futurelab

transforming the way people learn through innovative technology and practice

November 2011: newsletter issue 83

Welcome to issue 83 of Futurelab's monthly e-newsletter, which aims to keep you informed about our latest projects and news in the education sector.

Projects and Futurelab news

Futurelab and NFER announce merger

As of 9 November Futurelab Education has merged with the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER).

The two charities share complementary objectives and missions with an emphasis on using research to improve the quality of teaching and learning and, as a consequence, the lives and opportunities of young people.

The individual brand names will continue as the two organisations collaborate to strengthen schools' capacity to use research evidence to impact the classroom. Futurelab services and staff will operate as an associated company of NFER, and be based at the NFER office in Slough. The growing number of Futurelab Hub schools will greatly benefit from additional support and resources this merger will provide.

NFER's established track record for reliable and authoritative world-class research and assessment combined with Futurelab's reputation for creativity and use of technology create a unique force for driving change in education. Coming together, the charities offer unrivalled research capacity that will benefit young people, schools and educationalists in the UK and wider afield.

For more information, click here

21st Century Learners Conference

7 March 2012 9am to 4pm, Best Western Stoke-on-Trent Moat House.

Addressing key themes such as the creative curriculum, independent learning, enquiry-based learning and transforming learning, the 21st Century Learners Conference will examine whether these concepts should be part of the response

to the new National Curriculum, what they mean and how they can contribute in a practical way to the development of curricula fit for the 21st Century.

This conference will give delegates the opportunity to:

- Explore interpretations of the concepts listed above with a range of highly respected speakers
- Hear about tried and tested strategies for embedding them in the curriculum and progressively developing the underpinning skills and attitudes
- Evaluate the evidence that these approaches improve the quality of teaching and learning

Contributing speakers and organisations

Richard Gerver - Richard has been described as one of the most inspirational leaders of his generation. In 2005 he won the prestigious "School Head Teacher of the Year Award" at the British National Teaching Awards for his work in leading a school on the brink of closure to becoming one of the most innovative in the world. He works closely with Sir Ken Robinson, who wrote the forward for Richard's global best-selling book Creating Tomorrow's Schools Today. His presentations are now in demand around the world.

Lizzy Lewis, SAPERE - an internationally recognised educational charity that brings together a network of people throughout the UK practising and promoting philosophical enquiry for children and communities, often referred to as P4C. A primary school teacher for 12 years, Lizzy was awarded a Best Practice Research Scholarship to evaluate her work in P4C in 2001, and co-authored "Thinking on the Edge" (Thinking Activities to Develop Citizenship and Environmental Awareness) in 2003. Lizzy has worked for SAPERE since 2003, and is currently the charity's Development Manager.

Stephen Breslin, Futurelab - an independent charity dedicated to driving up standards and transforming teaching and learning, making it more relevant and engaging to 21st century learners through the use of innovative technology and practice. Stephen has been chief cxecutive of Futurelab since 2008 and is committed to promoting innovative approaches to teacher development and school improvement based on the authoritative evidence base that Futurelab has developed.

Partners in Creative Learning (PiCL) - an independent charity which specialises in making creative projects happen, bringing together young people, adults who work with them and partners from the creative sector. Its roots are in the Creative Partnerships programme – it has delivered the flagship Creative Learning Programme across Stoke and Staffordshire since 2005. Over that time PiCL has worked with almost 10,000 children and young people aged 3 – 16 in 140 schools, over 500 teachers and over 150 creative partners.

Kingsland Primary School - Kingsland has worked for a number of years with a variety of Creative Practitioners to develop an exciting teaching and learning environment. It was the first school in the world to have an aeroplane classroom - the culmination of a curriculum project that drew in first class business, design and manufacturing professionals. The school has attracted recognition for its 'ground-breaking' curriculum.

Stoke-on-Trent Learning Services - A part of Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority, Learning Services provides a team of experienced teaching and learning consultants seeking to support schools in developing their vision for learning. It is committed to helping schools to develop curricula fit for the needs of 21st Century learners; curricula that invest in skills for their future and lead to sustainable success in learning for all.

For further information or to book, please click here

Connect: Why should you use social media?

The Connect series introduces the teacher to a new area of practice, bringing together the latest research with practical exercises that can be used in the classroom. Each in the series includes an engaging A2 poster designed to be put up in the classroom or staffroom to provoke further exploration of the topic. To find out more, click here

Thinking Guides

Thinking Guides can support independent and group research projects with frameworks for thinking, planning and enquiry. Now available to purchase from Futurelab are a set of ready-made, interactive thinking guides. Print them, edit them or use them as inspiration to make your own. To find out more, click here