



Annual Report & Highlights

Central Berkshire Education Business Partnership

Central Berkshire Education Business Partnership is a registered charity supported and funded by: local businesses, schools, colleges, local authorities and the Learning & Skills Council.

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Charity Number: 1037021





2009 Report from Andy Nichol, Chair of Trustees

Once again, we reflect on a momentous year for the CBEBP. This time last year the full extent of the credit crunch was just becoming clear and we were beginning to get over the sad loss of Managing Director Mark Thatcher.

Having appointed Debbie Owen and Beverley Graves as joint acting MDs, it quickly became clear that we had the right leadership team in place to cope with challenging times. In February, the Trustees unanimously decided to ask them to take on the joint MD role on a permanent basis and were delighted when they accepted. The organisation has never looked back!

As usual, the whole team has stepped up to adapt to the changed economic conditions. We have recognised for a long time that no funding stream is guaranteed and have looked to maintain stability by keeping a close watch on budgets and ensuring a diverse portfolio of projects. Everything we do is linked by the common theme: we help young people gain a varied experience of the workplace, so they can make the right choices to realise their aspirations. This task is more vital than ever before as a generation of students faces a much tougher environment than their recent predecessors, for whom difficult choices were offset by many more opportunities.

It is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to thank all our partners for their continuing commitment to this cause. A huge vote of thanks must go to every business which has somehow found the time to support an event or provide a work placement. They tell us that, in return, their involvement in our activities has proved an excellent way to motivate and develop staff, shape tomorrow's workforce, fulfil their corporate social responsibility policies and build links with their local community.

As for our team, and their colleagues from the schools who work so closely with us, they are a wonderful example of what can be achieved when people work together with a shared passion.

As the year ahead unfolds, we expect to encounter keen competition from many other providers of training and development services at every invitation to bid and whenever a programme is renewed. Our focus is to maintain our reputation for delivering high quality programmes, together with our ability to draw upon the strongest possible network of schools, local businesses and government agencies throughout central Berkshire.

Finally, a thank you to all the trustees for the effort they put in on a voluntary basis and the personal support they have given to the management team and me. This year, we have said goodbye to Ruth Allen and Mark Pickett. Ruth was a long-serving trustee and we particularly acknowledge her efforts in recent years to help us adapt to the new diplomas, while Mark maintained the excellent tradition of support from Oracle Corporation. I am very pleased to report that Alison Spencer from Verizon has joined the trustees this year.

Thank you for your continued support of the CBEBP.

Andy Nichol
Chair of Trustees

2009 Report from Beverley Graves and Debbie Owen, Joint Managing Directors

'Working and Learning Together' has been our strategy for partnership working for the past 16 years. It emphasises the importance of unifying expertise from business and education to further the skills of young people to prepare them for the workplace and to contribute to the community. In offering our member schools a variety of tailored programmes, we welcome contributions from companies and their employees.

As the CBEBP team returned to work in January 2009, we started to experience the knock-on effect of the global recession on our work locally. The challenge for some organisations to continue operating has been difficult and some have closed their doors. Others have restructured and emerged stronger, with a willingness to support their local community through the difficulties. A heartfelt 'thank you' to these businesses for supporting the young people of central Berkshire and the CBEBP.

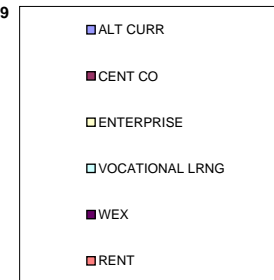
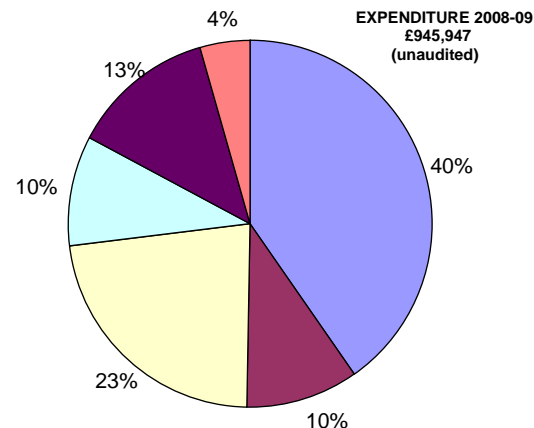
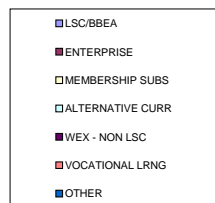
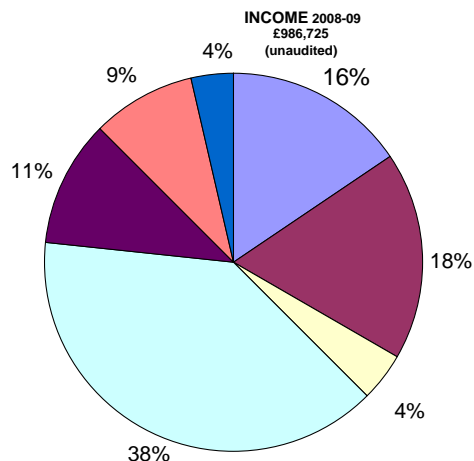
In these very trying times, it is important to celebrate the skills that our staff have put to good use in creating innovative, alternative ways to engage young people to acquire knowledge, skills and qualifications. This is especially critical where they are in danger of not progressing to training or further education. Members of our Alternative Curriculum team have worked intensively with around 300 students and are valued by their clients as mentors and supporters for the variety and breadth of their programmes. The Work Experience team has managed to defy the odds of a potentially diminishing pool of employers ensuring that every one of over 3,000 14-16 year olds had a placement arranged. The Events and Enterprise team has taken business experience into schools in Reading and Wokingham, supported by volunteers from local companies. Competitions, mentoring schemes and professional development opportunities have all taken place successfully as a result of CBEBP brokerage work.

During this year, we have had the opportunity to consolidate our programmes whilst researching and developing new initiatives. In June, we were informed of our success in securing two bids, in partnership with other organisations:

- ▶ One project will facilitate our work on careers awareness with children in the primary sector. Children from six primary schools will be given the opportunity to participate in interactive workshops with local employers to explore the world of work.
- ▶ The 'Generations Together' programme will help dispel some of the prejudices between young people and the elderly community. The programme will consist of a variety of activities, bringing both age groups together to work on common areas of interest. This will then culminate in a Festival of Ages at the end of the two-year programme.

The CBEBP team has worked incredibly hard to secure opportunities and develop activities for our young people to experience. Staff have taken on board the difficulties businesses are facing and given additional support to them where needed. Funding is always a challenge for us but our most valuable resource is the staff who work for us.

Beverley Graves and Debbie Owen
Joint Managing Directors



Business Members

Coffey International
Horwath Clark Whitehill
Prudential
Thames Valley University

Forest Personnel
National Westminster Bank
Reading Borough Council
Wokingham Borough Council

Halcrow Group Ltd
Oracle Corporation
Redland Healthcare
Yell Group

Primary School Members

Christ the King Primary School
George Palmer Primary School
St Martins Primary School

Farley Hill Primary School
Highlands Primary

Geoffrey Field Junior School
New Christ Church Primary School

Secondary School members

Addington School
Brookfields School
Denefield School
Forest School
Highdown School
Kendrick School
Maiden Erlegh School
Reading Girls' School
Shiplake College
Waingels College

The Avenue School
The Bulmershe School
The Elvian School
Hemdean House School
The Holt School
Leighton Park School
The Oratory School
Reading School
Southfields School
Willink School

Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School
Cranbury College
Emmbrook School
High Close School
John Madejski Academy
Little Heath School
Prospect School
Ryeish Green School
St Crispin's School

Trustees

Andy Nichol – Chair of Trustees

Telegraph Media Group

Paul Barras – Consultant

Carey Francis – BG Group *(Resigned Nov 2008)*

Peter Lewis – Head teacher

The Bulmershe School

Alison Spencer – Verizon

(Joined November 2008)

David Duvall – Treasurer for CBEBP

Chantrey Vellacott

Geoff Brown – Self Employed

Nick Hill – Thames Valley University

Keith Quine – Head teacher

The Forest School

Ruth Allen – Education Consultant

(Resigned Feb 2009)

Tony Denton – Consultant

Marius Hopley – Vivant Limited

Mark Pickett – Oracle Corporation

(Resigned Oct 2009)