

April 2001

The MirandaNet Fellowship is having a very successful year. The support of companies and government agencies has allowed us to promote a full range of professional development opportunities at home and abroad.

But none of our activities would be possible without the support of our partner companies : Oracle, Compaq, New Media, Promethean, Qiis, Toshiba and Sam Learning. My special thanks also to the dedicated team: Tanya Keable, MirandaNet communications and Jane Dorner, MirandaNet website, Francis Howlett, MirandaNet research, Jane Field from Education and Development and Anne Sparrowhawk from TEEM. Maryse Davis and Nick Westbury are engaged on the accounts. We hope to have a membership, events and diary manager in place soon.

In addition to the ICT professional development service for teachers and advisers, Fellows are engaged on ICT projects with Compaq, Oracle and the Department for Education and Employment. MirandaNet involvement will also be invited in the new Wapping project using ICT as a catalyst for change in teaching and learning. My role as project director has just been confirmed for the next three years. This is a really exciting opportunity to put some Fellowship ideas into action in the 14 schools in the Docklands.

We now have 180 members and the website is proving increasingly popular with teachers. We are delighted that practically everyone in the membership now has a profile online. The new site provides an update of activities which includes an extensive programme of seminars and conferences as well as an active closed list serv and lively discussions on the public forums. We shall now be advertising our e-mentoring services more widely and hope that more teachers will make use of this facility.

Our first report on Web Resources for teachers by teachers will be presented to the DfEE at the end of April. The MirandaNet team excelled themselves on meeting deadlines on this project. We also had an opportunity to interview 400 colleagues about their views on the NGfL which was an immensely positive experience. 98% of the teachers thought that the NGfL was a useful way forward. We certainly have a response to build on in this report.

Jane Dorner and I spoke about building learning communities online at a conference for 1,500 teacher educators in Florida in March. Anne Sparrowhawk, Jane Field and I will also publish our book on Building Education Communities Online in September. This book will represent a distillation of our knowledge so far in this field. Our work on the Oracle Thinking Space project continues.

This year we have held several seminars about curriculum use of web based learning environments and about using ICT as a catalyst in the management of change. Doug Brown led the debate on the NGFL at the International Teachers Forum at Warwick University in April attended by 60 teachers and advisors.

As you know the government are keen to raise morale and widen teachers professional perspective through study visits abroad. This accords with our own philosophy about the teachers role. The MN Fellowship has funded teachers to visit from Townships in South Africa In May MN Fellows will be visiting schools in Bulgaria, South Africa and the Czech Republic. We also have plans to exchange in the US and Canada working with the British Council.

We have been working very hard on bids for more professional development funds for teachers this year. Just as a sample we are currently bidding to the Lottery Fund, the EU Minerva fund and the Year of Science. We are expanding our bidding opportunities by applying to be a charity.

Congratulations to everyone involved in all these projects.

We are keen to hear from Fellows whose projects are not mentioned in this report. Please contact Tanya in time for the next ezine.

Regards

Christina Preston