



St. Werburgh's Park Nursery School to be awarded Helicopter Stories Centre of Excellence

In recognition of their work with Story Square

On Thursday 12th February 2015, MakeBelieve Arts will be awarding the UK's fifth Helicopter Stories Centre of Excellence award to **St Werburgh's Park Nursery School**, Bristol.

St. Werburgh's Park Nursery School, funded by Bristol City Council since 1931, has a long history of successfully teaching young children. Every member of staff is qualified to work with young children and is passionate about children's learning.

Helicopter Stories - Letting Imagination Fly is MakeBelieve Arts early years strand and it's based on the pioneering Storytelling and Story Square work of Vivian Gussin Paley. The approach has been robustly evaluated by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Story Square is a creative approach that supports learning across the early year's curriculum, outlined by the government, and the evaluation is evidence of this.

One of the suggestions and outcomes of the evaluation was to award settings as Centre's of Excellence in the approach.

These awards are given to those select Early Years settings that are regularly using Storytelling and Story Square and are able to share the benefits of the approach with neighbouring schools.

The presentation will start at 3.00pm with a short 15-minute demonstration of the approach followed by a presentation of the plaque by the MakeBelieve Arts Creative Director, Isla Hill.

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For further information about St Werburgh's Park Nursery School contact Liz Jenkins, on 0117 9030323
For further information about the Helicopter Stories Centres of Excellence and MakeBelieve Arts, please contact Louise Forbes
on 020 8691 3803
or email louise@makebelievearts.co.uk.
or alternatively please visit www.makebelievearts.co.uk

Editor notes:

1. **MakeBelieve Arts** is a theatre and education company and social enterprise offering innovative, high quality theatre and education programmes to develop the creative potential of children aged 0-15.
2. **This approach has been recently renamed.** It was formally known as the Helicopter Technique and is now known as Helicopter Stories, Letting Imagination Fly.
3. **Helicopter Stories, Letting Imagination Fly evaluation** was delivered by a commissioned team of researchers from the Open University. The team, led by Teresa Cremin, observed the programme, interviewed teachers and children, and read through the MakeBelieve Arts Helicopter Archive and the evaluation was launched on Friday 14th June 2013.
4. **Vivian Gussin Paley**, American kindergarten teacher and writer, is patron of MakeBelieve Arts. In the 1980s she published a series of books that made her perhaps the best known kindergarten teacher in America and she still publishes today. At present Vivian has written and published 13 books.

Vivian has been the recipient of many awards, including a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship (Genius Award), and in 2004 was named Outstanding Educator by the National Council of Teachers of English.

5. To watch a video of Helicopter Stories click here: <http://youtu.be/UkJI8dyzRQQ>

To download the evaluation please click here: <http://www.makebelievearts.co.uk/helicopter/>

To find out more about our Helicopter Stories Centres of Excellence please click here: <http://www.makebelievearts.co.uk/centres-of-excellence>