

Life Education Bradford celebrates 25 years serving the schools of Bradford



Life Education
Bradford

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The Life Education approach was conceived in Australia in the 1970s by Ted Noffs when he saw that existing help offered to young people to avoid drug or excessive alcohol use was largely failing them.

Ted Noffs found American research which showed that reaching children prior to adolescence and helping them to build confidence, a sense of self-worth and a positive attitude to life, as well as the knowledge and skills to resist peer pressure was proven to be highly effective in preventing drug and alcohol misuse later in life. Applying the new methods he had found, he established the first Life Education Centre in Australia. When HRH the Prince of Wales visited Australia, he was so impressed by the programmes that he encouraged the foundation of Life Education in the UK. Established in the UK in 1986, the programme has been created by child development experts and is delivered by qualified educators in specially designed mobile classrooms. Life Education now thrives in New Zealand, Hong Kong, Cyprus and a number of other countries.

Dick Hazlehurst, Chairman of Life Education Bradford for many years, recalls the early years:

“Early in 1988, Rotarian David Pollard returned from leading a Group Study Exchange Team to Australia and told me about Life Education Centres. I was soon to be President of the Rotary Club of Bradford and was very open to a suggestion for my Presidential Project. Rotary clubs had spent three years concentrating on the international arena with the beginning of the polio eradication project (little did we know how long that would continue!) and so a local community project seemed appropriate.

As a pharmacist, I was attracted to the drug abuse prevention theme of Life Education at that time; and we also had a six-year old son. All that was needed was a trip to see a Life Education Centre in action, and I was hooked.

The next couple of years were a blur, but a very exciting blur. We started with the objective of “introducing” Life Education to Bradford, but we underestimated the power of Rotary to open doors; that was key to our success. As President, I was able to meet with the Director of Education, the Lord Mayor, the Bishop, the Chairman of the Council of Mosques, the CEOs of Yorkshire Building Society and the



The first Bradford mobile classroom with Queen Anne-Marie

Health Authority, and many other influential people. I was even “granted an audience” with Eric Pickles while he was Leader of Bradford Council.

We hosted a Royal Gala performance of *Romeo & Juliet* at the Alhambra where I was privileged to host Queen Anne-Marie of the Hellenes and, with support from all the people and organisations mentioned, we were able to announce, just before the end of the Rotary Year, that we would offer Life Education to Bradford’s young children from Easter of 1990, which allowed the time necessary for conversion of a redundant caravan into a Life Education Centre and for the recruitment and training of our first educator, Pauline Smith.

It was a fabulous ride with many happy memories (including meeting our own Queen as well). Of course there were moments of high stress and drama; but the overwhelming memory is of Rotary at its best, with fantastic support and commitment from every member of Bradford Rotary Club, especially David Pollard and Canon Kenneth Cook who was the first chairman of the company.”



Queen Anne-Marie of the Hellenes with Dick Hazlehurst during the Gala evening



Front cover image: at St Andrew's Infant School in Brighouse. Photo courtesy of Halifax Courier.



The team after the SCARF launch and celebration event left to right are:

Jan Forshaw (Head of Education, CLE),
Sir Al Aynsley-Green (Patron, CLE)
Harold, Maria Burton (Educator, LEB),
Carol Homden, CBE (CEO, Coram),
David Henderson (Chairman, LEB),
Sharon Lambert (Head Teacher Allerton
Primary School and Trustee of CLE),
Jan Newman (Educator Manager, LEB),
Sally Dow (Educator, LEB),
Pamela James (Trustee, LEB),
Jennifer Angus (Trustee LEB),
Harriet Gill (MD, Education and
Wellbeing, Coram)



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