

PERSONALISED EDUCATION

‘Personalising the Education Landscape’

Of interest to all who learn and care about the society we live in.

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Personalised Education – Editorial Peter Humphreys

Personalised Education has entered the mainstream agendas. In one respect this is encouraging but as yet the understandings offered are far from those developed over many years by the membership of organisations like *Education Now*. At the launch of *Personalised Education Now* Peter, Chair of *PEN* and Managing Editor sets out our agenda and the work that lies ahead in our efforts to personalise the education landscape.

Welcome to the first journal of *Personalised Education Now*. *PEN* emerged from *Education Now* in 1996 as the *Centre for Personalised Education Trust (CPE)* and we have recently adopted *PEN* as our trading name. In 2004, after 17 years pioneering work *Education Now* transferred its resources and membership to *PEN*.

Within our membership and supporters we have access to some great educational practitioners and thinkers of our time, and the accumulated wisdom of those from previous generations from the UK and around the world. We draw upon and help generate the resources of *Education Now* and *Educational Heretics Press*. The ideas developed within our networks have fuelled and given succour to those who have cared to really think about the nature of education and learning. They have influenced growing education critiques and debate and supported practitioners to such an extent that personalised education has now become a key government driver - albeit with their own limited take on it. Our agenda is to define and share the benefits of personalised education and learning, challenge the limited prevailing views and to envision a new personalised educational landscape. This editorial should be read in conjunction with our enclosed *PEN* leaflet detailing our Statement of Purpose, definitions and explanations of personalised education. For further insight readers should immerse themselves in the resources and debates of *PEN* for the details, critiques, practice and vision.

Clearly ‘real’ education and learning are not being addressed by our prevailing and dominant learning systems. For all the schooling, curricula and assessment we’re not individually happier, our communities are impoverished in so many ways and we face a list of self-inflicted own goals that threaten humanity, species and planetary survival. At a time when we appear to have so much, we are painfully aware we have so little, and that much progress is superficial and empty.

PEN articulates a view of education which will contribute to effective motivated learning, a happier, more fulfilled existence and a sane, sustainable future within a democratic framework.

Our traditional institutions have lost their way. One by one they

are being called upon to meet personalised needs. The ‘one size fits all’ is no longer compatible. Leading debates talk of co-construction of services in the public sector but the totality of joined-up thinking is limited and the true costs of monolithic institutional behaviours are barely accounted by the current decision makers.

Education and learning still remain synonymous with schooling and a version of it based on pre-determined, pre-packaged, sanitised contents, of regulated progression and assessment, in pre-defined places and regulated timing of learning. At first glance it all appears so logical and neat, meticulously planned and endlessly measured. However, the fall-out is enormous and children from the earliest age look to the constant testing and assessment to gauge their worth. Childhood and adolescence have been appropriated by the adult world. Children are separated from communities, dragged through curricula with which they barely connect and of which they remember little. From the outset we develop ageist and fragmented communities struggling to understand each other and live together with purpose and harmony. Every technique of coercion (overt and subtle) including bribery, is employed to keep them firmly to the treadmill, in the specified places at the predetermined progression. Criterion referenced, minimal competency curricula programmes become substitutes for life. They are based on problematic linear rationales for learning and underplay what is a much more complex multi-level process. They are disconnected and fragmented from meaning and purpose. From the outset casualties litter the journey.

Remarkably this rite of passage is repeated again and again, generation after generation. There’s plenty of tinkering... people know it’s not right but the paradigm shift that’s required to transform learning, lives and communities is ignored... it’s just too big a super-tanker to turn round. It’s an endless production line mediated by instructors not educators, generating homogenised, clone-like outcomes perfectly matching cloned shops, products, food and so on, that plague our towns and cities across the globe. Give me something authentic – please!

The 'life spark' present in every child rapidly dims as it labours through the system filled with other people's agendas, rules and evaluations of their worth. Motivation, spirit and passion are sapped. Learning becomes more chance than design and is replaced by acceptance that it's just something you have to get through. They learn that choice is an illusion, the impossibility of learning everything and that there will always be a booster programme to ensure they catch up!

Our present learning systems are founded more on control than education. They are a 19th century legacy with little correspondence to what we know about human development, the brain or our social and emotional needs. As a result we are left picking up the pieces of the damage we create and misreading the symptoms as messages that the medicine is not strong enough. So the irony of it all is that it is the current solutions that appear to project more of the same and not less. The reality needs different solutions not - 'business as usual.' In the USA the 'No Child Left Behind' statute exemplifies the extent to which this can go. Governments fret just like schools about international league tables and comparisons, and rush onward, uncertain why or how like lemmings they leap into the abyss. For now, numbers, grades, and graphs are a substitute for learning, life and communities of worth.

There appears to be little concern at the discontinuity between what educators claim as goals and the actualities and outcomes of current learning systems which daily run rough-shod across human rights, democratic behaviours, dignity and morality. Problems are compounded by the social and life patterns in families that mean parents are also too tired or disinclined to share their lives with their offspring. The status quo is complicitly supported.

Those who challenge these issues and would offer alternative pathways are characterised as incurable romantics immune to the realities and practicalities of life. But are we? On the contrary, we believe we already have some of the understandings and frameworks to achieve solutions. Thankfully we don't have to start from scratch to re-conceptualise learning, life and communities. Personalised education and learning has prospered and exists in many forms.

Many people write their own more productive, diverse and personalised scripts for learning and life. As more and more take responsibility for their own lives they ditch conventional work, career, consumption and life patterns and they require a 'Personalised Educational Landscape' that can accommodate needs of the 21st century and beyond. Indeed, more and more people are making their own personalised choices throughout or during parts of their lives.

These operate most completely where people work autonomously in invitational learning centres, home-based education networks, small schools and community-based projects, through a continuum in which elements are experienced in a range of other situations, including 'oases' within current systems.

At the end of the day learners who experience truly personalised education are overwhelmingly more fulfilled and rounded individuals whose experience of learning, childhood and family and community is rich and secure.

Let's take an example related to home-based education - a solution for some but not appropriate for all. Research tells us that even

on the normative indicators of current school systems on average these learners are at two years beyond their schooled peers. However, this pales to insignificance compared to the longitudinal benefits as they turn into citizens – they are physically fitter, less prone to mental illness and crime, they are more social and active in their communities and enjoy satisfying work. They are more contented, rounded human beings. It is remarkable that this happens without funding, without a system of expensively resourced buildings and educational professionals and support services. They are adept at using the resources of the home, library, town city, countryside, the media, the open source and available catalogue curricula, local and global. These tailor what they offer to the needs and desires of the learner. Very quickly the learners develop strong skills of independence and of research. But they are also very social. They network with others if home-based and learn together and in groups of learners and families.

What lies at the heart of their learning is experientially, learner-centred, learner-managed learning. However, it goes further because all age-learning, and the disregard for the conventions of curricular and assessment age-based targets are usually core. There are no constraints of timetables, terms and years. So what's the threat?! At a minimum we have a lot to share and learn from just one element of the personalised landscape'. If the government and present educators want to create a real personalised learning system they cannot afford not to learn from and open real dialogue with current practitioners and thinkers. This is not an issue of blame. There are many good people tirelessly working within the system (many in our membership!) and we shouldn't alienate them. There are also many initiatives and practices with which those in the personalised arena can learn. It's time to engage, time to realign resources, reinvent our learning systems and produce a 'Personalised Educational Landscape' that really does meet needs.

The vision of a broad personalised landscape is not a risk to the community as a whole. It concerns only learners, families and communities who choose to adopt the approaches and life implications. They do it as consenting individuals and currently without support and recognition. Yet they are successful in adding to the positive cultural, educational and social capital of our communities. If these were extended and divergence encouraged, personalised learners and educators are quite happy to be judged by their own learning, lives and contributions to communities. Who knows what impact and ramifications that might have across the educational and learning spectrum!

With your commitment and help *Personalised Education Now* can accelerate the pioneering work of *Education Now* fuelling a drive for a more enlightened personalised educational landscape.

Peter Humphreys is Chair and Trustee of PEN and Managing Editor of the Journal. He spent 25 years as a teacher in Birmingham, 9 as Head Teacher of a Primary School. He now works as an Associate Adviser in Birmingham LEA and as a consultant with BECTA (British Educational Communication and Technology Agency). He writes in his personal capacity.

Ed Lines

"I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones." *John Cage*

Response to Asylum Work... The Influence of Education Now!

- Dr Lesley Browne

In the final issue of *Education Now* Ian Cornell of the Social Science Dept, Park Hall School Solihull described the project around the Asylum Crisis. Dr Lesley Browne reports back on the impact this has had.

Readers of *Education Now* might remember the last Feature Supplement focusing on "Addressing Attitudes Towards The Asylum 'Crisis'" by Ian Cornell, a Citizenship teacher at Park Hall School. One of the aims of publishing the article was to share ideas on the new curriculum area of Citizenship Education, with the possibility of sharing teaching resources and ideas which might prove useful for other teachers to use in their classrooms. The article also provided a useful vehicle to celebrate the work of young people at Park Hall School with a wider audience.

Little did we know how much impact this article would have! We thought it might be of interest to readers of the new journal 'Personalised Education Now' to know the impact a published article can have on those involved in the process. Shortly after the publication of the article Ian was contacted by 'Global Express' who sent copies of their latest journal to use in the classroom.

The students and their parents were thrilled to bits to receive their copies of 'Education Now', "It was an absolute pleasure to see the joy on the students faces when they received their copies of *Education Now*", and parents soon contacted the school to express their delight at the standard of the work published. The publication of work by young people obviously gave great pleasure and has had a tangible effect on the student's self-esteem. It has also been shared with all staff via the school intranet and been given out as part of our internal professional development publication.

A week after the article was published the school was visited by Chris Pittaway, DFES CPD Citizenship Advisor for the West Midlands. This visit had been arranged by David Walker, Solihull Advisor for Citizenship, to look at Citizenship Education at Park Hall School. During the course of the visit we took the opportunity to share the work of our students on Asylum Seekers with Chris Pittaway and to show him a display of their work. Chris was impressed by the standard of the student's work, their insight into this area of study and the approach taken to develop the work on Asylum Seekers. We also said that we were extremely proud of the fact that 'Education Now' had considered the work worthy of publication and had recently published an article documenting this work. Chris was given a copy of the article to take away with him at the end of the visit. Chris expressed a wish to share this good practice with other teachers and asked if he could send it to other LEAs across the country. After contacting the editorial team of 'Education Now' Chris posted the article to a range of LEAs and educationalists in the U.K.

Chris Pittaway phoned the following week to inform us that Don Row the DFES CPD Citizenship National Coordinator had quoted directly from the article at a conference on Citizenship in the East Midlands the previous Saturday, by reading out three extracts from the young peoples work on Asylum Seekers. Moreover he wanted to know if we could deliver two workshops at the 'Citizenship Moving Forward' Conference on 'Being an Effective Citizenship Coordinator' and for Ian to contribute to a workshop with Julie

Tortise (BASS) on 'Refugees and Ethnic Diversity'. Our Head Teacher, Neil Craven supported the request by enabling both of us to attend the conference and on Thursday 23rd September 2004 we arrived at Millennium Point to deliver our respective workshops. 'Education Now' provided us with numerous copies of the article to distribute at the conference, which also facilitated yet another opportunity to share the student's work with practitioners of Citizenship Education. Moreover, Chris Pitterway also mentioned the work that Ian and his students had completed in his keynote address. At the end of the conference we both went away enthused, we had a wonderful day, had learned so much from experts in the field of Citizenship Education and felt we had also been able to make a small contribution of our own. However, more importantly we could not wait to return to school to share our experiences with the students themselves and impress on them how much interest their work had generated.

Without the support of 'Education Now' this process might not have begun! The journal has influenced so many people over its fifteen years in print and I thought it would be useful to put on record how one article can influence so many people. We will all miss 'Education Now', but look forward to the future for more inspirational words and articles from 'Personalised Education Now.'

Dr Lesley Brown is Head of the Social Science Dept at Park Hall. She was an active member of *Education Now* since its birth and a regular contributor to *Educational Now News and Review* and several publications

Ed Lines

"The world our kids are going to live in is changing four times faster than our schools." Dr Willard Daggett

Educational Heretics Press and Education Now Books
- Professor Roland Meighan
In preparation and planning.

Do research the catalogues of Educational Heretics Press and Education Now books. Over 80 books have been published to challenge and inspire those concerned with learning and educational systems. www.edheretics.gn.apc.org or via the General Office Address on the back page.

Look out for forthcoming publications *Comparing Learning Systems: and why home-based educators are trailblazers*, by Roland Meighan. There is also a new series, *Community-Creativity-Choice-Change*, edited by Mark Webster, with his *Finding Voices, Making Choices* as the lead book.

The Editorial and Production team are also planning a publication focused on Personalised Education

Professor Roland Meighan was a founder director of Education Now and is a leading thinker, publisher, and author of Education Now and Educational Heretics Press. He has written and presented extensively across the world. His booklist is too numerous to list but includes *A Sociology of Educating* with Iram Siraj-Blatchford, Continuum Books (4th Edition) ISBN 0-8264-6815-2. His latest work is *Damage Limitation: trying to reduce the harm schools do to children* Educational Heretics Press, ISBN 1-900219-27-1

Personalised Education Now Home-based Education Research.

- Mike Fortune-Wood

PEN is engaged in a major research project into home-based education. PEN researcher Mike Fortune – Wood shares the key findings so far.

This first questionnaire is focused upon demographics and questions of who home educates and why. The more salient results include:

- The number of families home educating in England is far greater than other parts of the UK, but as a proportion of families resident in each region, Wales and Scotland have higher proportions (1.7 times in Scotland and 1.6 times in Wales).
- On average families responding to this survey have 1.8 children, higher than the average family size for the UK population (1.63).
- Few families home educate one child while sending others to school, though there is evidence that older siblings sometimes return to school, possibly to complete examinations.
- In $\frac{3}{4}$ of families women are primarily responsible for education, with partners jointly home educating in 21% of families and men taking primary responsibility in only 3% of families.
- Women are more than 8 times more likely to give up, reduce or change work than men.
- Bullying, often cited as the reason for families home educating, declines in importance over time: 44% of families who have home educated for less than a year cite bullying as a reason to home educate, falling to 28% in the next 12 months and around 12% in the subsequent year. Only a small core of families cite bullying as a continued factor long after the child's withdrawal.
- Over time, negative anti-school reasons decline in favour of positive, pro-home education reasons. Nearly 38% of families identify the child's preference as a reason to home educate.
- Academic reasons for home education are mentioned by only 19% of families who have home educated for less than a year. After one year this rises to 26% subsequently returning to around 20%, although those who home educate for religious reasons cite academic issues more than twice as often (45%).
- The US census office suggests that 33% of home educators in the USA do so for religious reasons. In the UK the proportion is far lower (8.3%). Additionally, our research suggests that even those who belong to a faith group are seldom motivated to home educate for religious reasons.
- Surprisingly, only 5% reported school phobia as a reason to home educate. However, two attempted suicides reported in the survey are some indication of the misery of this minority of children.
- 5% reported that teachers were disrespectful or had bullied their children; in one case a teacher was dismissed.
- Parents of SEN children report that their children's needs are not being met in school and often said that their child's health or needs were made worse by inappropriate

treatment. Sometimes LEAs did not recognise a condition or there were lengthy delays in provision. A significant number of parents reported that some of their child's special needs declined subsequent to beginning home education.

- Overall the most commonly given reason for home education is the flexibility it affords. (36%).

I am currently working on the feedback from a questionnaire on local home education groups. The work has recently been boosted by the recruitment of a volunteer researcher with expertise in SEN.

Mike Fortune-Wood is a researcher and home-based educator. He runs the UK's largest Home Based Education Website (www.home-education.org.uk) and home educates their four children. He is married to Rev. Dr Jan Fortune-Wood is a writer, independent liturgist and life coach Jan has written extensively on autonomous education and taking children seriously. Jan has three books in the Educational Heretics Publishing stable.

Home-based Education Research Funding News

- Trustees

PEN's research received a boost this Autumn.

The Trustees of PEN are delighted to report that the *PEN* research received a further boost with a £10,000 grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is one of the largest independent grant making foundations in the UK and we very grateful for their support. www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk. Our research is far reaching in scope and will enable all elements of a Personalised Education Landscape to learn from the experiences and practice of home-based education. To find out more or take part in the research please visit our website at www.homeeducationresearch.org

Worth a look... books, resources, websites etc

Careers Un-ltd. Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life? Jonathan Robinson and Carmel McConnell. Pearson Education Limited. ISBN 1-843-04026-3.

This book is guaranteed to give you a different take on life and work. It is unconventionally presented and thinks 'out of the box'. Choose a ltd or un-ltd future, redefine success.

The Unfinished Revolution John Abbott and Terry Ryan. Network Educational Press Ltd. ISBN 1 855 39 067 1

John Abbott and Terry Ryan synthesise with consummate clarity, evidence and skill why we've got our education system upside and inside out and why it's fundamentally flawed against our modern scientific and social understanding about human development and learning. Visit - *21st Century Learning Initiative website* at www.21learn.org ... a great resource and well worth exploring.

Weblogs... have you come across the phenomena?

Use your search engine to discover the fascinating world of 'blogging'. There's everything from the frivolous, the intriguing, the indulgent to powerful dialogues, essays and debates. Probably the fastest and cheapest way (often totally free) to get on yourself a website. Who will start a weblog on Personalised Education?

Book Review

- Dr Bernard Trafford.

Consulting Pupils: what's in it for schools? Julia Flutter and Jean Ruddock, Routledge Falmer. ISBN 0-415-26305-0

I was excited to receive this book to review. Although I quickly learned that the title was dictated by being part of a series, I liked the tag *What's in it for schools?* Almost everything I have written about school councils and consulting pupils has tried to link school democracy with school improvement: in other words, schools that go down the democratic path become kinder, happier and more effective. The body of research evidence is growing all the time: in answer to comments in a recent *News and Review*, some of us still in the system believe we can make bits of it more humane! So I liked the slant of investigating what schools could get out of consulting their pupils.

In the first of the four chapters the authors consider the scope of what is meant by consulting, discuss a range, if not a very exhaustive one, of the literature and neatly summarise the consequent benefits in teaching and learning for pupils, teachers and schools.

Chapter 2, to my mind, contains the meat of the book, listing the 15 school 'profiles', case studies of schools that have engaged in consultation exercises with their pupils with (one might presume) a positive outcome for teaching and for their learning.

As I read the first profile, my pulse quickened. The authors describe that school's "... whole-hearted commitment to demonstrating that... pupils matter:

- A strong sense of membership and inclusiveness which is balanced by a clear appreciation of individual differences...
- An emphasis that learning is "for [pupils]" rather than something "done to them"
- A clear respect for young people and a refusal to underestimate or ignore their capacities
- A commitment to providing both challenge and support for learning."

My kind of place! Curiously, although the authors praise the school and note that "the programme has contributed to the school's impressive achievements", little more is said, except that such an ethos is hard to maintain and needs the consistent support of the leadership team. From this shining example of a root-and-branch approach (much more than a 'programme', surely?) to running a school based on respect for pupils, the authors move on to other profiles, nearly all of which are concerned with focused discussions on teaching or behaviour. Thus there is one interesting case of a science teacher developing project work on topics identified by the pupils as being of interest to them (now, there's a turn-up!). Only one other case study links a democratic atmosphere with the school's detailed work on learning and behaviour. In another no connection is made between the presence of an established school council and the success of other aspects of pupil empowerment: indeed, the authors make a sweeping generalisation about the *limitations* of a council's usefulness. The chapter ends on a somewhat negative note about the dangers and pitfalls of consultation.

The third chapter deals with pupils' perspectives of teaching and learning, covering pupil comments on such issues as time, the structure of the school day and the rhythm of the year;

understanding assessment and teachers' judgments; the impact of friendships; and sustaining pupils' engagement with learning. These are less illuminating than the previous chapter's analyses of the effectiveness (or otherwise) of particular teaching styles.

The final chapter tackles the question: *what's in it for schools?* The authors start on safe ground with the pragmatic reasons: pupils give first-hand evidence about teaching and learning; engagement in a learning-focused dialogue can help build a more positive learning climate; above all, pupil involvement can bring about deeper, lasting change. So what's the conclusion? Are there new, profound insights? What did all those 15 case studies tell us that is new?

Sadly, there's something of a silence. Preparation for democratic citizenship and the Citizenship Curriculum are mentioned, and yet another pitfall is identified (!) - that of tokenism, and the danger that some voices are excluded. Good sense comes in a quote from Lynn Davies who sees 'conflicting voices' as natural and necessary:

"Genuine promotion of pupil voice is the acceptance and, indeed, encouragement of the positive conflict inherent in a democracy."

So are the authors prepared to make a bold statement to end with? Curiously, they end in the neutral, even flat tone with which they began. Perhaps this is a problem inherent in writing a 'book in a series', and conforming to some kind of template. But the whole book is cautious, full of observations of dangers and difficulties, and lacking in excitement or vision of the possibilities: the authors seem to display little enthusiasm for their subject! They end the book with Michael Fullan's challenging question,

"What would happen if we treated the student as someone whose opinion mattered?"

They respond:

"We are now, thirteen years later, in a better position to answer."

It's a shame that they make no attempt to do so.

Dr Bernard Trafford is Head Teacher of Wolverhampton Grammar School and Chair of the Headmasters Conference. Bernard was a regular contributor to Education Now News and Review and is the author of a number of publications including *Participation, Power-sharing and School Improvement*, Education Now Publications. ISBN 1-900219-10-7

Personalised Education Now Website.

- Peter Humphreys
Development of our website.

Over the next 12 months we hope to substantially develop our website... www.person.edgn.apc.org. We plan to raise its profile and create an influential resource, archive, publication and communication tool for our organisation.

Ed Lines

"The spontaneous wish to learn, which every normal child possesses as shown in its efforts to walk and talk should be the driving force in education." Bertrand Russell

Personalised Education

– Editorial Christopher Shute

Chris (our Copy Editor) charts the origins of PEN and calls for contributions to the journal and newsletters.

“New days, new ways!” sighed Wally T., my Head of Department in the mid-sixties, after his first encounter with the new first years. Wally was one of the school's Discipline Machines, but a little boy, no doubt emerging from one of the newly-fashionable Integrated Day schools, had spoken to him as one does to a friend. To his credit, Wally did not upbraid the boy, but I suspect that he began to look forward to his retirement. He was an old-fashioned, unrepentant communist, an authoritarian who saw it as his sole task in the classroom to insert knowledge into the boys' heads, by any means necessary. He was good at it, very good. Yet the culture of the grammar school, with its insistence on accuracy, compendious learning and respect for those who possessed it, (his culture), was shading into something else. A more egalitarian model was taking shape, and he would not find it easy to take his place in it.

The sixties and seventies saw a challenge to the visceral conservatism of teachers like Mr. T. It took the form of experiments with more flexible modes of teaching and learning, and a new recognition that, when all is said and done, education is about children, and has to meet their needs. They are the ‘customers’, not their parents, or the Government. Naturally, this movement foundered, as such enterprises so often do, on the simplistic paradigm which insists on equating good education with the large-scale acquisition of knowledge - any knowledge - whether the learner really needs to have it or not. It is easy to tell people, especially children, what their needs are, and then to ‘meet’ those needs as cheaply and verifiably as possible. It is a great deal harder to devote time to exploring the unique range of interests and skills which each child possesses, and then providing him or her with the means to master them.

Education Now began because a group of educators recognised that our national approach to education would not change radically until the ideas which underpinned it had been closely examined by a significant number of teachers, administrators and academics. The home education movement, which had begun in the late seventies and early eighties, was beginning to crack the monolith of compulsory schooling, and the core-group behind *Education Now* was convinced that the freedom and flexibility offered by home-based child-rearing was something which could form the basis of a reconfigured, child-friendly education system.

We have been exploring home-based and informal education, trying to create a base of ideas and principles which can be made to work in practice. Realising that not every family can educate in isolation we have contacted several groups which have set up small, child-centred learning communities, where more than one family's children can come together to share activities and grow in social competence. *Education Now* has for some time wanted to act as a co-ordinator and focal point for anyone who wishes to educate people informally, outside the confines of a classroom, and we have taken the decision to re-launch ourselves as *Personalised Education Now*. This will enable us to emphasise that the individual learner, and no-one else, is at the centre of our interest and concern as educators. As it happens, the Government has also begun very recently to talk about ‘personalised learning’, and though we confidently expect their ideas about what is meant by this expression to be markedly different from ours, we hope

that as the phrase is used more and more often, everyone who is interested in education will bring the debate into the widest public arena.

We shall continue with the journal, but we need copy from our readers. You are essential to this enterprise. We are looking for dissent and polemic as well as writing about techniques of personalised learning. We want to keep on challenging the assumptions which animate much of the Government's programme, and we particularly want to be able to say to officialdom: “You talk about more personalised education: well and good, we have been practising precisely that for longer than we care to think, and we know how to do it. Why don't you ask us for help?”

We can change the face of modern education by means of our ideas and the example we can set of realistic, successful, non-professionalised education. Above all, we want to show by what we do that one doesn't have to be an academic or a salaried worker in schools to be able to write effectively on raising and educating children. Whoever you are who read this, you can write for us, and your work will be considered on exactly the same basis as that of everyone else who has appeared in these pages at one time or another. We want opinions, not literature. We should be delighted to hear from ordinary parents about their experiences in home-based education. We should also like to hear from learners themselves, even if they are children, and not entirely at home with grown-up writing. Education is the concern of far more than the trained professionals who do it in our schools. It happens whenever learners ask questions and interrogate their environment to find out how it works. In fact, true education is thoroughly satisfied curiosity: no curiosity, no education.

We are not dogmatists, concerned only with a limited range of carefully vetted doctrinaire opinions. I should be delighted to receive articles written from a viewpoint contrary to the one which we exist to put forward. I look for reason and evidence, not conformity to a manifesto. We need to live in a universe of discourse where the criterion of judgement is what is observed, not what is assumed. Above all, we need to be authorised to experiment, to promote change and to accept that each person is unique. That means, in particular, that approaches which succeed for one may not be suitable for another. We hope very much that this journal will be able to erect a serious critique of the present system, with its obsessive determination to put every learner in the country through the same ‘process’, following the same, minutely prescribed curriculum, sitting the same standardised tests and even, if the latest Government plans are put into operation, wearing the same clothes as everybody else in the school.

We also hope to hear from those heroic people who run informal learning groups for youngsters whose parents choose to educate them out of school. These are at the heart of our vision for a better educational landscape. I have visited some of these endeavours, and I have been impressed by the enormous variety of settings and activities in which they offer children a chance to learn in their own way and at their own speed. We need to hear about this work, and celebrate it.

Education needs visionaries, now more than at any time. Our system is more than a hundred years old, and in that time little of any significance has changed. Some schools have carpets on their floors, and brighter interior decoration. The pupils sit through lessons in a wider range of subjects than they did in the past, and emerge at the end of the process with certificates attesting to their

having studied all sorts of things about which they still know very little, and of which they will mostly never think seriously again. Yet we still promote in our schools a utilitarian, Gradgrindian model of instruction: learn this or that because it will get you a better job, a University place, a better degree. Learn because your elders and betters know infinitely better than you do what knowledge you 'need' to possess. Never question, and above all, do not dare to reject any part of the curriculum for yourself, since that will make you a 'bad' student, subject to browbeating and even punishment.

We have not yet grasped the fact that learning is for the learners, and they will do it best if it satisfies a real, urgent need of theirs. Compulsory learning tends to create antagonism to teachers and a philistinism which never ceases to exasperate anyone who still expects schooling to transmit high cultural values. We need to refocus our education system on its real 'customers' - the children and young people, for whom in the end it must succeed, since anything which is compulsory has absolutely no business to fail.

We have already come a long way. The Government is using some of our terminology, including phrases like 'personalised learning' which we created. Naturally they will attach a completely different set of meanings to such expressions, but by dint of repetition and constant exegesis, we have a chance to put our agenda into the minds of more and more people whose decisions count.

Will you help us to achieve this by writing for this journal and our newsletters? It may be the most influential thing you will ever do.

Christopher Shute is Copy Editor of the journal and trustee of PEN. After 25 years secondary teaching Chris has researched and written widely on education. He was been a regular contributor to Education Now News and Review and is author of *Compulsory Schooling Disease*, Educational Heretics Press. ISBN 0-9518022-5-9 in addition to books on Alice Miller, Edmond Holmes and Bertrand Russell (all in the Educational Heretics Press and Education Now Publishing catalogue)

Ed Lines

"We can listen to the answers of very many people, but what evolution has bequeathed to each of us is a distrust of anything we have not worked out for ourselves. It's the pain of 'working it out' that makes us authentic." John Abbott

The Personalised Education Suite
- Professor Roland Meighan
Educational Heretics Press and *Education Now Books* already has a back catalogue of books that have resonance with *Personalised Education*.

The selection enclosed as an insert to the journal is not exclusive but has been put together to assist existing and new readers to deepen their understanding. New books are in preparation and being planned.

Dispatches from our Grandfather Correspondent

- Michael Foot

Michael reflects on the real nature of learning

One of the more improbable events of my summer was to share cricket umpiring duties with Sir Ron Dearing. Back in 1993 I had corresponded with him as he attempted to make more manageable the National Curriculum. Looking now at that correspondence, I recall my particular dismay at reading in his final report that:

"many schools will want in the first year of Key Stage 1 to use time... to teach them (children) how to learn."

If eleven years on, Sir Ron still fails to realise that children achieve vast amounts of learning, indeed are at their best as learners, before ever going near a school, he might usefully have spent time not umpiring, but with my grandchildren, Gemma and James, at energetic play on the boundary edge.

He would have found Gemma, not yet eighteen months old, and unable to say more than a word or two, nevertheless capable of holding a conversation and speaking in sentences. She initiates conversations and responds to others by uttering her various sounds in the structure of the sentences. More words will follow soon and she will have mastered speech in most of its complexities – how's that for learning!

He might also have been helped by James to realise the naivety of his thinking about children's learning. Now just three-years old, James asked his mother recently: "Can I watch a Bob the builder video?" Told that he must wait a short while, his response was: "Mum, I want to watch Bob." When his mother remained unpersuaded, his pleading response became: "Mum, I *need* to watch Bob,"

From "Can I?" through to "I want to", to "I *need* to" – how about that for the wonder of pre-school learning! Learnt, but not untaught in any formal sense – so we must be aware of those who would have us believe that, on going to school, children need to be taught "how to learn".

It is no secret that the driving force behind Sir Ron's curriculum reform in 1993 was Chris Woodhead, who was soon to exert his malign influence even more obviously as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools. His successor in that role was Mike Tomlinson – no longer HMCI – who is presently chairing the government's 'Working Group on 14-19 Reform.' This has been established because of high levels of disaffection among school children which, in consequence, at sixteen causes (to use the group's own words): "too many young people to leave learning or fail to progress."

Don't you recoil from the idea of people "leaving learning"? They go to school to be taught how to learn and when they leave school they leave learning! It was surely more than just a rich irony that Dearing's five year-olds from 1993 are Tomlinson's disaffected sixteen-year-olds in 2004!

Yet in a leaflet that summarises its interim report, Tomlinson's group assures young people that its proposals mean:

“that you can concentrate on what’s best for you, instead of having to take tonnes of exams, for loads of different subjects about things that you might not be really interested in.”

Might Tomlinson be on the verge of a breakthrough? Might he, a fellow grandparent, be on the brink of realising that all of the successful pre-school learning that his and my grandchildren achieve happens because they are ‘interested’? Might he be about to acknowledge that the remedy for disaffection and low rates of participation in school after 16 lies not just in reforming the curriculum for 14-19 year-olds? How long before he and his political masters recognise the nature of learning and the conditions in which it best flourishes, and set about the necessary root and branch school provision for children of all ages?

Michael Foot is a retired Primary Head teacher and was a long time member of Education Now and regular contributor to News and Review. He has co-authored *Let Our Children Learn*, Educational Heretics Press, ISBN 1-871526-49-3 and contributed a chapter to *Damage Limitation: trying to reduce the harm schools do to children*. Roland Meighan. Educational Heretics Press. ISBN 1-900219-27-1

Book Review

- Maurice Frank

Closing the Book on Homework, by John Buell. Temple University Press. ISBN 1-59213-218-9

Anyone with a significant public platform to oppose homework intrigues me. Buell noticed that teenagers' reasons for failing to complete the US school system, started with having too much homework to cope with, and having to attend lessons in a state of fear about this. This is his second book on it, updating the first, which had coincided with the media impact made by Pescataway, in New Jersey, setting a limit on homework load its ‘public’ schools were allowed to set.

Despite its US point of view, the book is a valuable social record of the trends in public opinion on homework, in the West, presently and during recent history. Comparisons with Japan are used to refute the argued benefits of keeping increasing workload hoping to make the economy more successful: once this has been done enough to get in the way of creativity, it harms the economy. Singapore fiddles its high place in world leagues of school performance, by sending lower achieving children to school in Malaysia while importing children who score high on tests, into its own schools. A history of US public opinion is given, revealing that as bogglingly early as 1880 there was concern at the health risks of over studying, that prompted some schools to abolish homework. That's a century before what happened to me. The president of the Boston school board wrote of intervening to stop his own children struggling with "nervous exhaustion and agitation ... long after the assigned tasks had ceased to have any educational value." It was business, desiring workers inured to routine, that kept demanding homework and using moral talk against the degenerate vices of the poor to claim they needed to be taught to work. In 1930 a Society for the Abolition of Homework was founded. Doctors were willing to help parents argue health risks, about "nervous conditions" or lack of time for outdoor activity, to schools. At a time of adult political conflict over working hours, school reformers, as Buell terms them, were proposing equivalent laws to apply to school.

The closed political culture we have been stuck in, for more homework pressure and testing, and for expecting them to turn out right, he dates from the early sixties, this is US-specific. Meritocracy and work ethic were valued both for Cold War reasons

and to out compete the developing world at a time before it had been trapped into debt slavery. It was the time of expecting scientific utopias, the early space age. This helps me make sense of something Buell does not mention, the emergence of the gifted movement. I always thought of it beginning then as a reaction of a few school extremists against progressive successes. In Britain we think of the Black Papers as right wing rants by sick minds awaiting their chance to come later, in the seventies backlash. To realise American politics had already crystallised into a pro-homework drive with public opinion, much earlier than that explains how the gifted movement had serious backing and could sound scientific, when I know as one of its victims that it's entirely an enslaver's scam.

The book's fault is that it says nothing against compulsion. It sounds as if Buell wants to be too mainstream for that, and he admits fear of upsetting poor communities who think schoolwork is part of fighting their corner economically, even if he thinks they are wrong. It's the same reason as why some in the home education scene are wrong to want total powers for parents instead of the children. Yet in practice Buell finds his logic leading in the direction of a kind of personalised approach, where he proposes schools should give students time of their own, for "independent work", with teachers available to help with its content when needed. That his gradualist approach lacks the urgency that could be conveyed by the clear cut experience of homework pressure survivors, is of course why he has been published and we have not, yet what he has written helps to prove the criminality towards students, of all the political elite's exclusion of stressed students' experiences from public recognition, while there is plenty of talk of teachers' stress. The book is a staging post making public some facts that illuminate the landscape and show there is no proven or measured evidence for any belief that homework is beneficial.

Maurice Frank was a member of Education Now and now PEN. Maurice is a lay member of the Scottish parliament Cross Party Group on the autistic spectrum, and takes part in a Fife group's responses on school aftermath difficulties. He survived irrational homework pressure that wrecked his chance as a child author, and pursues through the Civic Forum a case for a publishing right for all unrecognised social issues.

PEN National Conference - Toddington

- Janet Meighan

A reminder.

This year's conference takes place at the Planned Environmental Therapy Trust Conference Centre at Toddington in Gloucestershire over 16th and 17th October. We are grateful for the £1,000 grant from the Potential Trust which has supported us once again.

The conference theme is *Assessment of Personalised Learning: Beyond Stultifying Testing to the Celebration of Learning*, and will be led by Linda Fryer, Linda Hurrell and Carl Wilson from the *Stables Project* (one of our affiliated groups) in York. Details from Janet at the General Office.

Janet Meighan was an early years teacher and teacher educator. She was a founder director of Education Now. Janet has been a regular contributor to News and Review and her writing includes *Early Childhood Education: the way forward* with Professor Philip Gammage, Education Now Books, ISBN 1-871526-21-3. Janet is secretary, member of the editorial and production team and trustee of PEN.

Powerful Young Voices

- Six young people and their mentor
Brent Cameron from the Wondertree
Foundation in Canada.

An example of young people speaking powerfully for
themselves... a declaration of Learner's Rights and
Responsibilities put together in 1994

1. As a learner, I have the right to allow my own enthusiasm to guide my learning.
2. As a learner, I have the right to choose and direct the nature and conditions of my learning experience. As a learner I am responsible for the results I create.
3. As a learner, I have the right to perfect the skills to be a conscious, self-confident and resourceful individual.
4. As a learner, I have the right to be held in respect. It is my responsibility to hold others in respect.
5. As a learner, I have the right to a nurturing and supportive family and community. My family and community have the right and responsibility to be my primary resource.
6. As a learner, I have the right and responsibility to enter into relationships based on mutual choice, collaborative effort, challenge and mutual gain.
7. As a learner, I have the right to be exposed to a diverse array of ideas, experiences, environments and possibilities. This exposure is the responsibility of myself, my parents and my mentors.
8. As a learner, I have the right to evaluate my learning according to my own sensibilities. I have the right to request and the responsibility to include the evaluations of my mentors.
9. As a learner, I have the right to co-create decisions that concern me.
10. As a learner, I have the right and responsibility to openly consider and respect the ideas of others, whether or not I accept these ideas.
11. As a learner, I have the right to enter a learning organization which offers, spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical support, and operates in an open and inclusive manner.
12. As a learner, I have the right of equal access to resources, information and funding.

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Ed Lines

“The traditional educational system is obsolete... we need to replace today’s assembly-line lockstep with ‘self-directed’ learning that is based on modern day principles of cognitive science – including discovery, meaning making, immersion and self assessment – and the natural love of learning with which every person is born.”
Arthur Andersen Consulting Group

The Children’s Bill

- Leslie Barson

The case for fighting the Children’s Bill

The government, using Victoria Climbié’s tragic story, have placed a Bill before Parliament, claiming that it will stop tragedies like hers from occurring again. The Bill will allow the government to establish one or more databases containing information about all children and their parents, including low-level ‘concerns’, from every agency involved with each family. Agencies - including GPs, health visitors and nurseries - will share the information without knowledge or consent of the families involved. From birth, every child in England and Wales will have a file on the system. People on database will not be able to see what it holds about them.

An example of the kind of ‘concerns’ that will be flagged on a child’s file include children’s and parents’ physical and mental health issues, ‘frequently moving house’, ‘non-constructive spare time/easily bored’, ‘criminal area of residence’, ‘negative home influence on education’, ‘poor general parenting skills’ - and many others besides.

As the Bill will overturn the Common Law duty of confidentiality, information will be shared without the knowledge or consent of children and their parents. Eileen Munroe of the London School of Economics explains; “The Bill assumes that professionals’ existing power to dispense with consent when sharing information about concerns of abuse needs to be extended to all concerns about a child, but the case for this is not made. Indeed, the Bill fails to differentiate between the significantly different issues posed in identifying, assessing, and intervening in each category of problem. Consequently, no convincing case is made for assuming that sharing information without consent will substantially increase the effectiveness of all services to children.

Moreover, it may lead to substantial, unintended adverse effects:

1. Children who are the victims of significant abuse or neglect will be harder to identify in the plethora of minor concerns being reported.
2. Children’s willingness to talk to professionals will be reduced, knowing that they cannot be guaranteed confidentiality.
3. Parents’ trust and confidence in professionals will be damaged, making them reluctant to ask for help and to co-operate.
4. Professionals’ methods of working will change with the risk that, in today’s defensive culture, they will report all causes of concern, however minor, creating an avalanche of false alerts, damaging already overstretched services.
5. The technical problems of ensuring accuracy and security are immense as evidenced by other large databases such as for criminal records. (Tracking Children, <http://tracking-children.lse.ac.uk>)

Far from protecting children at serious risk of harm or abuse this Bill may in fact increase the risk to children in this category as it muddies the water of which children are at risk and extends the categories of risk from one to three; “Children at risk of parental abuse where consent to sharing information can already be dispensed with) [the definition now]; Children at risk of not fulfilling their potential; Children at risk of becoming social problems.” (Tracking Children, <http://tracking-children.lse.ac.uk>). This broadening of the term ‘at risk’ may include any child a

professional identifies, leaving the way open for subjective and culturally skewed identifications. Also these definitions are so wide as to include any child at some point in their life.

Further, there is a problem with the database itself. This database could be held centrally if the government desire it and it could be run by a private company or body. Terri Dowty from ARCH explains "Clause 8 (or 23 for Wales) would empower the government by Regulations to establish whatever database it decides, to demand that, whatever information it later specifies, is placed upon it and to decide later who will access that information. More than that, it allows them to delegate their function, and specify in the Regulations who will make the rules about information-sharing. All of this will be done without the knowledge or consent of those to whom the information relates."

What happens if something goes wrong with the database? The government do not have a good track record with other large databases. Things do go wrong, as Terri reminds us, "... the sad history of the CSA, the Libra Courts System, the Immigration and Nationality database (to name just a few) demonstrates. "

It must be clear that fighting this Bill is in no way condoning the injury or death of any child. The real question is about HOW to stop these tragedies occurring. There are laws already in place so that any authority can find out any information it needs on any child it thinks is at risk of serious harm or abuse. Remember Victoria Climbié was already known to the authorities yet they were unable to help her. What this reveals is that there is a need for more highly trained and experienced professionals in the field, to do these difficult jobs. If the government were to put the money they are willing to spend on this database (conservative estimates are in the many millions of pounds and database spending notorious spirals out of control) into training more professionals much more would be done toward preventing another child's death than anything this Bill has to offer.

Please help us fight this Bill. What can you do?

1. Write to your MP NOW. There are sample letters available on line at the ARCH site (see below) or use Dr. Munro's excellent summary of the Tracking Children meeting as a template for you letter (see below)
2. Write to your GP. Many GPs, as with many of the public, know nothing about this Bill and its implications. Your GP may be as upset as we are about the Bill.
3. Publicise the issues! The ARCH sites has leaflets you can download and hand out.
4. Join ARCH's mailing list and keep up to date with the fight!

Further information is available on the following websites:

<http://www.arch-ed.org/>
<http://www.spy.org.uk/spyblog/archives/000254.html>

Leslie Barson runs the *Otherwise Club* in London... an informal learning centre established for over 10 years. Leslie is an outstanding example of an educator within the Personalised Landscape and an inspiration to us all. Leslie's work was the subject of a Channel 4 documentary and she has written and spoken widely about her educational philosophies and practice. Leslie is working on her doctorate

Ed Lines

"They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."
Carl W. Buechner

PERSONALISED EDUCATION NOW STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The vision of *Personalised Education Now* is grounded upon a legitimated and funded *Personalised Educational Landscape* that includes:

- a focus on the uniqueness of individuals, of their learning experiences and of their many and varied learning styles
- support of education in human scale settings, including home-based education, learning centres, small schools, mini-schools, and schools-within-schools, flexischooling and flexi-colleges
- recognition that learners themselves have the ability to make both rational and intuitive choices about their education
- the re-integration of learning, life and community
- advocacy of co-operative and democratic organisation of places of learning
- belief in the need to share national resources fairly, so that everyone has a real choice in education
- acceptance of Einstein's view that *imagination is more important than knowledge* in our modern and constantly changing world
- a belief in subsidiarity... learning, acting and taking responsibility to the level of which you are capable
- adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in general and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in particular - recognising current limitations on educational choice.

PERSONALISED EDUCATION NOW

Maintains that people learn best:

- when they are self-motivated and are equipped with learning to learn tools
- when they take responsibility for their own lives and learning
- when they feel comfortable in their surroundings, free from coercion and fear
- when educators and learners value, trust, respect and listen to each other
- when education is seen as an active life-long process

What is meant by 'Personalised Education'?

Personalised education as promoted by **Personalised Education Now** is derived from the philosophy of **autonomous education**. This centres on learner-managed learning, invitational learning institutions, the catalogue/natural versions of curriculum, invited rather than uninvited teaching, and assessment at the learner's request. Its slogan is, '**I did it my way – though often in co-operation with others**' and operates within a general democratically based learning landscape that has the slogan, '**alternatives for everybody, all the time**'.

We already have institutions that work to the autonomous philosophy within a democratic value system. A prime example is the public library. Others are nursery centres, some schools and colleges, museums, community-arts projects, and home-based education networks. They work to the principle of, '**anybody, any age; any time, any place; any pathway, any pace**'.

Such institutions are learner-friendly, non-ageist, convivial not coercive, and capable of operating as community learning centres which can provide courses, classes, workshops and experiences as requested by local learners.

These are part of a long, rich and successful but undervalued personalised learning heritage, from which we draw strength and which we celebrate. Our urgent task now is to share the benefits of personalised learning and to envision a **Personalised Educational Landscape** that really attends to the needs of all learners and to the greater good of society at large.

Personalised Education Now seeks to maintain '**Edversity**' and the full range of learning contexts and methodologies compatible with Personalised Education, our latest **understanding about the brain**, and how we **develop as learners and human beings** throughout our lives.

Personalised Education operates within a **framework of principles and values** resulting in learners whose outcomes are expressed in their character, personality, in the quality of life they lead, in the development and sustainability of our communities and planet and in peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution. Performance indicators are measured as much in their physical and mental health, in peaceful existence, freedom from crime, usefulness of their contributions and work, levels of active citizenship etc as much as they are in the existing limitations of the assessment scores and paper accreditations.

Re-integration of Learning, Life and Community

Under the current mainstream education system most learning, living and sense of community is fragmented in a way that defeats learning and fractures social cohesion and development of our quality of life and community. It is structured around the needs of institutions and not learners, and fails to understand the brain and human development. These issues must be addressed and learning, life and community re integrated.

Democratic Values

Democracy is not predetermined - it needs democrats to shape it. Our education landscape must cultivate active democratically minded communities. Nelson Mandela's Minister of Education, Professor Bengu, declared that, "**Democracy means the absence of domination**". In the spirit of this principle, all the activities of **Personalised Education Now** are designed to promote the key ideas of co-operation, participation, learner-choice and responsibility, flexibility, diversity, self-motivation, equal access, as well as personalised learning. The slogan of democratic forms of learning is '**we did it our way**'.

We trust the membership and those who are sympathetic to our cause will join the continuous campaign to **challenge current limited perceptions of personalised learning, influence the educational debate** by engaging in dialogue, lobbying, writing and **practising Personalised Learning** wherever they can.

Personalised Education Now seeks to develop a rich, diverse, funded **Personalised Educational Landscape** to meet the learning needs, lifestyles and life choices made by individuals, families and communities. It promotes education based on learner-managed learning, using a flexible catalogue curriculum, located in a variety of settings, and operating within a framework of democratic values and practices. The role of educators moves from being, predominately, '**the sage on the stage**', to, mostly, '**the guide on the side**'.

Membership of Personalised Education Now

Personalised Education Now welcomes members, both individuals and groups, who support and promote its vision. Its membership includes educators in learning centres, home educating settings, schools, colleges and universities. Members range across interested individuals and families, teachers, Head Teachers, advisers, inspectors and academics. PEN has extensive national and international links. Above all the issues of personalised education and learning are issues with relevance to every man, woman and child because they lie at the heart of what kind of society we wish to live in.

Futures Thinking

The need to look for future scenarios for education is apparent in all sorts of places. The debate as to what education will look like in 5, 10 or 20 years is taking place alongside the struggle to define what is meant by Personalised Education and how we learn. It is clear that the dominant learning systems know that the status quo is not tenable. At PEN we believe we can assist clarity of thinking here. We urge members to become familiar with the extent of current debate and the engage wherever possible. Follow links to Futures thinking / Personalised Education / OECD Schooling for Tomorrow and alike on these websites:

www.oecd.org
www.demos.co.uk
www.dfes.gov.uk
www.ncsl.org.uk

PERSONALISED EDUCATION NOW

'Personalising the Education Landscape'

What can you do?

Don't let the Journal and enclosures end with you or just share with the converted... distribute widely. This is a message for everyone. Enter a dialogue with as many people as you can engage them in the issues and encourage others to join PEN. We find kindred spirits in all sorts of surprising places and those who just need a little more convincing. Often people partly understand but cannot conceptualise solutions. This is not an issue of blame... We need to engage the present system not alienate it. Some have never thought at all and need deep engagement. One of our roles is to explain and show how it is and could be different. Within a developing personalised educational landscape solutions will evolve according to localised possibilities... including ways of learning that we have not yet imagined. It's all too easy to take the moral high ground and believe we have all the answers because patently the enterprise is challenging and far from easy. But even now we can share the rich history and current practice of learning in all sorts on institutions and home based situations and we can assist in the 'Futures' thinking that can envision and give rise to its evolution. Together, the debate can be aired throughout grass roots and the current learning system, the general public, media, and politicians and decision makers. The one certainty is although the road is not easy it is more solidly founded than the one we have at present. Circulate our PEN leaflet (copies from the general office). Bring the strength of PEN to succour to those currently engaged in personalised education, and vision to those who are not.

Contact Personalised Education Now

Enquiries should be made via Janet Meighan,
Secretary at the address in the next column or on
Tel: 0115 925 7261

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Copy Contributions

Journal

Contributions for consideration for publication in the journal are welcomed. Authors should contact any of the Journal Publication Team to discuss before submission.

PEN operates an 'Open Source' policy... PEN resources and copy can be reproduced and circulated but we do request notification and acknowledgement.

Newsletter

Contributions for the Newsletter are also welcomed. We are hoping to increase the number of newsletters over the coming year so please get writing. Contact Janet Meighan.

Diary Dates

Trustees Meetings

- Annual Working Weekend: 10 / 11 September – Sedburgh
- General Meeting: 5th December – Walsall

Newsletters

- Next mailing Spring 2005

Journals

- Issue 2 – Summer 2005

Learning Exchange:

- Loughborough – April 2005

Annual Residential Conference:
16 / 17 October 2004 – Toddington, Glos

Join Personalised Education Now

Membership Includes:

- 2 PEN Journals a year
- 2 PEN Newsletters a year
- Annual Learning Exchange
- Annual Residential Conference
- The support of a diverse network of learners and educators in the field of Personalised Education

Your membership supports:

- Ongoing research and publications
- Development of the *PEN* website

Yes, I would like to join Personalised Education Now

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