

# HolibrookTimes

Holibrook House, Hopewell School  
& Bridging The Gap Project



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Annual Magazine 2012/2013 Review

# Welcome

2012 was the year that children services came dramatically under the media spotlight, and rightly so, because of the terrible abuses that took place, both in Rochdale and at the hands of certain celebrities.

At the height of the media frenzy a reporter from a national newspaper visited us. We enthusiastically informed him about our work and its positive impact on vulnerable young lives. He left promising an article in his newspaper, which never materialised. Winston Churchill once said, "The British nation is unique in this respect: they are the only people who like to be told how bad things are, who like to be told the worst." However, in a year that London hosted a successful Olympics, we refuse to accept that people are only interested in hearing the bad news.

**The Holibrook Times is about setting the records straight, about presenting stories of triumph over adversity. It's about celebrating the marvelous achievements of our young people and staff, despite the challenging environment of our times. For instance, the Holibrook Times can exclusively report that we were the only UK residential home and school to receive a delegation from Ukraine Social Services, eager to discover how we provide therapeutic care and education, with the aim of improving their service in the Ukraine. That's good news for the UK, that's great news for us.**

In addition, the magazine highlights news from 'Bridging The Gap' including our first international educational visit to Ghana, where some of our young people received a life impacting experience. This edition provides highlights on Hopewell School including news of our expansion into West London. It reports stories of HOPE, which is our primary mandate and vision to "restore hope, release potential, rebuild lives."

Enjoy the read.



Herman Allen  
CEO



## Reaching for Gold...

Two phenomenal events, the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games took place in London this year which was watched by millions of people all over the world. We saw dreams come true, years of hard work come to fruition, tears of joy and frustration and shouts of elation. We saw people from all corners of London come together to make the dream and the dreams of thousands of athletes become a reality. We were proud of one of our young people who willingly gave up his time and took up a golden opportunity to be a volunteer at the Games. Well done!



Our homes joined in the festive spirit of the Olympics. One of our homes held a sports event titled 'The Olympics!' Young people, staff and senior staff from our head office all took part in this amazing event; exciting even though the weather was not quite conducive to such an event. Some excelled and went for gold, whilst others 'fell' far short of the finishing line!

## Stars in the Making! ★

We are flourishing as a Therapeutic Community as are our young people. Each term young people and staff from all our homes and schools meet in an organisation-wide Therapeutic Community meeting to share achievements, reflection, fun, tears of joy, laughter and great food. The autumn term saw the best meeting held to date. Young people excelled! ★

They convened the meeting and provided entertainment that kept us at the edge of our seats. Poems, songs, dance, speeches, comedy – they rose to the occasion! Not only did they entertain us but they lauded the efforts of staff – staff who are not just staff but 'family' to them – seeing them through challenging, sad, exciting and happy times and providing care and nurture that is second to none. Young people outdid themselves, so much so that we have handed over our annual Christmas service to these stars! ★





# Celebrating Excellence...

## Achieving the Impossible

Prior to coming to Holibrook, 'achievement', 'successes' and 'victory' have been words that our young people have not heard. Once they arrive at Holibrook, with support to cope with their difficult times, they start to excel. Over and over again, we are shown the true capability of our young people and we are proud of their achievements.

## Scaling Great Heights

Our young people across our homes and schools continue to excel reaching heights once they join our homes or schools despite barriers they may experience. The previously impossible becomes possible with astounding results. We continue to celebrate these achievements and successes in a range of ways. One of our homes, Strathfield Gardens had a special day to celebrate the achievement of their young people. It was a resounding success with social workers, families and other professionals accompanied by great food.

## Academic Achievements

Young people start to achieve in all areas of their lives, including academically. At Hopewell School, a range of opportunities are provided for pupils to develop. In addition to supporting pupils in starting to manage their own behaviour and learning, pupils receive therapeutic, academic and vocational (TAV) opportunities to start to develop holistically and to prepare to enter the world of work. We see pupils start to thrive, grow and improve their overall academic performance. No opportunity is missed to celebrate these achievements!



# Celebrating the Achievements of Staff

Our staff are invaluable members of our Therapeutic Community, working together to provide a safe, nurturing and caring environment for our children and young people. There are those who work in the frontline, working directly with those that matter to us. And, there are others who give their all behind the scenes to ensure the effective functioning of our community. This year excellence in service and enduring commitment was rewarded at our annual Christmas Service. The Alfred James Award is presented annually in recognition of commitment in memory of a dear member who passed away tragically three years ago. This year the award went to **Myrtle James** who has been with our community for ten years.



A unique recognition of someone who works endlessly and patiently behind the scenes went to **Javi Kurti** who has the mammoth task of ensuring that our physical environments are comfortable and safe.



Well done to both these staff who epitomise commitment, dedication and endurance in our therapeutic community, providing positive role models for the rest of the community to follow!

## Children and Young People Now Awards Ceremony 2012

Not only do we celebrate achievements within our organization; we also celebrate the achievements of those who work in the children and young people sector at large. We recently sponsored a learning award for the Children & Young People Now Awards Ceremony which is a showcase for excellence in 19 different categories across health, education and care sectors. Herman Allen (CEO) presented this award at a glamorous event in London attended by key professionals from across England; we were joined by key leaders from Brent, Barking and Dagenham and the West London Alliance.







## Ukrainian Government Services for Children Visit

Earlier this year a Ukrainian delegation visited two of our homes in Barking to learn about child protection and preventative services in the UK, especially for looked after children. They met with staff and young people and reported that our young people are fortunate to have their own bedrooms and other privileges compared to children in their country.

Manager of Strathfield Gardens Views on the Visit:

**Hopefully, our Ukrainian visitors will see that the children in our care homes are happy; and that looked after children are able to thrive and fulfil their potential in a caring and nurturing environment...**

## Extending Links...

This year saw the introduction of themed teaching projects covering the breadth of the curriculum at Hopewell running on a pilot basis for a year. We hope to use these themes to make curriculum links with Juja and Operation Restoration as a means of taking forward our Global School Partnership programme.

## Changing Our World...

### Juja (Nairobi) Then and Now

We continue to receive great news from **Susan Mwaniki** (Executive Director of CLiPE) in Juja, the village in Nairobi that we support. Those very children that we saw infested with 'jiggers' (body fleas) that had them writhing with pain three years ago are now graduating to 'big school'! 29 children from the nursery school in the village attended interviews to start 'big school' and all were successful. This year saw great improvements overall in the village, not just in the school. The villagers have become meaningfully engaged in activities that will help them become self-sufficient. They have started growing vegetables, rearing goats and chickens.



### Trenchtown (Jamaica)

We made new links with Operation Restoration, a Christian school in Trenchtown, Jamaica this year. The mission of Operation Restoration is to educate, nurture, mobilize and empower inner-city youth of low social and economic status to become productive law abiding citizens. Trenchtown is one of the most deprived areas in Jamaica with a high level of gangs, drugs, poverty etc.

Operation Restoration's goal is to restore dignity and pride through life-enhancing experiences, educational opportunities, the arts and life skills development. **Lorna Stanley**, Founder & Director, visited our homes and schools and spent a day at our school interacting with staff and pupils which ended in an inspiring and heartrending special event 'An Audience with Lorna Stanley'. We were relieved to hear that Hurricane Sandy left the school unscathed except for power failures.







# Life changing ★ trip to Ghana

There are many 'firsts' for our young people. First time at school, first certificate, first trophy, first holiday, first birthday cake, first Christmas party, first....first....first....! But, a first that recently changed lives was a memorable trip to Ghana! 6 young people volunteered to go on a sabbatical to Ghana accompanied by staff. This project was coordinated and arranged by the Managers of BTG and our 16+ unit.

They experienced the culture of Ghana and their ethnic diversity, the legacy of the slave trade centre, the people of Ghana and their daily aspirations, environmental conservation in Ghana and the role of Ghana in the global economy. They interacted with their Ghanaian peers, shared ideas, and learnt more about different perceptions on matters of morality, fashion and globalisation.

The group visited an orphanage and school and were touched by what they saw. They played with little children, carried little babies and said that their lives have been changed. But, it was not all hard work. Young people met with the ex-president of Ghana, drank coconut juice from coconuts for the first time and took in a range of sights and experiences that were planned to give them a taste of Ghana from the richest to the poorest. The trip culminated in an awesome trip to a forest with a heart -stopping walk across a suspension bridge hanging metres above ground level over snakes and elephants!

## Young People's Views about the Trip:

Young Person 1: ...enabled me to expand my understanding about this unique continent...develop lifetime relationships...made me realise how God has blessed me.

Young Person 2: ...taken my breath away...made me appreciative of what God has given me.

Well done to those Managers who made this 'first' possible and thanks to the CEO of Holibrook House and respective Local Authorities for making this 'first' possible!



Photos:  
caring for babies,  
learning with  
children, meeting  
with ex-President  
and feeding the  
poor...



A short video of the trip can be seen at [www.holibrook.co.uk](http://www.holibrook.co.uk)



# Breaking New Ground



Bridging the Gap is an exciting new project set up last year by Holibrook House to help young people and their families flourish in their communities. The project was set up to identify barriers to young people's development and find solutions through working with schools, homes and the community at large. We aim to Bridge Gaps, Build prospects, Brighten futures and create opportunities for all young people which will enable young people to fulfil their potential, opening up to them new world of possibilities that will increase their life choices and life chances. This is done through coffee mornings, home visits, after school clubs, parenting classes etc. Currently we run our mentoring and education programme in six boroughs: Barking and Dagenham, Newham, Waltham Forest, Haringey, Lewisham and Redbridge.

An exciting launch including an exciting performance by the Iroko Theatre Club was held earlier this year; attended by parents and professionals



## What they say about BTG:

Young person: "I dreamt of becoming a professional footballer now my dream is becoming a reality thanks to Bridging the Gap projects."

Class Teacher: ... is a brilliant mentor for the children in our school; she provides class support with literacy and numeracy...

Headteacher: Our Bridging the Gap learning Mentor is a blessing and an asset to the school and I am extremely grateful for the BTG project...





# Living, Learning, Discovering Together

Shopping together, going to the cinema together, games together, day trips, off-site educational trips, daily activities off-site, residential trips - it's what makes learning exciting.

## Residential trips

In the summer, young people from our homes went on exciting residential trips. These trips were used to continue to build and strengthen relationships which are the pillars of our therapeutic work with our young people.

## Daily trips

At the school, pupils continue to attend daily activities off-site aimed at developing social interaction and communication skills, teambuilding, problem solving, conflict resolution etc. Some of the activities this year have been trampolining, kayaking, football, swimming and tubing.

## Off-site Educational Visits

Learning out of the classroom took on a new meaning for pupils. Key stage 3 pupils are currently working on the theme of water and amongst many other things are looking at the importance of water. Pupils watched the movie 'Flood' and then visited the Thames River Barrier to see and understand the power and significance of water. The movie helped pupils grasp the need for the Barrier.



## Hopewell update...

### Take a TRIP!

We are excited about our continued growth and development. The autumn term saw the launch of **TRIP (Therapeutic Respite Intervention project)** in Harmony House for respite in education for pupils at mainstream and other settings with a view to reintegration. TRIP is being expanded into Brent from December 2012.

### West London

**Hopewell School (Willesden)** was registered with the DfE following a highly successful Ofsted inspection in the autumn term. The school provides for pupils aged 7 to 16 with SEBD, ASD and MLD.

### South London

The spring term will see us relocating **Hopewell School (Bartram)** to larger premises in central Lewisham. It will also see a change in registration to 5 to 18 years for pupils with SEBD, ASD and MLD and will introduce a new 14 to 19 Vocational Programme.



## Metropolitan Police and Faith in Britain Conference

Almost a year after the August 2011 riots, Bridging the Gap was a key partner in a major London conference sponsored by the Metropolitan Police Service and Faith in Britain. Key note speakers included amongst others the Police Commissioner and David Lammy (MP).



The Police Cadets as part of the Mayor's programme have made a commitment to work with Bridging the Gap to develop a mentoring programme across a number of London boroughs and to establish Cadets in schools and in the community.



# STREAM

## update

We continue to work therapeutically with our children and young people. Keeping abreast of therapeutic practices and ensuring that our service in helping our young people coming to terms with their hurts, traumas, pain, rejection etc is at the forefront of our practices. Relationships, nurture and care are at the heart of our therapeutic work. This term we conducted an organisation-wide audit of our therapeutic practices and will be launching a renewed effort on rigorous and robust monitoring and training to ensure that all staff at all levels are adequately equipped with skills to empower our young people.

We are reviewed externally by the Royal College of Psychiatrists. This year the review team also consisted of members from a Therapeutic Community in Italy that is similar to our community.

As part of improving the way in which we work therapeutically, members from our community review other therapeutic communities on behalf of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. This year two Managers, Yvonne Miller & Sharina Klaasens reviewed a community in Belfast and other communities in England. They will be reviewing a therapeutic community in Athens early next year.

STREAM is our unique therapeutic model which means '**Strong Therapeutic Restoring Environment & Assessment Model**'

"The quality of education is outstanding...  
the curriculum is outstanding"

(Ofsted, March 2011)

## Outstanding Therapeutic Homes and Schools Now Have Vacancies!

"I prefer it [residential home] to any  
of the other places I have been"

(Young person to Ofsted inspector)

"The schools... transform students' learning experiences  
resulting in outstanding progress in both their personal  
and academic lives" (Ofsted, March 2011)

PREMIER  
LONDON  
PROVIDER

### What's New!

New SEBD school in West London

Expanding SEBD schools in East & South London

If you would like to find out more...

Call our Head Office on: 020 8880 4044

→ [www.holibrookhouse.co.uk](http://www.holibrookhouse.co.uk)

→ [www.hopewellschool.co.uk](http://www.hopewellschool.co.uk)



Holibrook



Hopewell



# Budding Poets

Our young people continue to use the arts and writing to express their deep felt emotions. This is a poem from a year 11 pupil. It is based on the tragic disappearance of five-year old April Jones. The year 11 group were given Benjamin Zephaniah's poem 'What Stephen Lawrence has taught us' and asked to emulate his style of writing:

## Pink Wheels

Pink wheels, the last thing I saw.  
A swinging ponytail, a hug at the door,  
I watched her turn that last corner last Monday night,  
how was I to know she would be wrestled  
from my life?  
Such a sweet girl, so helpless, so small,  
snatched away by the wolf.  
Not a sound, not a call.



### Children's homes

**[www.holibrookhouse.co.uk](http://www.holibrookhouse.co.uk)**

Holibrook House: Monteagle Avenue, Barking  
Holibrook House: Strathfield Gardens, Barking  
Holibrook House: Bartram Road, Brockley  
16+ Home: Holibrook House: Matlock, Leyton



### Schools

**[www.hopewellschool.co.uk](http://www.hopewellschool.co.uk)**

Hopewell School: Dagenham  
Hopewell School: Brockley  
Hopewell School: Willesden



### Bridging the Gap Projects

**[www.btgprojects.org.uk](http://www.btgprojects.org.uk)**

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