

## FE and Complex Needs Consultation

The Scottish Executive is currently consulting on arrangements for supported further education places and funding for students with complex needs, and inviting views from everyone with an interest. Hopefully as many people as possible will respond to this consultation document by the closing date of 31 October 2005, whether as individuals or as a group, organisation, educational establishment or whatever.

Excitingly, the Executive has committed itself to focus particularly on young people who cannot find appropriate FE (colleges or curricula) mainly because of communication barriers and lack of appropriate provision (ie. rather than physical access barriers or learning difficulties). Stuart Aitken and Sally Millar from the CALL Centre have been asked by the Scottish Executive to help to carry out the consultation amongst such young people with complex communication support needs themselves, to ensure that they get their say and get their message across. This is a unique opportunity to 'make a difference' for the future.

If you have complex needs and have been to FE college and have views you wish to express, or know somebody in a similar situation, please get in touch with Sally or Stuart.

You can get more information about the consultation from [www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2005/06/22102746/27482](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/publications/2005/06/22102746/27482).



## Adding 'Text-to-Speech' to MS Word

*WordTalk* is a 'plug-in' template that adds text-to-speech to Microsoft Word for Windows. Research and experience has shown that students with visual or reading difficulties can find it very helpful to have text read out by the computer. Supporting reading and study through ICT also offers greater independence and arguably a more useful life skill compared to relying on a human reader.

*WordTalk* was developed by Rod Macaulay at TASSCC in Aberdeen and the Scottish Executive Education Department has provided funding for it to be distributed on CD free of charge to secondary schools in Scotland.

The program was formally launched in September at a series of presentations attended by over 100 teachers and others in different parts of Scotland.

It can be downloaded free from the *WordTalk* website, <http://www.wordtalk.org.uk>. Unfortunately, the installation file is very large so we would strongly recommend using a broadband or similar fast internet connection. If you can only access a slow dial-up connection, we can provide it on a CD for £3, to cover duplication, post and packing.



### Inside this Issue:

Working Together on Passports

Using Technology in Exams

Conference Presentations

New Resources - SuperTalker, Jumbo Keyboard, Universal Reader

Interactive Whiteboards

Focus on ASN Advice Sheets

Allied Health Professionals information

Forthcoming Events..... and more!

# Working Together on Passports

The CALL Centre has designed an inclusive new CPD package which will provide opportunities to put into practice the principles of the new Additional Support for Learning Act & Code of Practice, and Community Health Partnerships, through:

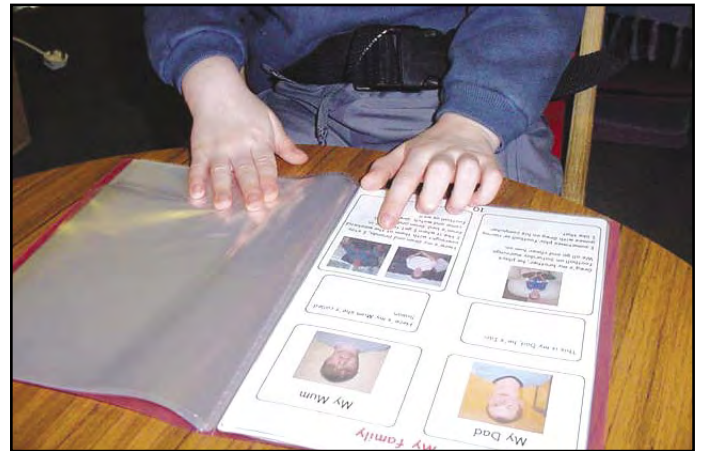
- Child-centred work (complementing Coordinated Support Plans)
- Partnership with and support for parents
- Joined-up, interdisciplinary working between professions
- Emphasis on sharing assessment information and inclusive communication issues.

Personal Communication Passports are a way of making sense of more formal assessment information and recording the important things about a child, in an accessible and child-centred way, and of supporting children's transitions between services. However, professionals - and equally, parents - do not necessarily have enough time to make Passports successfully. Importantly, also, a Passport is more than the end-product booklet. Creating a Passport is a process. The decision to create and use a Passport gives a clear focus for ongoing home/school liaison, partnership working with parents and for interdisciplinary collaboration.

This new course introduces professionals and parents to the Passports process, in an interdisciplinary format, motivating and supporting them and building-in good practice, giving them time while also focusing them on successful completion through provision of a structured timetable with a target completion date. All studies looking at how to promote 'joined up working' between different professionals have recommended joint training as one effective route - here is an excellent opportunity to achieve that, through the use of Passports as a common focus.

The course is intended to be run on an authority-wide basis. It is aimed at all those working with Early Years children, ideally - a mixture of some / all of the following: parents; pre-school educational visitors or home visiting teachers, staff working in nursery and in other education authority funded settings eg. private nurseries; Social Work staff; P1 / 2 teachers and classroom assistants; staff from voluntary agencies, eg. providing home support, short breaks; speech and language therapists and assistants; others.

Contact the CALL Centre for details.



## CALL Centre Service Surveys

### New in CALL

We would like to thank everybody who returned the survey forms distributed with the last New in CALL. It is important for us to know what people think of our newsletter. We are pleased to report that 85% of respondents found New in CALL to be interesting and useful.

A number of people made useful suggestions for content and appearance, which we will take on board in this and future editions.

### CALL Centre Web Site

An online survey of CALL web site users was carried out in February and March, receiving nearly 700 responses, with a significant number from people in Scotland. Teachers, Speech and Language Therapists and Students were the biggest user groups, but there were welcome numbers of parents and family members.

There were significant numbers of repeat visitors and downloads of materials, suggesting that many people found the site very useful.

We are grateful for the time people took to complete this survey and for their positive comments.

**Needing to consult children about the services you provide?**

**How do you find out the views of children who have communication difficulties?**

**Come and find out!**

## Listening to Children

**CALL Centre, Thursday 26th Jan, 2006**

**Contact the CALL Centre for details.**

**Tel. 0131 651 6235**

**<http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk>**

# Using Technology in Exams - Latest!

Every year thousands of students in Scottish schools apply to use special arrangements to sit SQA exams. Many of these students are using technology to assist with reading and writing tasks on a daily basis in school, but have to use a reader or scribe in exams.

The CALL Centre has worked with the SQA in the past to create and trial examination papers in an accessible digital format, which proved to be popular with staff and students. See *New in CALL*, Issue 17 for more details)

A new project, *SQA Adapted Examination Papers in Digital Format - Feasibility Study 2005*, is now under way. The new project has four main aims:

- to create a bank of accessible digital past SQA papers, in order that candidates and schools will have a means of developing and practising skills and procedures for administering digital examinations for candidates requiring assessment arrangements.
- to develop expertise and procedures in authoring adapted digital papers within SQA.
- to investigate administration procedures of using adapted digital papers in schools.
- depending on the success of the above three points, conduct a small scale 'live' trial of adapted digital papers in the 2006 examination diet.

A small number of schools from across Scotland have been invited to participate in this latest pilot project and are currently selecting students who

will be most able to benefit from using technology in exams.

You can get more information about the project from the CALL Centre web site, [www.callcentrescotland.org.uk](http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk).

CALL will also be running a training course looking at issues related to the use of technology in examinations, with input from the SQA. This will be held on Tuesday 15th November 2005, **NOT** 17th November, as stated in the CALL Centre CPD / Training Opportunities guide.

**How can technology be used to help students with reading and writing difficulties sit exams?**

**Come and find out!**

## **ICT and Alternative Assessment Arrangements for SQA Examinations**

**CALL Centre, Tuesday 15th Nov. 2005**

**Contact the CALL Centre for details.**

**Tel. 0131 651 6235**

**<http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk/training>**

## **By Royal Appointment!**

The CALL Centre's Paul Nisbet met HRH Princess Anne at the recent Inclusive and Supportive Education Congress (ISEC) held in Glasgow. Paul presented papers on *Results of a Pilot Trial of Scottish Qualifications Authority Examinations in Accessible Electronic Format for Students with Disabilities* and *Speech Recognition for Students with Disabilities*.

CALL staff are due to give a number of presentations at conferences in September. Paul Nisbet and Stuart Aitken will present on *The Impact of Recent Legislation upon Access to the Curriculum* at SETT in Glasgow. *Listening to Children - Where have we got to?* is the title of the talk that Sally Millar and Stuart Aitken will give at Communication Matters in Leicester, where Sally will also present on *Not Too Fast, Not Too Slow: Introducing single switch operated AAC in a mainstream school, in stages, with support from educational software and a Family*

*Technology Fun Day*. Paul Nisbet is also presenting at Communication Matters, on *Move to Communication / Communicate to Move: Communication and augmentative powered mobility*.

Copies of these presentations will be available shortly from the CALL web site.



# New Resources in the CALL Centre Equipment Bank

## The SuperTalker (by AbleNet)

The new (ish) and very purple recorded speech communication aid SuperTalker is very versatile in that it can 'grow with' a user and potentially meet their developing communication needs, offering progression through 1, 2, 4 and 8 message grid options, as the pupil learns the meaning of more symbols and is able to use more messages. A nice touch is that all the different keyguards are stored 'onboard' behind a little trapdoor on the back of the machine, so should not get lost!

It can be useful as an assessment tool for different levels of ability, or can provide an all-in-one device for a particular user. It is very simple to learn how to program and use (all instructions printed on the back).

There are two models:

SuperTalker™ (£250 ex VAT) which has 16 minutes of recording time and input and output jacks for direct switch input (NOT by scanning) and to control 2 external devices such as switch adapted toys or other devices. For switch input, you can either attach a separate switch for each message (up to 8) or use one switch to 'step ahead' through each message in turn (great for stories!!!).

The more basic GLOBAL SuperTalker™ has 8 minutes of recording time and NO switch input or output (£125 ex VAT).

### SuperTalker at a Glance:

- 8 different 'levels' or sets of messages (for different curriculum areas, or stories, songs or whatever).
- Choice of grid formats, with a clip-in keyguard for each (1, 2, 4 and 8 location grids)
- Onboard keyguard storage
- Lightweight (less than 1 Kg)
- 8/16 minutes of memory for messages
- Runs off 4 AA batteries
- Volume control with lockout
- Pretty cheap £125/£250 ex VAT).

But note -

- **Not useful to switch and scan users**
- **Changing to a new grid layout (ie. number of locations) erases all messages on the level you are leaving.**



## Find out more

You can find more information about the SuperTalker from suppliers, eg.

**Liberator**, see [www.liberator.co.uk/liberator/show.asp?page=supertalker](http://www.liberator.co.uk/liberator/show.asp?page=supertalker) (look under AbleNet, advice also provided on progression)

Or **Inclusive Technology Ltd** [www.inclusive.co.uk/catalogue/acatalog/global\\_supertalker.html](http://www.inclusive.co.uk/catalogue/acatalog/global_supertalker.html) (including two independent reviews).

CALL has one of these devices (the extended memory version with switch jacks) for assessment purposes and, potentially, for loan.

## Jumbo Keyboard

Until recently the only practical option for somebody needing a simplified keyboard, with bigger, more easily targeted keys was the Big Keys keyboard range. There are now a couple of alternatives: the Easy Keys (£74) from SEMERC and the Jumbo Keyboard (£79) available from Inclusive Technology. CALL now has a Jumbo Keyboard.



# New Resources in the CALL Centre Equipment Bank

Compared to the Big Keys, the Jumbo has a slightly 'cheaper' feel, but it is by no means 'nasty'! The lower case version uses a font similar to Comic for the lettering and is marginally easier to read than the Big Keys equivalent. Consonants, vowels and punctuation marks are colour coded.

The optional keyguard (£50) for the Jumbo is made by Maxcess and takes the traditional form of a shaped metal sheet that attaches securely to the keyboard with holes for individual letters.

There are fewer options in terms of colour and layout, than are available for Big Keys, but the Jumbo is certainly worth considering if cost is a major issue.

## Universal Reader 4.11

There are a number of screenreading programs available, ranging from complex (and expensive!) programs like *Jaws*, which allow blind computer users to read (almost) any text, to simpler programs like *ReadPlease* and *TextHelp! ScreenReader*, which are more suitable for people who just want to have text read out, e.g. from a web page.

The latest version of *Universal Reader* fits into the latter category, but contains features that make it more powerful than some of the other programs.

The basic *Universal Reader* program will read any selectable text out aloud, with the option (Show View Window) for the text to be copied to a separate window and each word highlighted as it is read.

### Talking Pointer

The latest version has an additional feature, known as the 'Talking Pointer'. This allows most text (e.g. web pages, desktop icons, program menus) to be read from the screen by simply moving the mouse pointer over it, without needing to click or select text. It doesn't speak EVERYTHING (interestingly, it doesn't speak its own control window), but it would be very useful for somebody with low vision or poor reading skills who needs speech output. If you want to use the Talking Pointer, you have to remember to switch it on as the program default is for it to be off.

At £30 Universal Reader represents excellent value. It is distributed in the UK by Millfield Books (<http://www.millfield.co.uk>). A free demo version can be downloaded from <http://www.premier-programming.com>. This can be used with full functionality 25 times.

## Using the CALL Loan Bank

CALL offers loans of specialist equipment for communication and learning to individual people with disabilities throughout Scotland. Loans of equipment are made to allow for extended evaluation at home, school or work, and to enable people to evaluate equipment before purchase. In the year 2004 - 05, 201 pieces of specialist equipment, with a total value in excess of £40,000 were borrowed from CALL.

Loans are generally for up to two months, but it may be possible to arrange an extension provided that equipment is not required by another person.

The equipment available from CALL includes:

- Communication Aids - a wide range of devices from simple single-message communicators such as the BigMack to complex communication aids such as the Tellus and the Dynavox.



Tellus Communication Aid

- Switches, interfaces and mountings - the Loan Bank has over 150 switches for use with toys, communication aids, computers, etc. Remember - you will need to use an interface to connect a switch to a computer.
- Alternative Access to Computers - e.g. trackballs, joysticks, ergonomic keyboards, touchscreens, etc.
- Equipment to Support Reading and Writing - e.g. Alphasmart and Dana notetakers, Reading Pen, etc.

Go to <http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk/loans> to find out more about how to borrow equipment and to get a list of some of the equipment available. Unfortunately, due to licensing restrictions, we are unable to lend most of the software that we have, but a wide range of software can be viewed and evaluated in CALL. Contact CALL to arrange a suitable time to visit if you wish to take advantage of this.

# Using an Interactive Whiteboard

The CALL Centre has now got an Interactive Whiteboard and we have been investigating the many uses it can have to support teaching and learning for a wide range of pupils at all stages and abilities. Unfortunately, it is not available for loan as it is a little large to post! We also need it for training courses.

It's first 'public' use was at our Family Fun Day where it proved a huge attraction for all our visitors. Although the children had never seen or used one before they soon learned how to be creative on it using a simple painting program. Several parents commented that they had never see their child so engaged before and that it held their attention far better than any other means of accessing a computer.

Some of the children, particularly those in wheelchairs, were unable to reach the screen easily so a 17" touch monitor was set up linked to the interactive whiteboard so they could see their work on the large screen and participate in the activity with all the others.

There are many resources already in schools that can be used with these boards, and there are many more that can be either used 'on-line' or downloaded from the internet. You can find links to many of these on the CALL Centre web site



**How can you use an Interactive Whiteboard in a classroom?  
What resources are available?  
Come and find out!**

## **Interactive Whiteboards**

**CALL Centre, Thursday 2nd March, 2006**

**Contact the CALL Centre for details.  
Tel. 0131 651 6235**

**<http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk/training>**



If you are interested in finding out more about the use of Interactive Whiteboards and the resources available, then come along to the CALL Centre course on 2nd March, 2006 where you will have the opportunity to discuss the various issues surrounding their use and try it out for yourself. Book early as places will be limited!

**How can I encourage staff and students to create video resources?  
Can video be used to record progress?  
Come and find out!**

## **Digital Movie Creator**

**CALL Centre, Thursday 1st Dec., 2005**

**Contact the CALL Centre for details.  
Tel. 0131 651 6235**

**<http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk/training>**

# New Internet Resources Available

## Focus on ASN

This is the overall title for a new set of 11 Advice Sheets produced by the CALL Centre, with support from Learning and Teaching Scotland. The Advice Sheets were originally created by Becta, but have been extensively re-written by CALL to fit the Scottish educational context. In particular, the sheets take account of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and the accompanying Code of Practice.

The topics covered in the series are:

- An overview of additional support needs and ICT provision
- Using ICT to support inclusion
- Improving the accessibility of classroom ICT for all pupils
- ICT to support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs
- ICT provision to help pupils with more complex support needs
- Accessing ICT provision for pupils with sensory or physical needs
- Where to find free (or nearly free) software to support the education of pupils with additional support needs
- Strategies to improve accessibility for disabled children and young people: planning duties and ICT
- SENDA 2001 in Scotland: Legislation for Disabled Children: ICT
- The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

The Advice Sheets can all be downloaded from the CALL web site and from the Learning and Teaching Scotland web site (<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk>). Alternatively, you can buy paper copies of the individual Advice sheets from the CALL Centre for £1 each and a complete set of all 11 for £10.00.

## OnLine from Oz!

If you're looking for regular impartial news and views about software and hardware for use in the classroom with children with additional support needs (in addition to New in CALL!), we can recommend *OnLine*, a free newsletter produced by Disability Support Services, Brisbane, Australia. You can subscribe to it at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/listserv/subscribe.htm>.

The latest edition has a great article on Clicker 5!

## One Scotland: Working Together Allied Health Professionals (AHP); Child Health Services

Allied Health Professionals (see below) work in partnership with parents and families, education, other health professionals, and staff of social work and voluntary organisations to meet the needs of children. A new series of easy to read coloured leaflets helps to demystify the roles and responsibilities of AHPs and of various specific therapists.

Download these leaflets now from [www.callcentrescotland.org.uk](http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk) or from [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

- AHP Services
- AHP poster
- What are Occupational Therapists?
- What are Speech and Language therapists?
- What are Physiotherapists?

The nine Allied Health Professionals are:

Speech and Language Therapy; Occupational Therapy; Physiotherapy; Dietetics; Orthoptics; Podiatrist; Arts Therapy; Orthotists and Prosthetists; Diagnostic and Therapy Radiography.



## Code of Practice

The AHP leaflets were recently distributed to schools and other organisations with the Code of Practice for the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act. If you haven't received a copy of the Code of Practice, you can download it from: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/08/15105817/58187>

