

Changing Times

Success!

From the start of April 2010 to the end of March 2011 JustDifferent ran 1,137 workshops, reaching 35,882 children and young people. That means almost three times more children benefitted from our workshops than in the previous year.

Our expansion continued in the summer, when we ran 482 workshops reaching 14,213 children and young people, compared with 288 workshops reaching 8,225 children during the 2010 summer term.



One pupil said:

“Now I know not to judge disabled people because they look different. I now know that being different can be a good thing. You have taught me that disabled people can be intelligent, can teach others lots and can live a happy and full life. I think it is great what you are doing, by going to schools and educating children that disabled people are part of our community and we should treat them no differently.”

Inevitably, this increase in activity costs money. The busier we are, the more we need to raise. For ideas of how to donate and fun fundraising activities you can organise to support JustDifferent, please see page 4.

This term...

During September and October 2011, our six presenters have delivered workshops in 40 schools in thirteen counties across London, the south of England and Suffolk. Teachers have responded enthusiastically to JustDifferent's



work. Amanda Davies, deputy head of The Tyrrells Primary School, Essex said “It was excellent, I saw the children’s views change markedly during the day.” And Jenna Land, Year 6 Co-ordinator at Castle Hill Junior School, Suffolk said their JustDifferent workshop provided “clear, concise information with an engaging friendly delivery.” She added that “the children were completely engaged and learned lots.”

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Welcome : message from the CEO



It's been a brilliant year for JustDifferent. We've been busy changing the attitudes of thousands of children across the south and east of England so they have a much better understanding of disability and difference.

This big increase in activity means more people are needed to do the work. We're delighted to welcome Michael Calton and Jane Meechan. Michael and Jane work for us two days a week and, in many different ways are helping us to become more efficient and develop our fundraising. We also have a new presenter, Amy Nettleton who, as well as delivering workshops in East Anglia, is leading us into the world of social media. You can now follow JustDifferent on Twitter (we're @JustDifferent08) and 'like' us on Facebook. Come and say hello.

As Amy joins us, presenter Emily Scrivener is taking a break for twelve months to concentrate on training for the GB Paralympic wheelchair basketball team. We wish her luck and will be following her progress closely.

New team members

Two new staff and a workshop presenter have joined us at JustDifferent.

Michael Calton arrived in September and will be working directly with schools and workshop presenters to develop exciting and dynamic curriculum-related initiatives and tools that schools can use before and after our workshops. He's also a real whizz using Excel and has already helped us to reduce our mailshot costs by saving postage! Michael's in his third year at Chichester University, where he's training to be a teacher.

Amy Nettleton is JustDifferent's new presenter. "I think it's fantastic how JustDifferent works with such young children. And they really get it. They really understand."

When she's not presenting for JustDifferent, Amy works as an artist, runs art workshops for children and adults and teaches life drawing. Find out more about Amy's art on her website www.amylouisenettleton.co.uk or follow her on Twitter, where she's @My_Red_Studio.

Jane Meechan is an experienced fundraiser who joined JustDifferent in October. She's responsible for raising money from trusts and foundations, concentrating on grants that run over several years. The increased financial security these offer will help JustDifferent plan ahead. She was attracted to working for the charity by its precise focus. "The team knows exactly what they want to achieve."

Thank you – funders

A huge thank you to all those who've supported JustDifferent's work in 2011.

The Bothwell Charitable Trust; The Brian Mitchell Settlement; Boltini Trust; The Childwick Trust; Constance Green Foundation; Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust; Fowler, Smith & Jones Charitable Trust; Garfield Weston Foundation; Hall & Woodhouse Community Chest; The Marjorie and Geoffrey Jones Charitable Trust; The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation; Woodward Charitable Trust.



Thank you – schools

Big thanks to schools for supporting JustDifferent. Thunderous applause to Loddon Primary School in Reading whose mini-marathon raised £1,375!

Compton All Saints Primary School Winchester; Laburnum Grove Junior School, Bognor Regis, Stratford St Mary Primary School in Colchester, Chew Magna Primary school and Hillbourne School in Poole participated in Just Dress Different Day 2011. Our Lady Immaculate Primary School, Surbiton and Whitstable Junior School raised money selling cakes. Radstock School, Wokingham ran a bring-and-buy sale.

Fairview Community Primary School, Rainham, Hadlow Primary School, Tonbridge, Benedean CEP School, Cranbrook and Queens House School, Woodbridge Suffolk supported JustDifferent with their Christmas collection, play, fête and carol concert respectively. Lyndhurst Junior School, Portsmouth, Staines Preparatory School and The Mead Infant School, Epsom undertook a variety of fundraising activities including (at The Mead) painting with feet!

St James' CE Aided Infant School, Tunbridge Wells, also used their feet but in a sports day penalty shoot out. And finally, Somerhill Junior School, Hove supported us with attitude and a 'Don't Diss My Ability Day.'



Secondary school workshops: “a life-changing experience”

JustDifferent CEO Toby Hewson takes one of his personal support assistants and canine partner Quest along when he leads secondary school workshops.

He talks with students about difference, his life and demonstrates the technology that helps him communicate, operate doors and windows and switch his TV on and off.

Then Toby invites volunteers to find out how it feels to be fed your meals (warning: involves yoghurt. Can get messy!). Throughout, the students are encouraged to ask anything they like.

Jenny Lees, Personal Development Co-ordinator, Davison CE High School For Girls, Sussex, said:

“Initially many students found it quite a challenge to see him struggling to work the controls on his wheelchair and communicator. But a combination of their curiosity and Toby's energetic and humorous tenacity helped them overcome their fears. Soon every student became engaged with the fascinating insights into Toby's life.

Toby is an inspiration. The Year 9 students – and their teachers – left the session with two clear messages: 1. Although Toby may look different, he is just like any other person, he has hopes and dreams and also a wicked sense of humour! 2. Anything is possible and we can all aspire to achieve.

I consider the JustDifferent session to be a rare and very valuable eye-opening experience. For some students, it may be a life-changing experience.”



Emily Scrivener takes aim

JustDifferent presenter Emily Scrivener is taking a year's sabbatical to focus on her bid to make the GB 2012 Paralympic women's wheelchair basketball team.

Emily, who's played competitively for six years, is currently rated sixteenth or seventeenth in a squad of thirty players. The top twelve will be picked for the team.

"It's extremely competitive", she explains. "Since the 2008 Beijing Paralympics, it's really taken off. More women stay in the game and the younger ones are coming on more quickly. Ten years ago, you just had to play to be in the GB team. Not any more!"

Getting into the team will, Emily says, require "fitness, commitment, consistency and luck." Luck? "I have to avoid injury and sickness."

Her training programme is vigorous and, during playing season her week looks like this. Monday: two-and-a-half hours training in a sports hall. Tuesday: Three hours training with her local club, the Essex Outlaws. Wednesday: rest day and sports massage. Thursday: strength and conditioning training with a personal trainer in the gym, followed by swimming ("I'm up to doing half a mile in the pool now"). Friday: a hill push or alternative. Weekend: games.

Emily will find out if she's made team GB in April or May 2012. All of us at JustDifferent wish her the best of luck. And Emily says "I'm so grateful to JustDifferent for all their support. I couldn't do it without them."



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The JustDifferent website

The JustDifferent website is evolving!

We're organising our information so it's easier to find, refreshing our look and will be posting updates regularly. And we're also introducing a new page enabling teachers and teaching assistants – who we know have loads to contribute – to get involved in the development of JustDifferent workshops.

Once the changes are underway, we'll be looking for volunteers to test the new site. If you'd like to contribute, please email toby@justdifferent.org

Want to be amongst the first to find out when the new site is live? Follow us – @JustDifferent08 – on Twitter or 'like' our Facebook page.

Fundraising ideas

Inspired to support JustDifferent?

You can raise money through sales, dress different days, sports and arts events. When you do something for JustDifferent that's 'Just Different', we want to hear about it. Email michael@justdifferent.org. You can also contact Michael for resources to support your fundraising.

For more inspiration, information and ideas download the JustDifferent fundraising pack from www.justdifferent.org.

And put Just Dress Different Day Wednesday 27 June 2012 in your diary now! We'll provide more details, resources and ideas in our next newsletter.