as this is what allows us to provide the high quality support and guidance we give to parents. A lovely affirmation for school!



## Old Phones for iPads

We now have enough iPads for each pupil to have their own dedicated iPad! In recent months, we have been busy collecting used mobile phones and for every 165 phones we gain one iPad! In addition, we are very grateful to the Friends of Bright Futures who kindly purchased several iPads for school. Pupils will now be able to use iPads to support their learning and staff are busy finding appropriate Apps to enable a more interactive approach to their work with pupils. We are still collecting old mobile phones in preparation for the new pupils who will be joining Bright Futures School next year, so please keep donating! Thank you.



School closes for the Christmas break on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2014** and reopens on **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015.**

## Training Day

The first day back after the Autumn half term break saw staff taking part in a training day. Issues covered included a review of the positive achievements of our students; using SMART targets in our planning to help improve student progress; looking at iPad Apps to support learning; and a focus on how to 'frame' recent guidelines from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and student can step into their co-regulatory roles. Lunch was a convivial affair, with sandwiches and cake provided by Woollyknit cafe. Yum!



## Join Friends of Bright Futures!

We are looking for enthusiastic people to engage in activities and help raise funds to provide facilities or equipment to support the school and advance the education of our pupils at Bright Futures School.

Please contact us if you are interested. And please follow us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Bright-Futures-School/352066844973672>

## Friends of Bright Futures School (FBFS) secures training grant



LOTTERY FUNDED

We are delighted to announce that Friends of Bright Futures School (FBFS) has secured a grant of £7,000 from the Big Lottery Funds' Awards for All Programme to fund a training workshop for parents of children with autism and professionals who work with them, looking at iPad Apps to support learning; which will be run twice.

Recent guidelines from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence recommend that social communication work is undertaken with children and young people with autism to help address some of the difficulties at the heart of autism. These difficulties include trouble staying calm and focused; difficulty understanding other people; trouble making and maintaining friendships; difficulty being flexible and managing change and uncertainty. The FBFS training course will look at: a) how parents can use a social communication approach to work on some of these difficulties and what this kind of approach looks like in practice and b) how to secure provision for social communication in a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (which used to be called 'statement of special educational needs'). The first course is expected to run in Spring 2015.

For further information about dates and venues, please email: [office@brightfutureschool.co.uk](mailto:office@brightfutureschool.co.uk) or keep in touch via the FBFS Facebook page.





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### Wolfscape learning

At Bright Futures School, we use our students' interests to encourage learning. And most recently, Zoe has been working with one of our pupils, Holly, (using our guiding methodology) to build a Wolfscape model. Holly just loves wolves and so Zoe (as the Guide) used the building and painting as a vehicle to work on social referencing and spotlighting competence (Holly's good problem-solving) as they went from plastic bottles covered in newspaper.....



.....to a full blown mountain range with caves and a stream!



### Christmas Fayre!

Our pupils are still very busy making Christmas goodies to sell at the Craft Fayre in the Civic Hall, Uppermill, on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December - 10am to 4pm. They're making tree decorations, jams, chutneys and of course Christmas cards. After the success of the cards previously sold in the Woolyknit Café in Diggle, we are hoping for some great sales! We look forward to seeing you there! All proceeds will go to school.



### Remembrance Day 2014

One of our pupils, Philip, did some internet research about Remembrance Day 2014 and found photos of the special display of ceramic poppies at the Tower of London for the First World War Centenary. We made our own poppies here at school and Philip decided to decorate his hat with his poppy, which he then wore for his visit to the Food Bank.



### New Software Trials

On the 17<sup>th</sup> November, David from 'A Quiet Place' came over to demonstrate some of the software that can be used to help our pupils keep calm and focused as well as stay relaxed. We plan to upgrade our sensory room at school, so this was a good chance to try out the different packages that are available. One of our pupils, Ben, had a go at the lie detector test.....



...and he also tried out some light and sound specs! Well done Ben for giving it a go!



### Special Visit

On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November, we hosted a visit from Libby Scherrer - a Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) Consultant from Australia.



Libby wanted to see how we use guiding principles in school to help work on some of the difficulties at the heart of autism. Here is what Libby had to say about her visit:

"How refreshing it was to visit Bright Futures School in Oldham. It really lives up to its name!

"The school is small and works hard to ensure the students placements are funded through education and health authorities.

"Staff work well together as a team and make sure the learning framework targets the individual child's needs.

"The learning environment is productive, engaging and well planned.

"Staff document the students' progress through notes, photos and videos. The students want to engage with adults and each other.

"For example, I observed a group of three teenage boys enjoying their lunch-break sitting around a table and talking about some brownies one of them had cooked. They were joking about the hardness and tapped one on the table. The boy who made them laughed and went with the joke but said that they tasted good.

"It was a great social interaction to witness in this group of teens."