

Dates for the two
day ...

**'Introduction to
social pedagogy'**

...course are available through this coming year. For more info email Jackie.mee@derbyshire.gov.uk or cathy.barrass@derbyshire.gov.uk

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Practitioner's view: Ricky Marshall and fishing with Finlay

Finlay is a 13 year old boy from an ordinary, loving, hard working family consisting of mum, dad, sister and Finlay himself. The family enjoy holidays at their caravan in Skegness and do the everyday normal run of the mill things that most families do.

As he grew mum Fay started to notice little things about Finlay that were a little different such as preferring to wear specific items of clothing and insisting on things being done in a certain way. Food started to become an issue and socialising became ever more difficult for him, sometimes resulting in meltdowns when Finlay found himself in large social gatherings. School also started to notice certain aspects of Finlay's behaviour that were a little different to what might be expected but, as Finlay was attending and doing okay, there was no great concern and things were ticking along until a bad experi-



ence involving a teacher knocked Finlay back and he spent some time away from school.

Then came the transition to 'big school' which can be a nerve wracking experience for most children but for Finlay it proved to be a move too far. Finlay's attendance started to decrease as he refused to go to school and when he did go he could not go into class and school had to come up with alternative strategies to cater for

Finlay's needs but eventually these failed and even the Out of School Tuition service were unable to engage with him. It was around this time that the family had input from MAT.

First Kate, a very experienced worker in social pedagogy tried to engage with Finlay but was unable to reach him as he had started to regress into himself and became selectively mute.

(...continued on page 2)



If not fishing what common third activities do you use?

Continued...fishing with Finlay

Kate had to move on and Becky, another fantastic worker took the reigns and had some success in reaching Finlay but she had to do this initially by using an I-pad in order to communicate. By this time Finlay had been referred to CAMHS and was in the process of being assessed for ASD but these things take time and there are no quick fixes.

Finlay started to engage with Becky and although he was not in school he was in a much better place than previously and the family felt that they were able to cope with the situation and MAT withdrew. Finlay started to socialise with other children in his neighbourhood more and formed a firm friendship with a brother and sister about his own age. This however proved to be a disaster as Finlay started stealing from home, staying out and gradually getting more and more into anti-social behaviour which left Fay and dad Rob at a loss as to what was

going on and so a referral was made again to MAT which is where I come in.

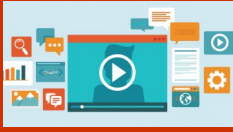
I went to meet the family with Becky and during the conversation it became apparent that Finlay enjoyed going fishing with his friends but could no longer do this.

I have used angling as a common third activity in my roles as Dad's Worker, School Family Resource Worker and MAT worker and I make sure I have all the kit I need at hand at my workplace at all times. Angling has so many positive benefits that I couldn't possibly name them all here but if it's good enough for the British Army to use in rehabilitating soldiers with PTSD then it's good enough for me. I recall wonderful early mornings trying to keep up with my late uncle as a six year old as we yomped up the hill to our favourite reservoir to try and catch a few bejewelled, magical, fascinating creatures in an inspiring natural environment.

Finlay took to me immediately we decided to go fishing. We were able to use the canal near to where he lives (in his comfort zone) where he would go with his friends previously. This allowed him to introduce me to his world and feel in control of the situation. Finlay is ultimately more comfortable communicating in his own home but he made great efforts to speak to me from underneath his baseball cap and hood which he uses as a shelter from the outside world whenever he has to interact with it, and he enjoyed entering into competition with me, even if he did change the rule sometimes to suit himself !

During this time mum Fay identified an alternative education provision for Finlay at Willow Tree Farm and she was amazingly proactive in pursuing this and took Finlay on a visit there where to everyone's delight and surprise he stayed for several hours with her and even had some lunch!

(concluded on page 3)



New Year
launch for
online learning

Social Pedagogy MOOC Firestarter

The UK Social pedagogy development network and their European colleagues have now evaluated the massive open online course MOOC in social pedagogy which ran as a pilot last year.

It covered social pedagogy as used in a range of ways across Europe including here in the UK. It also explored a range of social pedagogy ideas and approaches. Availa-

ble free online with video, text and interactive forums the course is due to relaunch in the New Year. You can stay in touch with its development here:

www.thempira.org.uk/category/mooc

Richard and Alex representing the residential social pedagogy steering group attended the Firestarter event for the new year launch to find out more about the next steps.

Although free to access learners who want a final certificate do have to individually pay a small cost. The course is a great next step for anyone's developing understanding of social pedagogy and is well worth registering as there is no expectations to complete and you can progress at your own pace.

I will keep people updated as the launch approaches.

Is Finlay's
fish getting
bigger?



Finlay now has an official diagnosis of ASD and will hopefully soon be attending Willow Tree Farm but in the meantime he has gathered enough confidence to take himself fishing at the family caravan which is a massive step forward for him.

Children with undiagnosed ASD know they are different but don't know why which can have a

devastating effect on their self-esteem and confidence and in Finlay's case he experienced extreme anxiety when faced with social situations such as secondary school. The 1-1 common third work through fishing provided him with an activity he was interested in and comfortable with which prevented him from becoming completely socially isolated and helped him to see

that there were alternatives to an education that he knew he could not possibly cope with. He is now able to go fishing by himself and will always have the skill and knowledge to allow him to take himself away from the big scary world by finding his own special place in it.

Grateful thanks to Ricky Marshall for his reflective piece about social pedagogy and early help work and thanks to Finlay too.



'Working creatively together to inspire and empower children, young people and their families and communities to be the best they can be: safe, healthy, happy, learning and working'

Stay in touch

If you have any comments about the gazette or would like to know more about the development of social pedagogy please feel free to get in touch. Also do make contact if you would like to highlight your own or colleagues work developing social pedagogy.

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Social pedagogy quote:

"There exists within everyone a grand passion, an outlandish thirst for adventure, a desire to live boldly and vividly through the journey of life."

-- Kurt Hahn

Disclaimer: we hope this provides useful and relevant information, but we cannot guarantee that all source documents referred to have been checked and verified. We cannot accept responsibility for actions or omissions taken after reading this bulletin. Nothing in this bulletin is intended as a substitute for expert, professional or legal advice.

These bulletins can be found at:

<http://bit.ly/29P1Aip>