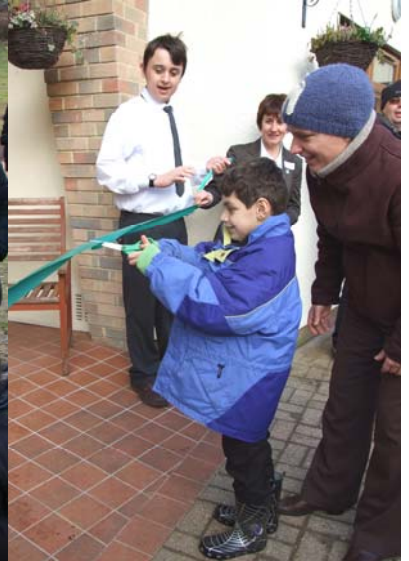




Sheiling School Ringwood - Newsletter February/March 2011



Feirefis House Opening Celebrations—Thursday 3rd February 2011



Thank you to everyone who helped us to celebrate the opening of the newly refurbished Feirefis House. Feirefis is now running once again, having been closed for the refurbishment since last summer. The house now accommodates 8 residential pupils aged between 8 and 16 years.

Many invited guests joined us for the event, including parents, local authority representatives, trustees and council members, and Heath Southgate, whose team carried out the refurbishment work to such a high standard. The official opening gave us the opportunity to present our strategic vision for the Sheiling School as we continue to diversify. Paula Kirk, our Principal, gave a presentation highlighting the range of services we currently offer—day and boarding education places, care packages up to 52 weeks, respite provision and our very popular Activity Days for local children. Paula was also able to announce our plans to open a Specialist College provision (see over for more details).

After the presentation we all made our way to Feirefis House to join the rest of the school community for the opening itself. David told us a little about the history of the house. There was a show of hands from all those gathered who, during the house's 40 year history, had lived in it—quite a few hands were raised! We sang some songs and then our youngest pupil, with some style, cut the ribbon. The guests were shown around the house, some by enthusiastic pupils. The event was a great success—so thanks to everyone for helping us celebrate!



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The Sheiling School Ringwood—a Camphill Rudolf Steiner school providing day and residential support and education for children and young people with learning difficulties.
An Activity of the Sheiling Trust Charity No. 292320

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Candlemas... on February 2nd, as dusk was falling, everyone gathered outside Feirefis House (right) to celebrate Candlemas. Candlemas is one of those small festivals which punctuate the year. The children carried lanterns, sang songs and enjoyed the earth candles that were lit as darkness fell. The celebration helped “warm up” newly refurbished Feirefis House, ready for the opening celebrations the next day.



Wolves!...in January we hosted a great evening, made possible by funding from Hampshire Aiming High. The Forest Forge theatre company (above) transformed Tobias stage, presenting their play—The Wolves of Willoughby Chase—a whirlwind of tragedy, drama, music, danger and laughter. The actors were brilliant—each playing several roles and drawing us into the world of Willoughby Chase, the Work House, the streets of London...and always the ever present menace of the wolves lurking in the shadows...!

Our students were joined by several local families and children, some of whom have taken part in our regular Activity Days. Many thanks to Forest Forge for a memorable evening.



Specialist College opening in September...we intend to establish a new provision from the start of the new academic year to extend the age range we are able to provide for. The Sheiling College will broaden access to our specialist provision for young people, from the local area and further afield, who have complex or severe learning difficulties. We are working initially on adding a 4th and 5th year to our current Seniors provision. The intention is eventually to be able to provide a broad range of further education opportunities for 16 to 25 year olds, in partnership with other local colleges and organisations. This new provision builds on the current good practice in the Seniors Programme to offer individualised flexible learning programmes and opportunities to make choices to support independence. The aim for students will be that they can work towards fulfilling a rich and valued role in the broader community.

And other news...we are in the process of putting together a leaflet about the wide range of therapies available at the Sheiling School. This should be available on our website soon. The image above is from a recent drum group led by our music therapist Susan Nares.

Last week we were visited by the grandson of Georg and Sally Schad, long-standing co-workers. Matthew is in the final year of a contemporary dance training and while here he offered some students a dance workshop. You can see some of the action below!

The Sheiling's strength has traditionally been the focus on arts, crafts, work-related learning and residential living. It is these areas we intend to specialise in with the new College. All this is dependent on successful registration with the relevant government bodies, which is on-going. There is already a lot of local interest and we will endeavour to provide regular updates through the newsletter and e-mails. To register your interest please e-mail Barbara Fisher: college@sheilingschool.co.uk



Photos in this edition: Sarah Lumber, Zsolt Galsai, Forest Forge Theatre, David Morley