



Vranch House

Annual Report & Accounts 2011 - 2012



Vranch House

School, Clinical Centre and Registered Office:
Pinhoe Road, Exeter, EX4 8AD
Telephone: 01392 468333 Fax: 01392 463818
www.vranchhouse.org

Officers & Principal Staff 2011 - 2012

Board of the Society

Chairman: Mr Andrew Barge
Vice Chairman: Mr Clive Rendle
Mr S Torlot
Mr A J Griffin
Mrs C Tailford
Mrs A Ballman
Dr G Humphreys+
Col G Wheeler++
Mrs J Morgan
Mrs S Mathieson
Mrs J Tolman-May
Mr D Barnes
Miss P Hale
Mrs J Parsons+
Mr W Richards

*Ex Officio Members

++Secretary

The persons listed above, less the ex-officio members, were the appointed Trustees and Directors of the Society for the 2011 - 2012 Financial Year

Board of Governors

Chairman: Mr. Andrew Barge
Vice Chairman: Mr Clive Rendle
Secretary: Col G Wheeler

Dr G Humphreys++
Mrs J Parsons+
Mrs M Wood--
Mrs J Tolman-May--
Mrs R Parsons

--Staff Representative

--Parent Governors

+ Head Teacher

++ Head of Therapy

Management Committee

Chairman: Mr Andrew Barge
MRS J Parsons+
Col G Wheeler
Dr G Humphreys

Principal Staff

Chief Executive Colonel G F Wheeler MPhil., CGIA
Head Teacher Mrs J Parsons BA (Hons.) PGCE, PG Cert.SEN, QTVI
Head of Therapy
Dr G Humphreys D.PT, MSc., MCSP

Consulting Physicians

Dr R C Smith MB BS MRCP DRCOG MRCPCH
Consultant Community Paediatrician
Mr P J A COX MS FRCS (Orth) FRCS (Ed)
Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon
Dr R J Tomlinson BMed Sci BMBS MRCP MRCPCH
Consultant Paediatrician
Dr M W Quinn MD FRCPCH DCH
Consultant Paediatrician
Dr E Thomas MB BS BSc MRCP
Consultant Paediatrician

Orthotist

Mr Jamie Pegg
Exeter Mobility Centre

Vranch House School and Centre is:

Registered under the Charities Act 1960
Registered number 1002700

A Company Limited by Guarantee

Registered Number 2599511

Vranch House School is:

An Independent School approved under the Education Act 1981

Front cover pictures:

Left to Right

Bethany - Class 2

Alex - Class 1

Leah - Class 1

Printed by Hedgerow Print. Tel (01363) 777595

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT to the 2012 AGM

This is my seventh and sadly last report to an Annual General Meeting as Chairman of the Society. As with previous years, it's my pleasure, once more, to report that the charity is in excellent health and continues to deliver first class services as we continue to navigate the difficult economy and ever changing public sector landscape. Once again, I'm delighted that we have enjoyed another monumental and indeed historic year in the history of the charity and Vbranch House.

In our 51st year we have maintained our excellence in all that we do as proved by our 'Very Good' rating at our most recent Ofsted Report earlier this year and by the seamless way in which we have expanded our clinical work. My thanks go to the Head Teacher and Head of Therapies for leading this excellent work.

I have said since the downturn in the economy started in 2008 that Vbranch House could very easily have been a victim of these unprecedented circumstances that the country has faced. It is because of our strong relationships with our commissioners, NHS Devon and Devon County Council built up over many years of delivering excellent services at extremely competitive value for money that we are still here and as strong as we have ever been. We should not lose sight of this nor take it for granted and as before my thanks go to all of you for the part you have played, however large or small, in ensuring Vbranch House continues to provide such a valuable service to the wider community of Devon.

I reported last year, in our 50th year, how we had successfully built the new Children's Specialist Assessment Centre. I'm pleased to say that this facility is operating well and providing a superb location for Integrated Children's Services to deliver their services.

If that was not exciting enough, then this year, an even better and more extraordinary development occurred when we purchased the freehold of the site here at Vbranch House. This site and all of its buildings are now owned by your charity, guaranteeing its long term future in a way it has not known before. My thanks go to our Chief Executive and the Board of the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust for agreeing and concluding this transfer of ownership.

As with last year I want to pay tribute to our staff. We should not forget that we still have staff working for us who are now in effect in their third year of a pay cut due to the 0% settlement from both our health and education partners for the last three years. As I have said over the last few years, we here at Vbranch House deeply value their amazing dedication and loyalty to Vbranch House and the management team will continue to do everything they can to reward that loyalty and dedication.



Chairman
Andrew Barge

Before I finish I want to pay tribute to one individual or should I say two individuals who left the service of the charity this year. For many years, Sue Gould worked tirelessly as our Marketing Manager along with her incredibly supportive husband, Peter to raise both the profile and valuable funds for Vbranch House. Their contribution to the success of Vbranch House cannot be measured in pounds and pence alone. Vbranch House would be a very different place and dare I say a lesser place without their contribution over so many years. On behalf of you all I should like to thank them both for all they have done to support the charity over those years and wish them a well earned retirement from their commitments to the charity.

As I said at the start of my speech, this is my last report to the AGM. I am very sad to be standing down from my role as Chairman but it is only because I am shortly to take on a paid role at Vbranch House. Due to charity law I cannot be both an employee and volunteer. It has been a fantastic privilege to hold this position, one which I would never have imagined I would do when I first left here as a ten year old boy. These last seven years as Chairman has seen the charity make massive strides forward as we have gone from strength to strength. I want to thank Graeme, Ginny, Jane and Maureen for helping to make it such an easy but thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable role to undertake. Though I am stepping down as Chairman I can assure you that my dedication to the charity and most importantly the children we serve is as strong as ever and I look forward to working with my new work colleagues in taking us forward to more success in 2013 and beyond.

Andrew Barge Chairman

Annual Trustees' Report

Vranch House
(The Devon & Exeter Spastics Society Limited)

Report of the Board of the Society for the year ended 31 March 2012

The Board of the Society presents its report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2012.

Reference and Administrative Information

Registered Charity Name: The Devon & Exeter Spastics Society
(Working Title): Vranch House

Charity Registration No: 1002700
Company Registration No: 2599511

Registered Office and Operational Address:
Vranch House School & Centre
Pinhoe Road
EXETER
DEVON
EX4 8AD

Auditors: Kirk Hills, 5 Barnfield Crescent, Exeter,
Devon, EX1 1RF
Bankers: NatWest, St Thomas Branch, Exeter,
Devon, EX4 1DB
Solicitors: Foot Anstey, Senate Court, Exeter,
EX1 1NT

Board of the Society

Mr Andrew Barge: Chairman
Mr Clive Rendle: Vice Chairman

Mrs A Ballman
Mr D Barnes
Mr A J Griffin
Miss P Hale
Mrs S Mathieson
Mrs J Morgan
Mr W Richards
Mrs C Tailford
Mr Sidney Torlot
Mrs J Tolman-May

Col G Wheeler: (Secretary, ex officio as Chief
Executive with no vote)
Mrs J Parsons: (ex officio as Head Teacher
with no vote)
Dr G Humphreys: (ex officio as Head of Therapy
with no vote)

Company Secretary & Chief Executive

Colonel G Wheeler

Board of Governors

Mr Andrew Barge: Chairman
Mr Clive Rendle: Vice Chairman
Col G Wheeler: Secretary
Mrs J Parsons: Head Teacher
Dr G Humphreys: Head of Therapy
Miss V Parsons: Staff member
Mrs J Tolman-May: Parent Governor
Mrs M Wood: Parent Governor

Management Committee

Mr Andrew Barge: Chairman
Col G Wheeler
Mrs J Parsons
Dr G Humphreys

Structure, Governance and Management Governing Document

The organisation is a Charity limited by guarantee (Registered Number 2599511), incorporated on the 9th of April 1991, and an independent charity (Registered Number 1002700) registered with the Charity Commission on the 15th of May 1991. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Instrument of Management. Any person over the age of 18 can become a member of the charity on payment of an annual fee of £2 (for those not in work) or £5 (for those in employment). There are currently 79 members each of whom are liable to the extent of their membership fee in the event of the company being wound up. All members have the right to vote at General Meetings.

Appointment of Trustees

The number of Trustees can be set at any General Meeting but has never varied from a mean of 12 between the minimum of 8 and maximum of 16 stated in the Governing Document. Invitations to nominate Trustees are circulated every year to the membership and these nominations are ratified at the Annual General Meeting. The senior officers (Chairman and Vice Chairman) are elected every year and the Chief Executive acts as Company Secretary. Employees of the charity may be members of the charity and the three senior employees are ex officio members of the Board of Trustees but no employee is entitled to vote at any meeting of the Trustees. The Executive Committee of the charity is known as the Board of the Society and the Board may co-opt any member of the charity to fill a specialist role.

Trustee Induction & Training

Trustees are briefed frequently on their obligations under charity and company law, the structure of the charity and its operating procedures as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association and in those

changes in statute which bear directly on the work of the charity (principally legislation in the areas of Education and Health). A briefing document has been prepared alongside a more formal induction and training process. Trustees are usually appointed because of specialist skills but the charity will meet any identified need for specialist training.

Organisation

The Board of the Society has strategic oversight of the charity and meets three times a year. The Board establishes all policy for the general direction and operation of the charity and meets to review those policies and to hear a record of operations. The Board employs a Chief Executive to work with a Head Teacher and Head of Therapy to oversee, direct and drive forward the Board's policies for the School and the Clinic (the principal operations of the charity). The Chief Executive has delegated powers for the day-to-day operation of the Board's policies for employment, finance, contracts, legal compliance (including Equal Opportunities), buildings and acquisitions, risk assessment and mitigation, Health and Safety and business development. To assist the Head Teacher and meet statutory obligations for maintained schools, the Board has established a Board of Governors for the school. The Board of Governors has direct control of those matters bearing on the delivery of educational services; matters relating to finance, employment and resources, if not within the competence of the Governors, are referred to the Board of Trustees. The Head of Therapy is responsible to the Trustees for the full delivery of the clinical contract which includes professional and service delivery standards. In this she is assisted by the Chief Executive who retains direct control of all matters relating to the contract.

Related Parties

The Society has formal and informal arrangements and relationships with many other statutory and voluntary bodies. Principal amongst these is the 25-year Strategic Partnership Agreement with NHS Devon and Devon County Council under which the charity is joint-funded for 65% of the costs of the statutory educational and clinical services it provides. These services include the assessment of potential pupils, the education of pupils at Vranch House School, the review of pupil development, the inclusion of pupils in mainstream schools and the delivery of clinical therapies at Vranch House and in the community all over Devon.

The network of national and local charities and voluntary bodies is too complex and numerous to describe adequately but the Society retains active links with The Exeter Foundation, DreamAway, Whizz Kids, Children in Need, CEDA, A Brighter Tomorrow and the Norman Family Trust. A similar network of local groups and individuals continues to assist the Society in raising funds for children at Vranch House and this incredibly generous and loyal support provides a much-needed and indispensable resource. The charity has also forged close links with the NHS Devon Specialist Children's Assessment Centre which it hosts in a purpose built facility on the Vranch House site. It is worth noting that the children at Vranch House School raise money each year for other charities which have included Comic Relief and the Royal British Legion.

Risk Management

As a normal part of the annual business cycle the Society reviews its Risk Assessments. These include financial management, accounting, security of cash and removable assets, insurances, fire and Health & Safety. The outcome of these assessments is reported to the Trustees by the Chief Executive. The Health and Safety and Fire Risk Assessments are translated into operating policies which are available to all employees. Employees at every level are encouraged to contribute to the continuous business of risk assessment through the Staff Meetings held every month.

Objectives and Activities

The charity's objects and principal activities continue to be those of:

- i Promoting and providing facilities for the care, education, training, treatment and welfare in their respective aspects of people with physical difficulties.
- ii Advising, helping or catering for the needs of the parents or others having the care of people with physical difficulties.

The core activities arising from these aims are the education of children with physical difficulties from the age of 2 to 12 at Vranch House School and the provision of paediatric therapy and clinical treatment to children as outpatients at locations throughout Devon. The charity has also developed Opportunity Technology, a not-for-profit service which designs and installs assisted mobility tracks and robotic vehicles throughout England and Wales.

Public Benefit – General Statement

The Trustees have established a policy to review continuously all the charity's activities and the development of services to ensure that they remain consonant with the requirements of the 2006 Charities Act, and particularly with Section 4 of the Act, (the need to demonstrate Public Benefit). The charity operates in partnership with statutory bodies under guidance from the Office for the Third Sector in order to provide expertise, treatment and enhanced services to children with physical disabilities. It does not charge fees but receives about 65% of the total cost of the services it provides from NHS Devon and Devon County Council. Referrals to the service are made by Local Authorities and all referrals are seen for assessment and the majority of assessed referrals are retained for treatment or given a place in the school. The referral process, whether as a therapy outpatient or potential school pupil, is not controlled by the charity but by NHS Devon and Devon County Council. A school placement or therapy intervention might be deemed inappropriate at the assessment stage but only for reasons that are cogent, demonstrable and compliant with benchmarked national practice. The charity is as public a body as its statutory partners and enters into no private arrangements for individual treatment. No member of the public is denied the services provided by the charity provided those services are assessed to be suitable and appropriate for the individual concerned.

Public Benefit - Aims and Strategies

In order to direct the activities of the charity in such a way that Public Benefit can be identified clearly, the Trustees have set out the following Aims and Strategies;

- **School Aim** The school is to be organised, equipped, staffed, managed and operated to the highest national standards.
- o **Strategy to Achieve Aim** The Governing Body will monitor the established Continuous Improvement Programme and the School Audit Cycle with the intention of maintaining the high OFSTED gradings of "outstanding" and "good" achieved in 2005, 2009 and 2012.
- **Clinic Aim** The charity's clinical activities are to be organised, equipped, staffed, managed and operated to the highest national standards.
- o **Strategy to Achieve Aim** The Trustees will monitor clinical operations with the intention of maintaining its unbroken record of meeting the targets set by the NHS and for satisfying its clients. To do this, the Trustees will use tools such as reports and standards set by the National Service Framework and quality audits conducted in alliance with our statutory partners.
- **Financial Performance Aim** The charity's financial affairs are to be conducted to the highest levels of public probity and according to the policies and procedures established for service and capital development consistent with the need to demonstrate Public Benefit.
- o **Strategy to Achieve Aim** The Trustees will consider financial Performance Indicators, other financial records and Risk Assessments at all their meetings to ensure that all our financial processes meet the requirements of both the Statements of Recommended Practice of the Charity Commission and Companies House. They will look at the record of expenditure to ensure that public monies are used exclusively for the Public Benefit.

Public Benefit - Achievements and Performance

The Trustees are pleased to note that the record of operations for the year under review complied with the aims and strategies set out by the Board and in all respects have exceeded expectations. The Trustees approved an investment program for the year that provided for the completion of the new Specialist Children's Assessment Centre to replace the old NHS Honeylands (estimated at a total project cost of £1.8m including purchase of the freehold). An additional allowance was set aside for normal maintenance and some improvement of the main Vranch House building but the investment plan also aimed at developing a surplus for the following year.

Service delivery remained at the same levels as the preceding 7 years with an average of 24 children on the school roll and nearly 2,000 children on the clinical list. The uptake on provided services has been very encouraging, with growth in every area of activity and, particularly, out-reach clinical. The tenants of the old residential hostel at Hill Barton House are now holding over on a concluded three year lease. This is acceptable to the Trustees because it offers the charity maximum flexibility for the generation of either capital or revenue income.

The multi-disciplinary Inclusion Advisory Service continues to make a substantial and remarkable difference to the inclusion of Vranch House Pupils into mainstream schools. This service provides advice and support to receiving mainstream schools and programs of extensive training to mainstream school staff, much of which will be tailored to the specific needs of the individual child. The rate of Inclusion of Vranch House School children into mainstream schools at over 80% is the best in the country. No charge to the Authority is made for this service.

The Trustees are pleased to report the effectiveness of the charity's ongoing and significant investment in Continuous Professional Development for its staff. All the teachers are engaged in programmes leading to Master's degrees and the school is one of a very few in the country in which all its Teaching Assistants are either already qualified or training to qualify to at least GQAL Grade 3.

Optech, a non-profit making service run by the charity which designs, manufactures and installs guided mobility equipment throughout England and Wales, had its best year in 2008. The recession has contracted the education and domestic markets and activity levels have been challenging. Nevertheless, around 50% of the operating costs are being recovered through maintenance activity and some new installations. The contribution made by the Mobility Project Manager and our Technical Consultant to many of the other Vranch House projects is both invaluable and highly commended.

Plans for Future Periods

The new Service Led Agreement with Devon County Council and NHS Devon came into effect from the 1st of April 2011. Planned changes to the structure of the NHS mean that some of the commissioning arrangements for services will change to reflect the inception of Clinical Commissioning Groups but the overall structure of the 25-year agreement will remain unaltered. The long-term aim of increasing the geographical cover, depth and level of resource of these services is recognised in the Agreement.

The charity continues to establish benchmarks in clinical and educational practice in order to meet its goal of not just meeting but exceeding service delivery standards. Preparations for the new OFSTED regime continue and the work of the NHS Heads of Professions Team – in which our Head of Therapy plays a leading role as the lead Physiotherapist for the NHS in Devon – informs the continuous development of our clinical services. The charity has been involved in the combined agency review of the local Children's Development Centre and this has led to a re-validation of centre-based expertise, novel methods for delivering this expertise into the community and new, far more integrated, ways of working.

The onset of the present recession and its effect on investment in public services will have an effect on this charity. The Trustees have established a conservative policy for future capital spend and for the revenue development of all the charity services. Whilst our statutory partners are actively engaged in establishing new ways of delivering services, in which this charity will play a significant part, there will be a need for retrenchment and for adopting new methods of working in order to sustain current activity levels at less cost.

Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities shows total income for the year ending the 31st of March 2012 of £2,127,670 (£2,006,039 in 2011). The Society's Net Current Assets stand at £770,739 (£764,574 in 2011). The Society has tangible Fixed Assets reflecting the purchase of the Freehold of £5,392,718 (£1,653,464 in 2011) when the charity did not own the site on which the Vranch House buildings had been constructed). It has Total Funds Employed of £6,163,457 (£2,418,038 in 2011). £475,000 of the Fixed Assets is the market valuation of Hill Barton House as of March 2009 and a further £4.8m is the market valuation of the Vranch House site. £333,500 of the total incoming Resources (shown as Restricted Funds) was a grant from a single donor for the new Assessment Centre. Adding back depreciation, (a non monetary expense), the Society made a cash surplus in the year of £831,632.

Important transactions in the year include the contract income of £876,352 from NHS Devon in respect of the outpatient and clinical work. Total income from charitable (not contracted) and all other sources was £486,734, (excluding the £333,500 donation mentioned above), compared with a total of £138,133 in 2011. The income from school fees was much as predicted at £431,084 (compared with £479,308 in the preceding year).

The strong financial performance of the charity is remarkable considering that the contract sums for the original educational and clinical work has not changed at all since 2009.

The Trustees are content that all expenditure made in the accounting period met with the Public Benefit aims and strategies as set out in an earlier section of this report.

Reserves policy

The Trustees have established a liquid reserves policy so that it is consonant with the revenue interests of a service charity. By setting the development of liquid reserves to the equivalent of annual operating costs, revenue will be developed from interest which will enable further development in our services. The forecast level of funding is such that an operating surplus is expected for the current year and the maintained reserve is such to provide a cushion in the event that either of the largest sources of income is threatened. The current recession and unprecedented low interest rates have proved the wisdom of establishing and maintaining this policy.

Investment Policy

The Memorandum and Articles provide the Trustees with the power to make investments as they choose but consonant with current Charity Commission advice. The charity's cash assets are spread between the Business Reserve and two Mutual Society investment accounts in accord with the stated policy of low-risk diversity.

Trustees' Responsibilities in relation to the Financial Statements

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- (a) Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- (b) Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- (c) Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In accordance with Company Law and as the Company's Directors, we certify that:

- So far as we are aware there is no relevant audit information of which the Company's auditors are unaware; and
- As the Directors of the Company we have taken all the steps that we are required to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Compliance

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small company regime Section 419(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

Auditors

A resolution proposing Kirk Hills to be re-appointed as auditors of the Charity will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

Approval

This report was approved by the Board of the Society (the Board of Directors and Trustees) on the 13th of November 2012 and signed on its behalf.

A Barge

Chairman

November 2012



Colonel Wheeler,
Chief Executive
Joined 1993

Chief Executive's Report Financial Information

Financial Information abstracted from the Audited Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2012

The figures used in this article are taken from the Auditor's Report for the 2011 - 2012 Financial Year. The headline financial news is included in the report of the Directors and Trustees but the following financial information is worth high lighting:

- Income rose from £2,006,039 to £2,127,670 as a result of our fund-raising for the new Specialist Children's Assessment Centre project which commenced in July 2010 (£333,000 from a single donor and £486,734 from other sources). Debtors dropped dramatically from £135,352 to £67,745 a result of the decline in pre-payments generated by the building project.
- Net Current Assets increased slightly by £6,165 to £770,739.
- Tangible Fixed Assets rose to £5,392,718 from £1,653,464 in the preceeding year and Total Funds Employed rose from £2,418,038 to £6,163,457 in the same period. This unprecedented development in asset value is the consequence of the freehold purchase of the title to the Vranth House site and the value of the completed Children's Assessment Centre.
- With Depreciation discounted the Society made a net cash surplus over the year of £831,632 – an outstanding performance reflecting higher turnover in every area of activity.
- We have maintained the high number of pupils in the school and outpatients seen by the clinic whilst continuing investment in the buildings at Vranth House and in the Inclusion and IT services.

The Trustees agreed a programme of capital investments for the Financial Year which provided for continuing maintenance of the Vranth House estate (mostly for rebuilding the plant in the hydrotherapy pool), for further investment in the New Honeylands building and finalisation of the purchase of the title.

Profit & Loss Account

ELEMENT	2012	2011	2010
Gross Income	£2,127,670.00	£2,006,039.00	£1,255,887.00
Gross Expenditure	£1,326,162.00	£1,911,766.00	£1,170,598.00
Cash Gain/Loss for the Year	£801,508.00	£94,273.00	£85,289.00

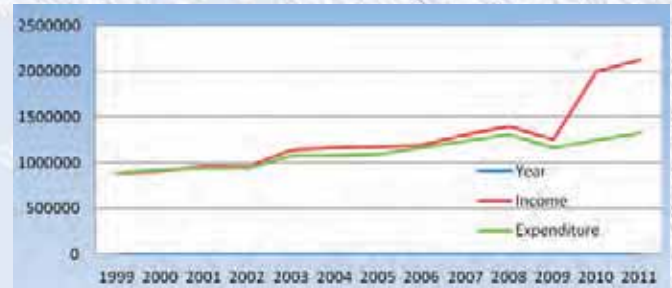
Summary of Key Financial Ratios:

Debtors as a Percentage of:				
	2012	2011	2010	2009
Total Funds	1.00%	5.60%	2.00%	4.00%
Creditors as a Percentage of:				
Current Assets	7.50%	17.60%	5.50%	4.00%
As a Percentage of Total Funds				
Profit/Loss for the Year	13.50%	3.90%	5.00%	4.00%
Revenue Costs	3.00%	4.90%	2.50%	3.00%

Notes:

- Profit is shown net of depreciation.

Income & Expenditure Trends



Notes:

- The Auditor's Report for 2011/12 is available on request at a cost of £2.00 per copy but may be viewed at no cost but by prior arrangement at Vranth House or on the Charity Commission website at www.charitycommission.gov.uk.

Future Plans

The charity's strategic objective for the next five years is to embody and develop the new partnership with Devon County Council and NHS Devon. The immediate objective is to demonstrate performance compliance with the requirements of the joint contract and then to so develop service objectives that all the benchmarks are exceeded. In the longer term, the Charity aims to continue development of its services, continue the investment programme by further developing charitable income and work with its partners to respond to financial retrenchment by adaptive working practises. Our long established financial policy of holding reserves amounting to no less than a year's operating costs has proved its worth on many occasions. Given the uncertainty and instability of the financial markets and the continued imperative of fiscal discipline we intend to maintain and further develop this reserve. The policy of not charging capital costs in any of our contracts forms the basis of our charitable benefit by contributing significantly to the 40% of the costs of the statutory services we provide.

Graeme Wheeler
Chief Executive

Headteacher's Annual Report



Jane Parsons
Head Teacher
Joined 2004

Academic Year:
September 2011 to
July 2012

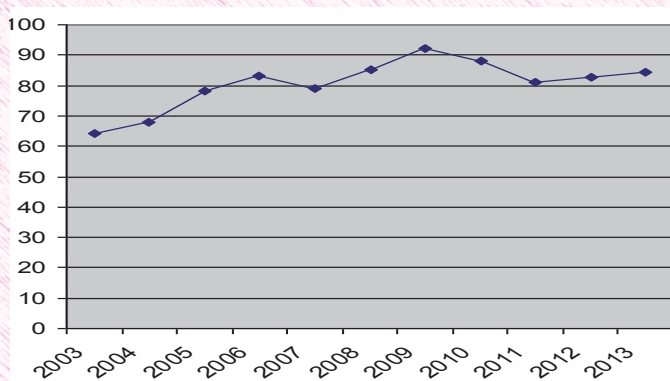
1) What have been our successes this year?

- The school underwent an Ofsted Inspection during this year. A copy of the latest report can be found on our website and extracts have

been included at the end of this report.

- The sensory room has been completed and is now in regular use on a daily basis. We are also very pleased to be able to share this facility with our colleagues at Honeylands Assessment Centre.
- Links continue between the charity Whizz-Kidz and ourselves, which has included football skills and powered wheelchair skills workshops which are held on an annual basis during "Whizz-Kidz week" in June.
- We continue to work successfully with Exeter University and may also be welcoming teaching students for introductory visits from Bath Spa University during this year.
- The Administrative side of our MIS (management information system) within school has now been up and running successfully, for some time. The assessment side is due to be implemented in full during the next year.
- Class visits during this year have included the Donkey Sanctuary, Teignmouth Pier for a party, Middlemoor Police Headquarters to see the helicopters and the theatre to watch and enjoy "We're All Going on a Bear Hunt."
- We have also enjoyed visits from the Fire Brigade and the Charity Follow Your Dreams who have worked very hard to make some dreams come true for our pupils.

Percentage of Pupils Included in Mainstream Settings



2) What are we trying to improve?

Develop strategies to further support the acquisition of independent living skills Further develop curriculum resources

Embed agreed phonics approach throughout school

Improve IEP target setting, support and assessment within all areas of school

3) How much progress do pupils make?

Pupils at Vbranch House School make good progress when their baseline achievements are taken into account. The following section describes the results for Foundation, Key Stage 1 and 2 assessments during 2011/12. The results are compared to targets set two years previously.

Foundation Stage Assessment

The results of the Foundation Stage Assessment at the end of the 2011-12 academic year, demonstrate that the three children concerned are working towards early learning goals in all subjects.

	PSED			CLL				PSRN			KUW	PD	CD	PRE	CLL	PRN	TOTAL
	DA	SD	ED	LCT	LSL	R	W	NLC	C	SSM							
a	5	4	4	2	3	5	1	5	2	4	2	5	4	13	11	11	46
b	6	6	5	5	3	5	2	4	2	3	2	2	5	17	15	9	50
c	7	6	5	6	7	6	5	7	5	7	7	6	7	18	24	19	61

All three pupils are working securely towards (0-3) or within (4-7) the Early Learning Goals.

Their future targets for the end of Key Stage 1 (2013-14) are set out below and represent challenging targets of at least one level of progress.

2013/14 Total children: 3	* P5	P6	P7	P8	L1	L2
English: Listening		1	1			1
Speaking	1		1		1	
Reading	1		2			
Writing	2	1				
Maths: Using & applying	1	1			1	
Number		1			2	
Shape, space & measures	1	1			1	
Science:				2	1	

* P Levels – working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum

Key

PSED: Personal, Social and Emotional Development. **DA:** Dispositions and Attitudes. **SD:** Social Development. **ED:** Emotional Development) **LCT:** Language for Communication and Thinking. **CLL:** Communication Language and Literacy **LSL:** Linking Sounds and Letters. **R:** Reading, **W:** Writing, **C:** Calculating. **PSRN:** Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy. **NLC:** Numbers as Labels and for Counting. **KUW:** Knowledge and Understanding of the World **SSM:** Shape, Space and Measures. **CD:** Creative Development. **PD:** Physical Development.

Review of Targets set for Key Stage 1 Assessment for Year 2011/12

Targets were set for 6 Key Stage 1 children for the academic year 2009/2010. Since these targets were set four of these children have moved to mainstream or alternative specialist education settings.

Targets set in 2009/10		Target (number of children at level)						
Total Children: 6		*P1/3	P4/5	P6/8	L1	L2	L3	Total
English	2009/10							
S& L Listening		2	2	0	2	0	0	6
S& L Speaking		1	3	1	1	0	0	6
Reading		3	1	0	2	0	0	6
Writing		2	2	1	1	0	0	6
Mathematics	2010/11							
Using & Applying		2	1	1	2	0	0	6
Number		1	1	1	3	0	0	6
Shape, Space & Measure		2	0	2	2	0	0	6
Science	2010/11	1	2	1	2	0	0	6

*P levels – working towards Level 1

The remaining two children achieved all targets set for them with one child exceeding their target for Level 1 Listening by achieving Level 2.

Future Target for Key Stage 1 Assessment for year 2013/2014

The remaining two children achieved

Total Children: 3 2013/14							
	P5	P6	P7	P8	L1	L2	Total
English S&L Listening	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
S& L Speaking	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Reading	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
Writing	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
Maths: Using & Applying	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Number	0	2	0	0	1	0	3
Shape, Space & Measure	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Science 2014	0	0	0	2	1	0	3

*P levels – working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum

These targets represent at least one and often two levels of progress and are considered to be challenging. As all three children are currently on a shared placement it is possible but unlikely that all three will have transferred to full time mainstream education by the end of the academic year 2013/2014.

At the time these targets were set two pupils were assessed. Since then one pupil has transferred full time to mainstream attendance. **Key Stage 2**

2011/12 total children: 2 *P1/3 P4/5 P6/8 L1 L2 L3 Total								
English	2009/10							
English Listening		0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Speaking		0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Reading		0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Writing		0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Maths Using & Applying		0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Number		0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Shape, Space & Measure		0	1	0	0	1	0	2
Science		0	0	1	0	1	0	2

*P levels – working towards Level 1 National Curriculum

For English the remaining pupil achieved their target for Speaking & Listening and Writing but achieved P5 instead of P6 for Reading.

For Mathematics this pupil achieved targets for Number and Shape, Space and Measure but achieved P5 instead of P6 for Using and Applying.

For Science this pupil achieved all targets.

For targets set in Spring 2012 this pupil achieved or exceeded all their targets.

Future Target for Key Stage 2 Assessment for Year 2013/2014

These targets are for one pupil who was Year 4 in the academic year 2011/2012. These targets are based upon PIVATS and Durham data and teacher assessment at the end of 2011/2012 and these targets will be monitored at the end of the academic year 2012/13 and reviewed and compared with previous results and national

2013/14 Total Children: 1						
	P5	P6	P7	P8	L1	Total
English Listening	0	0	0	0	1	1
Speaking	0	0	0	0	1	1
Reading	0	0	0	1	0	1
Writing	1	0	0	0	0	1
Maths: Using & Applying	0	0	1	0	0	1
Number	0	0	0	1	0	1
Shape, Space & Measure	0	1	0	0	0	1
Science 2014	0	0	0	1	0	1

*P levels – working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum

results at the end of the academic year 2013-14.

These targets represent at least one level of progress and are considered challenging.

4) How have our results changed over time?

Having examined target setting by teachers, Durham (www.cemcentre.org) and Pivats (www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/web/?PIVATS/14588) and by analysing the end of year results, we have decided to cease using Pivats and continue with a combination of teacher assessments and Durham data collection tools. This is mainly because the National cohort used by Durham includes the majority of children with learning and physical difficulties across the United Kingdom and is therefore far more finely tuned for comparison between the results of our pupils in school and those nationally.

When analysing the results of teacher assessments and targets overall, they compared well with 2 year targets set by the Durham and Pivats assessment tools. The teacher targets were set in the Spring Term this year, so were relatively short term.

In a few cases children have exceeded or not achieved targets in certain areas. This has been across all assessments (Teacher, Durham and Pivats). Unexpected results such as these, appear to be due to individual circumstances such as illness or are due to a child making excellent progress. Specific details regarding this are included within each child's reports, reviews and personal assessment data.

There were no significant differences between individual teacher predictions and targets. We are moving towards making finer predictions for targets due to the introduction of small steps of progress between P Levels and we are also increasing our moderation activities between teachers to maintain our consistency across the school.

Evaluation of Whole School End of Year Assessment Data

Assessment results according to groups Results from Years: 2011-12

This table illustrates the end of year data results for our pupils according to their main area of physical difficulty.

This data has been collated following interrogation of Durham data charts for each individual area of difficulty and also for all the pupils together, which is the 'none' category.

The key below is intended to explain the coding system.

The numbers at the bottom of the table illustrate how many of each of the groups has achieved at each level.

Subject difficulty	Sp.	Lst.	S&L	R	W	U&A	SSM	Nu	ScE	Life	Mat.	Phy	ICT	Pshe
None	A	+	+	A	-	A	A	A	A+	A	A+	A	A+	A
PD	A	+	+	A	A	A	+	A	+	+	+	+	A	A
SLCN	A	A+	+	A	-	A	A+	A	A+	A	A	A+	A	A
VI	A	+	+	A+	A	+	++	+	+	+	+	+	A	A+
HI	A+	A	NA	A-	A	+	A	A	A+	A	A	A	A	A
PMLD	_	_	NA	_	_	A_	_	A_	A	A	A	A	A_	A
BESD	A_	A+	NA	A	_	A	+	A	+	+	+	+	A	A+
+	0	3	4	0	0	2	3	1	3	3	3	3	0	0
A+	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	1	1	2
A	4	1	0	4	3	4	2	5	1	4	3	3	5	5
A-	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
-	1	1	0	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Key:

- lower than interquartile range Interquartile range is the middle 50% of the whole sample according to need. **A-** predominantly interquartile range but spreading quite strongly into lower than interquartile range. **A** within the interquartile range. **A+** predominantly within interquartile range but also spreading quite strongly above the interquartile range. **+** entirely (or almost entirely) above the interquartile range

Abbreviations:

PD physical difficulty **SLCN** speech, language, communication needs **VI** visual impairment **HI** hearing impairment **PMLD** profound and multiple learning difficulty **BESD** behavioural, emotional and social difficulty

The S&L (speaking and listening section is only for pupils who are working within National Curriculum levels for this area)

Sp speaking **Lst** listening **R** reading **W** writing **U&A** maths, using and applying **SSM** shape, space and measure **N** number **ScE** scientific enquiry **L** life processes **M** materials and their properties **P** physical processes **ICT** information and technology **PSHE** personal, social, health and emotional

- Due to the nature of our pupils' difficulties it is understandable that speaking, reading and writing are either within the average band or below it. Nevertheless these are areas that need consideration to ensure that we are providing the best education and support possible. Particularly as the pupils are achieving so well for listening, which suggests that they are engaged and keen to learn and achieve.

- When compared with all children nationally, taking no difficulties into account, the pupils achieve mainly within the interquartile range but when compared with other pupils nationally who have physical difficulties Vbranch pupils have achieved higher scores than the average, except for writing.

- The children with profound and multiple difficulties do not achieve such good results and we must continue to work towards improving these. It is however, good to see them heading towards an average score this year for numeracy, whilst already achieving within average levels for science, ICT and PSHE, which is an improvement on last years results. I would suggest that our sensory based curriculum has definitely supported these learners and that we should continue with this approach and investigate why these results do not follow across to literacy, particularly as these students are mainly at P Level 3 and below which means the P Level objectives are relatively generic across all subjects.

- BESD – we only have one child who has been categorised as BESD and it is good to see that these results demonstrate an able individual who is achieving well in comparison with his peers – when this child is singled out from the 'none' section his/her progress in comparison with his/her peers is also within the average range. When compared with the physical difficulties group this pupil achieves just above average and this would be expected due to the nature of this pupil's physical difficulties (ambulant with reasonably good fine and gross motor skills)

- VI – it is good to see that the pupils who are in the VI group (which ranges from children with glasses to a significant proportion of children who are registered blind – ie almost 50%) have results

which are predominantly above average across all subjects.

- S&L – the very good results for these pupils suggests that when interventions and teaching support work well together a pupil is likely to make excellent progress and these are the pupils' who are likely to move to full time mainstream education before the end of their primary schooling or upon entry to secondary school.

Action Plan:

- Listening and Science would appear to be strengths. This needs further investigation and explanation by the teaching team – teachers meetings, planning and moderation meetings will be used to discuss these issues and plan next steps.

- We need to monitor results for children with PMLD – aiming to establish why results are lower for literacy and some numeracy areas and identifying steps to remedy this.

- regular snap shot assessments for these pupils throughout the year (3 times) alongside moderation of the results will help us to explore these issues.

- Speaking and writing remain priorities for ways of promoting and improving speech, communication and writing development. – write dance has been in place as a programme for two years now and Ipads and eye gaze systems have also begun to be used by pupils.

- It is anticipated that the gap for speaking and writing should reduce, but this needs to be monitored when IEP's are reviewed and at the end of the year to asses progress.

5)How are we making sure that every child gets teaching to meet their individual needs?

- Individual IEPs linked to statement of special educational needs and annual review, with a focus on personalised learning, individual needs and life skills development.

- Individual IEP targets included across all planning for class and group work, using a multi-professional approach.

- Formative and summative assessment including; Pre-entry assessment, Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum profiles, assessment for learning Key Stage 1 and 2 assessment, annual assessment

of National Curriculum and P Scale levels and sub levels, annual school report, annual and interim review reports.

- Annual monitoring of pupil progress using Durham data analysis.
- Moderation of individual pupil assessment, including links with mainstream schools.
- Regular meetings between staff to ensure children's needs are met.
- Targeted curriculum.
- Visits from Educational Psychologist and LA Advisory Teachers as necessary.
- Personal Education Plans for children with additional and complex medical or physical needs.
- Music therapy for some children, as appropriate.

6) What have pupils told us about the school, and what we have done as a result?

- Pupils have enjoyed the interactive displays in the corridors and we are continuing to develop an interesting indoor environment.
- There is a school council through which pupils have an opportunity to contribute towards ideas and decisions. For example the school council chooses the Christmas Play each year and helps to plan the Christmas Party.
- School Council Members take turns to show visitors around school, when possible
- We have been encouraging pupil voice across the school community.

7) How do we make sure our pupils are safe and well supported?

- School nurse on duty at all times and good staffing levels.
- Pupils are encouraged to let staff know if they have any problems.
- Regular clinics held at school: paediatric, orthopaedic, orthoptic, audiology and wheelchair clinics.
- Children's diets monitored.
- Effective links between home, respite, transport and shared placements to ensure up to date knowledge on dietary, behavioural, medical or communication needs are shared.
- Effective induction of new staff.
- Provision of healthy snacks at break times.
- Good standard of moving and handling, including regular updates and training.

- Comprehensive health and safety policy with regular premises checks.
- Closed circuit security cameras outside the building.
- Good security procedures – registration of visitors, car parking permits.
- Regular fire drills.
- High levels of investment in buildings and equipment and regular maintenance.
- Safeguarding policies in place and a high level of staff awareness.
- Regular child protection updates.
- Liaison with mainstream schools regarding issues such as attainment, moderation and attendance.
- Secure boundaries around school.
- Visitors to school informed re policy on use of mobile phones in school.
- Monthly support staff meetings to raise concerns or issues.
- A Staff Governor who provides an easily accessible link between staff and management. The Staff Governor represents the views of everyone at support and governors meetings.

8) How do our absence rates compare with other schools?

- Total number of pupils of compulsory school age on roll for at least one session - 19.
- Percentage of pupil sessions (half days) missed through authorised absence – 10.3% and through unauthorised absence – 0.15 %.

The authorised absence figure is higher than for the previous year (9.3% authorised and 0.0 unauthorised). This reflects the complex medical needs of some pupils and represents a third year of increase.

This year we have had four pupils (approx. 20%) who have had complex medical interventions or illnesses which have required hospital treatment.

These pupils each have absence rates of 15% or more. If the attendance data for these four pupils is removed the figures are 6.09% and 0.10% which are comparable with national data for special schools for the years 2010-2011 which are 8% and 2%. The 0.15% unauthorised absence is due to late arrival in school due to unavoidable transport difficulties.

(data taken from DfE Statistical First Release published in March 2012)

9) What activities are available to pupils?

- Broad and balanced curriculum.
- Music therapy sessions for individual children.
- Outdoor nature trail and classroom including tracker mobility device.
- ICT – children individually assessed and given full access to ICT with fully accessible Learning Resource Centre.
- Swimming / hydrotherapy.
- P.E. and Swimming badges/certificates (as appropriate).
- Holiday workshops such as swimming groups
- Range of educational visits off-site e.g. Northcott Theatre, Inclusive Playpark, Donkey Sanctuary
- Links with Whizz-Kidz Charity
- Sensory room

10) How are we working with parents and the community?

- Parent representative on the Governors.
- Signing and moving and handling courses and Therapy/School Open Weeks.
- In school training opportunities and workshops to encourage parents to try out equipment and ask the experts for advice
- Therapy sessions provided during holidays.
- Fund raising activities for charities by the children including Children in Need, Sign2Sing and Breast Cancer Awareness.
- Christmas Fayre.
- Student placements from universities.
- Parents and families invited to school events e.g. school play and Christmas Carols, Easter Bonnet parade, Achievement Awards assembly, Harvest Festival.

11) What do our pupils do after leaving this school?

Most of the pupils continue their placements in their mainstream partner schools, if they move to full inclusion before Secondary age. Some pupils go on to secondary mainstream or special schools depending on what is the most appropriate provision for the child's individual needs.

12) What have we done in response to our latest Ofsted Inspection in May 2012?

Extracts from Ofsted report in May 2012:

Vranch House School “provides a good quality of education. The outstanding quality of welfare, health and safety of pupils, including safeguarding, and the outstanding provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensure that pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development.

What the school could do to improve further:

Improve consistency in teaching and learning by refining the learning goals in all lessons so that they are always matched precisely to the needs of the pupils.

- 2012-13 audit target to further develop whole school approach to Individual Education Plans (IEP's) and to ensure their use across school and departments. To make use of IEP's to further develop lesson plans which recognise individual targets for pupils and ensures differentiation, assessment opportunities and pupil progress.

Build on the already good assessment procedures and implement the new assessment systems consistently in classes across the school so that academic progress can be tracked more precisely.

- 2012-13 audit target to implement the new MIS assessment systems and link these with Durham data tools and individual education plan target setting and reviews to provide a concise but efficient tracking tool to record and analyse pupil progress. Compare these results with National data and recognise opportunities for further refinements and improvements. *Improve the curriculum by implementing plans to link more closely*

The learning and therapeutic aspects of pupils' education

- 2012-13 audit target to implement finer detail to individual education plans and to ensure that targets are meaningful and achievable for pupils to make progress and can be used across subjects and activities in this school, mainstream and often at home.

Beverley Simcox - School Secretary - Joined 1988



I can't believe that yet another year has flown by and during that time we have seen some changes to the staff, saying farewell to some and welcoming others.

Six children left the school in the academic year ending July 2012 to transfer full-time to mainstream or other special schools. It has been great getting to know them all and to see the children progress throughout their time in the school and I wish them all well in their new settings and in due course look forward to hearing news of how they are getting on.

Once again staff and the Family Network combined to organise another Christmas Fayre in December 2012 and a big thank you is extended to all the organisers and helpers for giving up their valuable time to assist and to all the children and their families who were able to come and support it.

Since joining the school in 1988 I have seen many improvements not only to the services offered at the Centre but also to the fabric of the building and site itself. Last year I mentioned the new Vranth House building which the Honeylands Children's Assessment Centre now occupies. Vranth House has now taken over the swimming pool and since then a great deal of effort has been put in to ensure its smooth operation in a cost efficient way. However, there is only so much that can be done to the existing structure so you never know in the next year or so I may be mentioning that a new building to house the pool has been constructed!



Sue Phillips - Finance Officer - Joined 1992

I started work at Vranth House School in 1992 and have held various positions within the school. In 2003 I became the Finance Officer. I am responsible for all the daily financial functions, salaries and record keeping of the school.



I enjoy my work but I also enjoy working in an environment where there is always something going on, it may be listening to the children singing or laughing whilst they are having a therapy session or it could be watching their delight as they take part in a school play. Whatever is happening you can guarantee each day will be different and that's a good thing.



Tracey Ward - Receptionist/Secretary - Joined April 2005

I can't believe that I have been working here since 2005 - I honestly don't know where the time has gone!

Some of the children that started around the same time I did have now left Vranth House to either attend mainstream on a full-time basis or High School. It has been lovely to see these children grow and mature over the years and I look forward to their visits when they come into Vranth House for Paediatric Clinics.



I have really enjoyed the past 2 years at Vranth House being able to use my Early Years teaching experience and gaining new insights and knowledge into working with children with varying needs. I am looking forward to putting the new Early Years curriculum into practise in Class 1- it should offer some interesting changes!

This year I have completed my Post Graduate Certificate in Learning Disabilities- severe, profound and Complex. This has helped me develop my own understanding of disability and the opportunities which can be available to help children succeed. I have really enjoyed the multi-disciplinary options the course offered to me and I am looking forward to putting my new ideas into practise!

The children in Class 1 are always happy and determined to succeed. They make my job very rewarding and enjoyable!



Michelle Woodgates
Teacher ~ Class 1
Joined 2010

Julie Lobb Teaching Assistant - Joined 2005



I have been at Vranth House since 2005 starting initially as a lunch-time assistant. I also ran the crèche on Wednesdays/Thursdays and helped out in the hydrotherapy pool until 2010. I now work as a teaching assistant and in 2012 I gained a diploma level 3 in children and young persons workforce. I have a particular interest in the visually impaired and I am involved in a couple of groups working with our children which I really enjoy. I am also a qualified first aider. It is a privilege to be working alongside a wonderful team and such inspiring children.



Ronnie Parsons
Teaching Assistant -
Joined 1995

Since I joined Vranth the school has seen many changes. The positive difference in each child however, can be subtle to dramatic but always wonderful to see. I have always felt very privileged to be part of that process. Personally I find it very rewarding being part of such a caring and intuitive team.





**Deborah Down
(Dee)
Teacher ~ Class 2
Joined 2002**

I have been working at Vranth House since 2002. Up until July 2010 I worked as the nursery teacher in class 1 working with children during the Early Years Foundation Stage. Previous to that I worked in a mainstream playgroup and I have also had 10 years experience of working for the NHS in a care role. I now work as a teacher in class 2 and I am enjoying my new challenge of working with an older age group and delivering a different curriculum to that of the early years. I thoroughly enjoy working at Vranth House and being amongst a great multi-disciplinary team. Every day is different here at Vranth House and seeing the bright and cheery faces of our pupils and their determination to succeed is not only an inspiration to me but to all who visit our school.



Carol Crabtree - Teaching Assistant - Joined 1985

I have worked at Vranth House for 25 years and have been part of its steady evolution from a good school to a fantastic one. This development has not always been easy – change often brings feelings of insecurity and confusion – but throughout this long period of growth and maturation, one constant has remained – the children. They have provided the motivation for all our achievements as a school, and have given me personally a huge amount of joy. I would not wish to be anywhere else.



Chelsea Armstrong - Teaching Assistant - Joined 2010

I first came to Vranth House to do work experience during my studies. After completing my diploma in childcare, learning and development, I started volunteering as I enjoyed my placement at Vranth so much. I am now one of the teaching assistants in Class 2.



**Sandra Selley
Teaching Assistant
Joined 2007**

I started working here at Vranth House as a lunch-time assistant and I am now happily working full time as a teaching assistant. It's the children that make my job enjoyable and rewarding and I look forward to coming into work.





Chloe Bond
Teacher - Class 3
Joined 2011

I am the Class 3 teacher at Vbranch and I have worked here since graduating from The University of Plymouth in July 2010 where I trained as a Primary teacher. Whilst at university I completed my Foundation and enhancement workshops in Makaton sign language and gained other qualifications in coaching and teaching different sports. During the summer holidays throughout my university years I worked in nurseries, holiday play schemes and I also spent nine weeks working at a school for children with severe and complex needs and visual impairments.

I am very happy that I can say I love my job working at Vbranch House, and the children I teach are amazing making everyday exciting where I learn something new from them.



Debbie Prout
Teaching Assistant - Joined 1991

Although I have worked at Vbranch House since 1991 and seen a lot of changes, the one thing that has remained constant is the children. They continue to delight and surprise me with their achievements. I believe

that in this job we never stop learning. I feel very privileged to play a part in that process.

Helen House - Teaching & Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2004



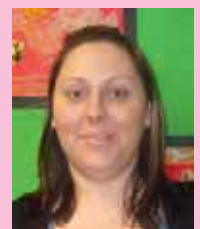
I work with the other staff helping the children reach their full potential in their learning, social and personal skills. I also help with some of the physiotherapy swimming sessions.

Each day is varied and brings something new. The children are great to work with and are full of fun.



Tammy Brown - Teaching & Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2008

I have been a staff member at Vbranch House since 2008 and find it a really rewarding place to work. I love working in Class 1 and especially enjoy welcoming the children into school on their first day and watching and helping them to settle in, develop and then see them progress through the school.



I feel very lucky to work with great children and staff and enjoy being part of Vbranch House's workforce.

Head of Therapy's Report



*Ginny Humphreys
Head of Therapy
Joined 1987*

The clinical team has been working hard in and out of Vranth House across Northern and Eastern Devon. With the team now comprising of 15 physiotherapists (3 of whom are seconded from Honeylands), 4 occupational therapists, 2 speech and language therapists, 6 therapy assistants, 2 nurses and 3 administrators, there are inevitably some staff arrivals and departures.

Kathryn Esau, physiotherapist, has taken a year's sabbatical to do voluntary work in a special school in Peru and we wish her bon voyage. Charlotte Tyrrell has replaced her and although new into paediatrics she is already doing a great job and is popular with children and staff.

The physiotherapists at Honeylands Specialist Assessment Centre have been seconded to the Vranth House clinical team and this has enabled a pooling of physiotherapy resources, resulting in Louisa Hetherington moving from Vranth to the Honeylands site to provide an increase of 2 days a week for the under 5s. The physiotherapists at Honeylands with new RD&E funding have taken on a developmental screening clinic for babies born before 31 weeks gestation or below 1kg in weight.

Average waiting times for accessing physiotherapy are between 5-8 weeks across the region.

There have been changes in the occupational therapy team at Vranth House with Anna Findlay leaving in July 2012, choosing a new life for her family in Hong Kong. Janelle Penfold has taken her place and is a very welcome addition to the team, hitting the ground running and supporting Susan Mitchell in providing an excellent service for children from mainstream schools with motor co-ordination difficulties. With Clare Webber taking up the Specialist Wheelchair Services post, her work with the Vranth House School children and in the Inclusion Team has been taken on by Jenny Budd who although newly qualified (with a degree

in psychology and a further one in occupational therapy) is introducing new approaches in a very calm and measured manner.

I am delighted to report that average waiting times for children from mainstream schools accessing occupational therapy at Vranth House will be below 18 weeks by the end of February 2013. This is a major achievement given the rising number of referrals and the historic waiting list. It has taken a whole team effort and I applaud the immense hard work from the therapists and administrative staff alike in this accomplishment.

We have introduced "User Feedback" this year and every term ask the children and parents at Vranth, the other special schools, Honeylands, North Devon and outpatients everywhere to let us know how we are doing. So far the comments have been overwhelmingly positive and the children tell us they enjoy coming to see us.

Clare Webber has been operating the Specialist Wheelchair Service very successfully for nearly 12 months. A panel of clinical leads meet once a month with Col. Wheeler, who holds the budget, to consider applications and allocate funding when applications are approved. Feedback from the children and families receiving this service has been very positive.

The Specialist Alternative Augmentative Communication Service is underway with newly recruited Katie McCaughey, speech and language therapist, at the helm. She is developing links with specialist and community speech and language therapists, county advisory teachers and schools across Devon. Already her support is being appreciated by these colleagues and families and schools.

Fun Fit is proving to be exceptionally successful in delivering training to all schools on the running of motor skills groups. Many schools are now offering daily movement groups for identified children to improve their motor skills. There have been reports of gains in self esteem, self control, enjoyment in PE and occasionally dramatic improvements in handwriting.

Thank you to all the clinical staff for their hard work and innovation again this year.

Physiotherapy

Kathryn Esau - Physiotherapist - Joined 1990

I continue to enjoy my role supporting children with a variety of physical difficulties who attend mainstream schools full-time. This involves assessing and reviewing the children's physical needs and offering advice to staff and carers to enable the children to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of school, home and community life. I see the children either at Vranth House, their schools or homes. I feel very privileged to have such a varied and stimulating job, working with such lovely children, their carers and such a great team.



Lucy Wills - Physiotherapist Joined November 2009

Following 3 years providing physiotherapy predominantly for the pupils at Vranth House School, I was given the opportunity in November 2012 to cover for Kathryn Esau's caseload while she is on sabbatical leave. I am currently providing physiotherapy to children and teenagers with physical difficulties, which involves visits to their mainstream schools to support and advise them and school staff in meeting their physical needs and reviewing their progress. I also see them as outpatients at Vranth House and liaise closely with the orthotics service, paediatricians, orthopaedic consultant, OTs, Advisory School Service and other professionals who may be involved in their care. I am enjoying the challenges that a varied caseload of ages and abilities brings. It is amazing what can be achieved with a supportive team and a determined and motivated child or teenager working together.



Charlotte Tyrrell - Physiotherapist - Joined 2012

I am the most recent member of staff to join the therapy team at Vranth. For the last 3 years I have been working as a Physiotherapist in a rotational post for the NHS. My role here is working with the children at Vranth House and also having an outpatient caseload. In the school setting I undertake individual therapy programmes and also group sessions. I am keen to get stuck in and have some fun in therapy. I look forward to getting to know the children and their families and I feel privileged to work in such a lovely environment with a great team.



Di Staves - Therapy Assistant - Joined 1987

I started at Vranth House School as a lunchtime assistant and then went on to become a physiotherapy assistant. I am now a therapy assistant which



involves leading group swimming sessions with the school children, power mobility and also seeing individual children for physiotherapy sessions. My work also involves taking individual outpatient swims and helping with outpatient groups. My work is challenging, enjoyable and rewarding.

Louisa Hetherington - Physiotherapist - Joined 2004

I have been working with the Vranth House Therapy team since 2004. Since January 2012 I have been seconded to work at the Honeylands Specialist Child Assessment Centre. This involves working as part of a large multidisciplinary team, assessing and treating children aged 0-5. I am enjoying getting to know some new colleagues and families and developing my skills with this age group.



Jackie Rowe - Therapy Assistant - Joined 1989

As a therapy assistant there are no boundaries, opportunities arise through the Therapy Team here at Vranth House to experience and be involved in new ventures. At the moment I help the Orthotist, Jamie Pegg, who comes into school and holds a clinic on a Monday. I enjoy this very much and am in awe of our feet quite an understated part of our body. I have also become involved with the new exciting fun-fit programme being rolled out across Devon. Working with Sarah Stone one of our North Devon physiotherapists, we travel to different venues in the county where Sarah and I deliver the training, allowing staff in Primary Schools to help children with Developmental Co-ordination Delay. This ensuring they receive the help needed early. Both things are quite different from my every day role in school.



Hanna McFadden - Physiotherapist - Joined 2012

I started at Vranth House in February 2012 and my week is divided between work in the East Devon community and Vranth House School with the school children. In school I primarily work with the children in classes one and three and work closely with both school and therapy staff to ensure the children get the right amount and type of therapy. We aim to make all of our therapy here fun for the children and deliver it via a combination of individual and group therapy sessions, swimming and daily activities. This includes supporting them with necessary equipment and orthoses in order to support them in achieving their full potential. I think it's really important to work closely and openly with the children's families, their mainstream schools, community therapists and any others involved in their care to ensure they receive the best from our service.





Kate Moss - Joined 2000

I qualified from Nottingham University in 1995 and have been working in paediatrics since 1997. I now support Ginny as assistant Clinical Lead. Over the past year I have led the therapy team in participating in the module based course - productive community services. This is an initiative by the NHS Institute of Innovation and Improvement, to evaluate our processes, environment and practice with the desired end result in improving and increasing face to face contact with the children and their families. We have completed the first 3 modules and the principles are embedded in our everyday working lives. I work with a variety of different children with different physical conditions. I am the physiotherapist responsible for the children with physical difficulties at ST Luke's mainstream secondary school, Southbrook Special School and children with neuromuscular conditions. It remains a privilege to work with all the staff at Vranth House and the wider team who are constantly an inspiration through their dedication and hard work for the children and their families when they become involved with Vranth House.

**Nicky White - Physiotherapist
Joined 2010**



I qualified from Nottingham School of Physiotherapy in 1992. I worked at Airedale General Hospital, then St James' University Hospital in Leeds where I had the opportunity to specialise in Paediatrics. After a career break and four children, I returned to work at Vranth House. I have had a varied caseload since returning to practice. I love working with children and their families and enjoy being part of the supportive therapy team at Vranth.



**Karen Sparks - Clinical Administrator
For The Therapy Team - Joined 2002**

The therapy department has changed out of all recognition since I joined it in 2002. The office has been enlarged (twice! - and it's still full!) and I now have more than twice the number of therapists 'under my wing'.

Since January 2012 I have been grateful to be ably assisted part-time by Rebecca Wheeler who has taken on administration for the new services, including FunFit and the Specialist Wheelchair Service, and helps with the relentless tide of paperwork.

I continue to administer the waiting list of mainstream children and arrange appointments for their assessments and reviews of physical skills. I organise medical clinics for consultant paediatricians and I groan my way through producing monthly statistics on how we are doing in terms of waiting times! We now have

more than 1,000 children across Devon on our caseload, and the phone calls and paperwork they generate all pass across my desk!

I strive to remain approachable and reassuring to anyone who rings in needing our services, including 'phone calls from distressed parents and concerned teachers. Even after all this time, no two days are ever the same for me!

I am feeling more than ever like a 'mother hen' as I find myself now nearer the 'senior' end of the age range in the department, with an influx of more newly qualified therapists at the 'junior' end! Although we miss greatly experienced and respected colleagues like Rosemary Pavitt who has now retired, and Kathryn Esau away on sabbatical, the youngsters bring in enthusiasm and new ideas, and are the next generation 'carrying the torch' of professional caring.

What is reassuring for me is that the thoughtful conversations I hear around me every single day between therapists about the children they are treating still have the needs of each individual child (and its family) at the very centre of any intervention. Knowledge and experience is shared generously and respectfully between physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech & language therapists and practice is continually challenged and improved. I think this is where a multi-disciplinary team really comes into its own. Learning doesn't just happen on 'training days', it happens all day, every day, from each other and from every child we see.

The whole truly is greater than the sum of its parts!



**Rebecca Wheeler - Assistant to the
Clinical Administrator - Joined 2012**

I started at Vranth House at the beginning of 2012, as assistant to Karen Sparks in the Therapy Department. I have had some previous experience of the wonderful atmosphere at Vranth House through undertaking work experience and spending time as a volunteer at various points during the last 10 years. I really enjoy the variety of the job, and being able to work with the enthusiastic and hard working team that is Vranth House.

**Steven Rowe - Clerical Assistant
- Physiotherapy Department -
Joined 2000**



I was a pupil at Vranth House from 1978 until 1985. Since leaving I have maintained my association with the school through regular visits and also because my mother is a staff member.

In November 1998 I was asked if I would like to do some voluntary work for the physiotherapy

department. Following a one month trial period, my voluntary work continued for nearly two years until, in February 2000, I was fortunate enough to have my position made permanent and I became employed as a part-time clerical assistant to the physiotherapy department on a Thursday afternoon. I feel very lucky to have been given the opportunity to work at the school and to experience life in a busy working environment. I can now go into the Staff Room to eat my lunch and I don't even have to knock on the door to go in !

The Ellen Tinkham Team

Gill Scott – Physiotherapist, Clare Harradine – Technical Instructor, Helen Hicks – Physiotherapy Assistant, Carly Budd – Physiotherapy Assistant

We work as part of the wider team of Vbranch House. We are based at Ellen Tinkham School which is a special school for children aged 3-19 years with severe learning difficulty (SLD), profound and multiply learning difficult (PMLD) and complex needs. We provide rebound therapy, hydrotherapy, group work or individual programmes depending on the therapeutic need of each child. We also take one group of children to Exeter gymnastics club for a gross motor and sensory processing session. We liaise closely with our occupational therapy and speech therapy colleagues based at Ellen Tinkham. Gill Scott also provides physiotherapy at Mill Water School in Honiton.



North Devon Community Children's Physiotherapy Service 2013

Vbranch House provides the only Children's Physiotherapy service in North Devon. This is a community based service providing Physiotherapy for children aged 0-18 years, or 19 years if still in full-time education.

The team in North Devon comprises 3 WTE Physiotherapy posts shared between 4, with a further full-time post covered by our Clinical Administrator Michelle Yandell and Therapy Assistant Charlotte Thomas. Sally Bunney leads the team, supported by Physiotherapists Rob Shaw and Sarah Stone.

This team provide treatment and advice in a number of different settings depending on the need, such as;

- Barnstaple Health Centre Outpatient Department
- Home where the child is too fragile to travel or where equipment requires setting up or monitoring
- Within Mainstream School/Nursery settings
- Special Schools
- Highfield Specialist Child Assessment Centre
- Venues where joint assessments are arranged with other professionals and parents/carers
- Outpatient Clinics held at Torrington and Holsworthy Hospitals
- North Devon District Hospital Children's ward and Special Care Baby Unit where a child has been referred for neurological assessment and training for staff

In addition, joint clinics with the Wheelchair Service (Exeter Mobility Centre or EMC), are held in our Department at Barnstaple Health Centre, and at Pathfield Special School on a termly basis. This is additional to the monthly clinics EMC provide at Barnstaple and Bideford Hospitals and in Exeter. We

have found this helpful for many families who wish to be seen with their Physiotherapist in a local setting their child is familiar with.

A wide variety of conditions are treated such as;

- Neurological - Cerebral Palsy
- Neuromuscular - Muscular Dystrophy, SMA
- Congenital - Spina Bifida
- Developmental Coordination Disorders
- Developmental Delay
- Postural and gait Abnormalities (including Hypermobility and Musculo-skeletal conditions) – in the young child (ie primary school age)

Referrals are accepted from a variety of professional sources such as General Practitioners, Hospital Consultants, Health Visitors, School Nurses and other professionals in Health and Education. In addition, families have open access for advice.

In the last year information leaflets for both Professionals and Parents, have been made available, in order to improve awareness of conditions that may not require Physiotherapy assessment.

2013 brings changes to the North Devon Children's Physiotherapy Team, as we will be recruiting a 4th specialist Physiotherapist in the New Year.



(From left) Michelle Robinson, Kelly Leonard, Rob Shaw, Sarah Stone, Charlotte Grigg and Sally Bunney.

Orthotics

Orthotics is the branch of medical science dealing with the rehabilitation of injured or weakened joints or muscles through artificial or mechanical support by orthoses or what used to be called orthopaedic appliances, for example Ankle Foot Orthoses. The meaning comes from 'orthos', the Greek for straight.

We take a plaster cast of the limb, arm or torso - whichever part needs support and make the orthosis using the cast to give an accurate fit. This is worn either all day, just part of it or during the night.

Muscle and bone grow at different rates and the tendons can sometimes get very tight. When there's spasticity (stiffness) in the muscle it can pull the joints into awkward positions and reduce the amount of motion. We are trying to maintain the length of the tendons so that the joints can work properly. Intervention while the child is growing is very important. Outpatients are seen 3 or 4 times a year and the pupils in school more regularly. The children have to be monitored as they grow.

The Nurses

Ruth Whithorn - Nurse - Joined 1983

I have been a nurse at Vbranch House for many years. I am on duty throughout the week. There is always nurse cover here.

We have excellent contact with parents and encourage them to pop in for a chat or to ring us. Between us we have gained several years experience in helping children with disabilities and their families, all of whom have individual and sometimes complex needs.

No two days are ever the same. We never know what may crop up next. Whatever the problem, we are equipped to deal with it. The team here at Vbranch is a tremendous support to us; they have a wealth of knowledge and skills in different areas.

One of our objectives is to keep a good link between home and school and to liaise with other schools and respite units and, of course, other professional bodies in the community plus hospitals.

I am also part of the Munch Bunch Team, our aim is to maximise each child's potential independence with their feeding skills, promote good nutrition and of course good manners within our friendly dining hall.

We have paediatricians from the hospital who have their individual clinics here for Vbranch House pupils and outpatients from the community. Other regular clinics include: Orthopaedic, Audiology assessment and referrals, Orthoptists and optician input, Dental check-ups and treatment and continence clinics. We have also started a gastrostomy review service which is held 3 monthly with the Hospital dietician coming in.

All our clinics are well attended and families and children benefit from advice from our multidisciplinary team.

We have year 4 Peninsula Medical Students regularly on a Thursday morning. It is a pleasure to see them getting involved with the children in class and they find the experience so useful as part of their learning about children with special needs.

Ellen Prouse - Nurse - Joined 2006

Everyday brings a new challenge at Vbranch House School since starting work here in February 2006.

Vbranch House has a full team approach to endeavour to help our children and their families with their complex needs.

The ongoing support for our families is all part of the daily ethos of Vbranch House School and our daily aim to involve and encourage in the challenge to take our standards higher.



Jamie Pegg
Orthotist



Occupational Therapy

Susan Mitchell - Specialist Children's Occupational Therapist - Joined: 2003

Occupational therapy at Vbranch goes from strength to strength. We have a super team with a great mix of skills and experience. The children we see continue to be challenging but rewarding. All have problems with motor co-ordination in some way but many have additional problems relating to perceptual, sensory, behaviour, social or emotional needs.

We have made changes recently and as a result, have reduced our waiting times considerably without, we hope, compromising quality. We try hard to focus on what each child wants to get better at - tailoring each therapy programme to the child & family circumstances. We focus strongly on 'occupation' and 'participation' in local activities where possible.

The majority of children are primary school age but we continue to see lots of children as they make the transition to secondary school - working mainly on organisation, routines, recording and participation in activities. For school referrals, we now ask the school to send a member of staff to the initial assessment. This has proved immensely valuable in setting school and home targets. Many school staff have commented on the usefulness of taking the time out to come.

We have introduced new 'quick fix' clinic slots to address a specific issue. This avoids having to wait some time for an available assessment time and has worked really well for follow-up work or cross referrals from physiotherapy to OT. We continue to run groups for appropriate children - always beneficial and rewarding.

What we offer is not rocket science but it can be valuable to be an 'objective observer' and use a practical approach to improve a child's 'occupation'.

I continue to give some presentations to other professional groups including parents, teachers and educational psychologists. As a team, we do regular Continuing Professional Development so we get better at what we do and don't get stuck in our ways.

We have a super therapy team which includes administrative and therapy assistant backup. We all get on well together. Here's to the next step.....

Janelle Penfold - Specialist Children's Occupational Therapist - Joined: 2012

I joined Vbranch House in September 2012 having previously worked in a child development centre for nearly ten years in Torbay. I am so pleased to be a part of the Vbranch team and I feel settled already. My role is to see children in outpatient clinics who have a range of developmental co-ordination disorders and to help run the handwriting group. Every day is different and it is lovely to work in such a happy environment.



Clare Webber - Specialist Children's Occupational Therapist - Joined: 2003

In 2012 my role with Vbranch House changed. Commissioners for Devon County Council are funding a new service for specialist wheelchairs as an augmentation to current NHS wheelchair services. This service is delivered by Vbranch House, and considers the mobility needs of children where these fall outside the provision criteria of existing services. The service budget is restricted, and applications are screened by a panel of therapy leads and specialists before being allocated to me, the therapist.

I assess the child's needs and abilities at home and at school, and consider their mobility requirements for education, leisure and social activities. I then work with the child, the family, the school and the child's community therapists to find the most appropriate wheelchair to meet the needs. I liaise with the statutory wheelchair services (often the child will have a 'wheelchair voucher' from them) as well as local and national charities to agree funding. All funding offered by the Specialist Wheelchair Service is agreed by the Panel.

Parents' and children's feedback is invited, and I hope that this service will continue to develop alongside statutory services to provide children with wheelchairs which will enhance their participation in all aspects of their lives.



Therapy support for children in mainstream schools

The Inclusion Team

Most of the children at Vranth House School now also attend their local mainstream school or Pre-school. The role of the Inclusion Team, (Viktoria Pavlics, Inclusion Advisory Teacher and Clare Webber, Occupational Therapist) is to set up and support the shared school placements, by liaising with parents and teachers and making sure that adequate facilities and equipment are available, and that various appropriate training is in place for the staff at our partner schools. We visit the children regularly in their mainstream settings to offer ongoing support and advice, and to discuss any issues arising. Vranth House School based Physiotherapists and the Speech and Language Therapist are also involved in this outreach service. Our aim is for each child to be fully included in their local school, whether that is for half a day each week or ultimately full-time.

Jenny Budd - Occupational Therapist (Joined 2012)

My role involves working with all children and staff in school to promote independence in daily activities from eating and toileting, to dressing and mark making, as well as accessing other areas of the curriculum such as ICT. I am also learning about sensory processing and how to meet these needs of children throughout the school day.



The rest of my role involves working with other professionals to assess potential new school children, working as part of the Inclusion team to support our children's mainstream placements, and since the summer I have been spending one day per week working with children from mainstream schools with motor co-ordination disorders.

Although my learning curve has been huge since starting in March 2012, I love the variety that life at Vranth gives my day, and getting to know all the children, staff and parents here has been wonderful.



Viktoria Pavlics, Inclusion Advisory Teacher (Joined 2005)

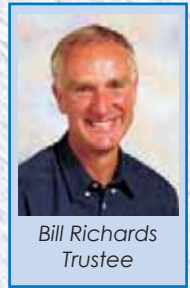
I joined the Inclusion Team in 2005; I support mainstream schools on adapting the curriculum. I also teach at Vranth House in the absence of the class teachers and take my share in the process of updating the curriculum policies.

I am seconded for one day a week to the Physical Difficulties Team of the Support and Advisory Teacher Service, covering Exeter, Mid and East Devon. I work with mainstream settings where pupils with physical difficulties are included full time.

In 2011 I celebrated the birth of my little boy and the completion of the Masters in Special Educational Needs; 2012 brought me my second child, a little girl this time.

School Development Plans

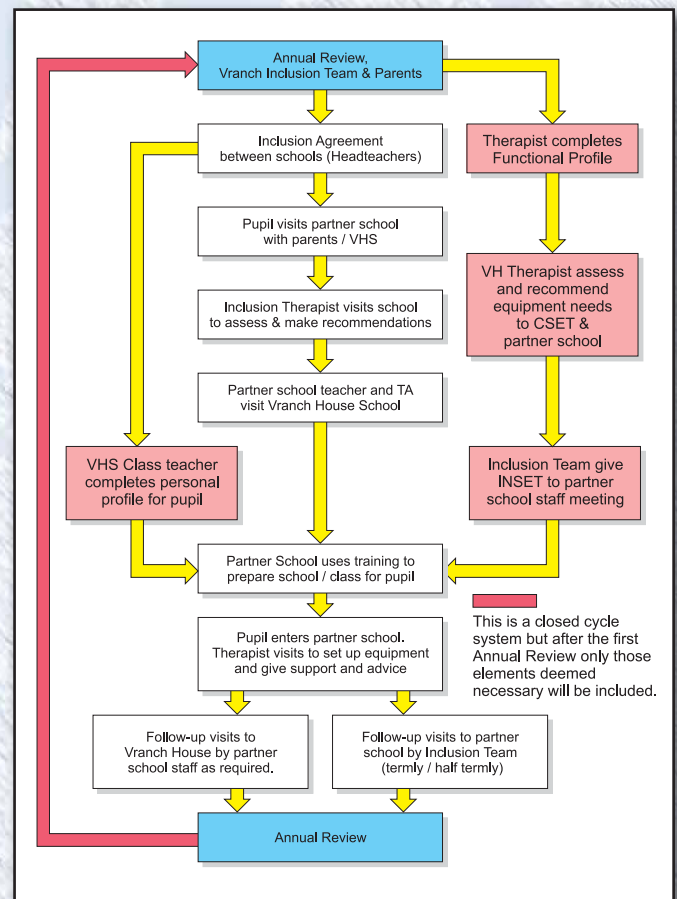
Vranth House has an excellent reputation locally, regionally and nationally and I have been privileged to work with the school in different roles since 2001.



A central reason for this well-earned reputation is the forward thinking vision of the senior management team in supporting the continual improvement of the school in all respects. This is especially important at a time of significant change in the educational climate, as currently the government is committed to developing a new relationship with schools.

At the heart of this relationship is the process of self-evaluation leading to school improvement. Our current initiatives are designed to ensure that the school continues to stay focused and is innovative in meeting these new challenges.

The school development plan and continuing professional development of the staff will ensure that we can utilise the huge level of expertise that all our staff possess. We will build on current best practise and individually and collectively move forward with confidence.



Speech and Language Therapy Report



Catherine Ward
Speech &
Language Therapist
Joined 2006

Speech and Language Therapy Contribution to Year Book Oct 2012

It's been another busy year for Speech and Language Therapy, with a few changes throughout the year. Denise (Speech and Language Therapy assistant) went on maternity leave at the end of the summer term. Katie McCaughey (the new SLT for AAC in mainstream schools) started in Sept 2012. She is based in the therapy dept and

is kindly helping support some of our school children to use their communication aids while Denise is on maternity leave and I am very grateful for her support. I'm now working 2.5 days / week at Vbranch and 2.5 days with the NHS community dysphagia service (for children with feeding difficulties) and also leading the NHS team of specialist SLT's.

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
Please don't keep on.	past	future	opposite		not	+ing							
I'm going	I'm sorry	where	I/me	he, him	is	feel	wait						
I don't know	please	why	Mum	she, her	am	wash	write						
I'm telling the truth	hello	what	Dad	it	are	play	sit						
It's not on my board	next	who	Laura	you	was	help	ride						
I'm lying	first	what	man	she, her	were	work	drive						
I don't understand	before	how	boy	they, them	have	music	read						
I want to talk about something else now	after	after	girl	have	had	do							
talking back	morning a.m.	yesterday	baby	Speech and Language									
may I go to the toilet	afternoon p.m.	today	teacher	Physio	has	want	love						
	night	tomorrow	helper	stand	maybe	paid	smile						
	about												



Denise Hutchinson
Speech &
Language Teaching
Assistant
Joined 1989

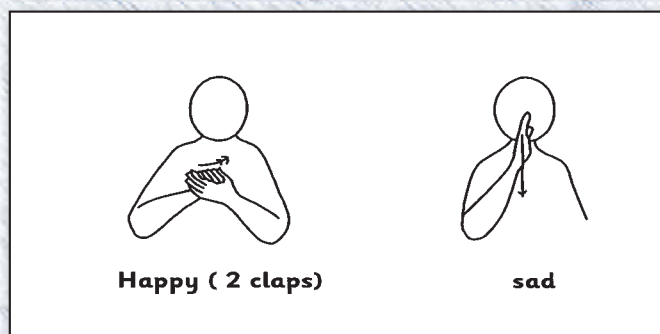
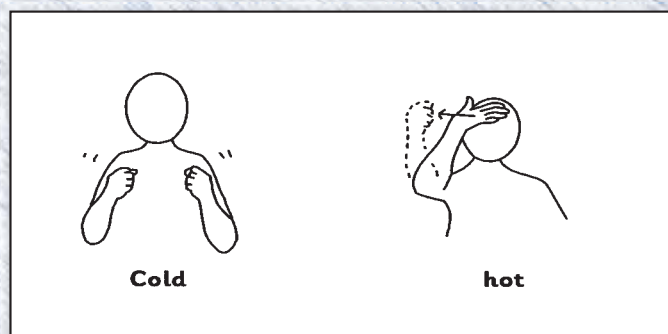
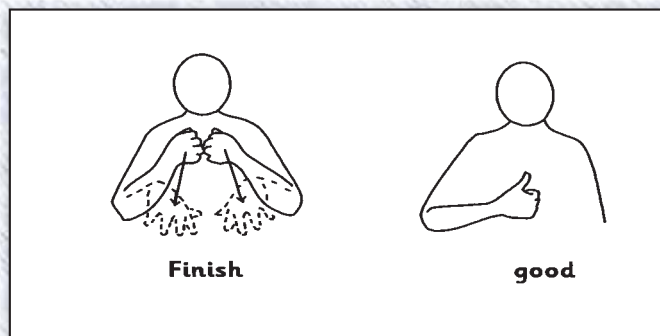
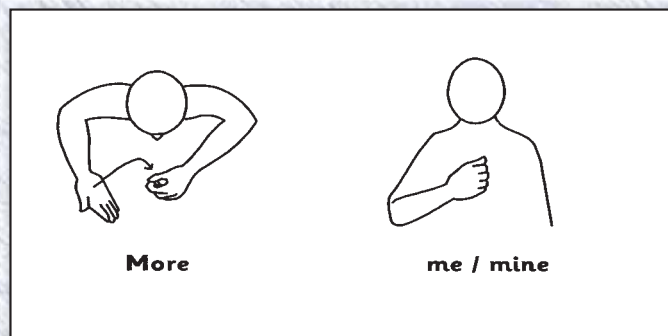
Everyone at Vbranch continues to work hard to develop the children's communication skills, creating opportunities for them to communicate, socialise, make choices and express themselves throughout the day. We continue to encourage a 'Total Communication' approach throughout the school, with staff using whatever methods are most effective for each child, including using signing, speech, facial expression, vocalisation, eye-pointing, communication aids, symbols, photos and objects. We continue to run signing workshops for staff, parents and carers as required. In the past year some of our children have been able to develop their communication using i-pads with communication app's and others have trialled an 'eye-gaze' system to access communication / computers.

The 'munch bunch' team have also run staff training at Vbranch House over the past year. The team (Cat, Jenny OT and Nurse Ruth) continue to endeavour to promote independent eating and drinking skills and good communication at snack and lunchtimes.

I'm Katie and I joined Vbranch House in September 2012 to provide a new AAC (Alternative and Augmentative Communication) Service. The aim of the service is to provide assessment and support to children in mainstream schools who use High Technology Communication. This is a new and exciting challenge which I am thoroughly enjoying. It is a privilege to have become part of such passionate and dedicated team of staff at Vbranch House.



Katie McCaughey
Speech &
Language Therapist



Lunchtime Assistants



Dawn Street - Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 1999

I work at Vranth House in the kitchen and in class as a lunchtime assistant. I really enjoy coming into class and helping the children. It is nice getting to know them all. After lunch we go back to class. I love this time with the children and have learnt how special they all are and what different needs they all have. This is a lovely place to work, staff and children are great and I love coming to work every day.



Georgina Mortimer - Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2008

I started working at Vranth House in September 2008 and help out in the classes everyday as a lunchtime assistant. I also help out in the therapy groups. I find the work I do at Vranth House with the children very rewarding.

Michala Smith - Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2010

I work in the classes at lunchtimes and also help with swimming sessions on a Wednesday and music therapy on a Thursday. I enjoy my work so very much at Vranth. The staff are very friendly and working with the children is very rewarding.



Kitchen Staff

Lunches are delivered from the hospital. We then sort them out for the children, some of them need to be mashed, others need cutting up, some have special diets. We get it all ready then they come into the hall for lunch. We really love our work.



Lorraine Chapman - Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 1993

I work in class 3 as a lunchtime assistant. I find my job rewarding and enjoy coming in each day and helping the children.

Amanda Battishill - Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2012



Prior to commencing at Vranth House I worked at the afternoon club at my son's school and helped out a lot within the school itself. I joined Vranth House in September 2012 as a lunch-time assistant and have enjoyed getting to know the children. All the staff have been welcoming and helpful.



Charlotte Davey - Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2012

I started working at Vranth House in May 2012 as a lunchtime assistant and had a really nice welcome from everyone. I enjoy coming to work everyday getting to know the children and assisting them at meal times and in class.



Laura Gould - Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2012

I started at Vranth House at the end of February 2012 as a lunchtime assistant, previous to this I worked at the RD&E Hospital where I completed a NVQ3 in acute care and then went on to train as a haemodialysis nurse (HCA). In my spare time I volunteer at my own children's school as a book buddy, and for myself I enjoy swimming and running.



Di Brooking - Relief Assistant - Joined 1982

I decided to retire from work at Vranth House in July 2008 but be available as a voluntary swimming helper and as a relief if required. It is lovely seeing all the children from Class 1, when they are learning to adapt to school and all the changes, right through to Class 3 when they are experienced in school life and all its opportunities. I will continue to help Vranth in all capacities whenever I can.

FAMILY NETWORK

The Family Network aims to provide an informal opportunity for families of school children to get-together for meetings, to offer them a chance to get to know each other and to be able to exchange ideas and share experiences. Sometimes guest speakers are invited. Younger siblings are always welcome.



Various Roles



Adrian Chown - Technician – Joined 1995

To do my job I need to be a jack of all trades and master of none. Unfortunately for Vranth House I am neither and I am afraid they are stuck with me. I call myself Billy Bodger. I make/adapt/repair things for the children/teachers/support staff/physios./occupational therapists/ dinner ladies, etc.

The type of job that gives me the greatest satisfaction is when I am asked to make something (but they don't know what) that will do a specific task, or fulfil a certain function. This means that I have to employ the old grey cells to design and subsequently make a piece of equipment (that all sounds a bit grand but you know what I mean) to do the job. As the children's needs are constantly changing it is important that turn around time for anything I make is kept to a minimum i.e. whatever I make has to work but does not necessarily need to look pretty (bit like me really).

There is so much care and goodwill at Vranth House but I think they are lucky to have me here to add a touch of balance and reality. After all every school needs a grumpy old man. I joined Vranth House on the 1/4/95 'April Fool's Day'. I think that says it all.

Over the years I have obviously become more efficient, as I now only have to work 3 mornings to achieve what used to take me 5 mornings. So at this rate I should be able to retire when I reach 83 years.



Dave Clark - Driver/Handyman - Joined 2005

I am very pleased to be a member of staff at Vranth House although this is somewhat of a diversification for me, having been involved with sport and leisure management all my life.

My role here is one of school maintenance, driving the children on their school trips and generally helping to assist in the smooth operation of the school within the parameters of my post.

Simon Batstone - Groundsman/Technician - Joined 2011

Having spent 28 years at Vranth House as a subcontractor groundsman, in 2011 I had the pleasure of being offered a full time job as Groundsman/Technician at the school. It is a pleasure to work in such a caring environment with the children's needs at heart.



Tom Warren - Mobility Project Manager and Engineer - Joined 2005

I have run the Guided Mobility Project for 18 years now, working at Vranth House since 1999. This project has designed and developed a 'robotic' wheelchair system which has now been installed in over a hundred educational and healthcare establishments in the UK. This 'tracking system' primarily allows an adapted powered wheelchair or custom built platform to automatically follow a safe, predetermined route controlled by a single switch, which allows a child to experience independence and potentially develop mobility skills, and has proven to provide a powerful motivation for learning in many cases.

It has been interesting, challenging and above all rewarding work, and in the last few years my role at Vranth House has increased to include an ever expanding 'portfolio' of projects and responsibilities, including the updating and maintenance of our hydrotherapy pool, where we have restored the plant, installed a new liner and a state of the art custom built environment monitoring system which can be monitored from anywhere. We will be continuing this work to add control and automation as well as improving the infrastructure of the building, hopefully to make the facility better for everyone who uses it.

Other projects include the refurbishment of the boardroom, augmenting the alarm system, improving and maintaining the website and keeping the content up to date, to name a few. In short, the more it changes, the more it stays the same. Always interesting, usually busy, often challenging, sometimes frustrating, never dull. It continues to be the most fulfilling job I've done.



Phil Gater - Technical Assistant

I have been involved with the Centre since 1972 when I started organising the PA system for the annual fêtes and fayres. My role now is that of technical assistant doing electric repairs, installations and IT work (including trouble shooting problems with computers, installing software, fixing toys, etc.).

During the year I have project managed the new Sensory Room ready for it to be up and running by the end of 2011, installed a new 60 inch TV and two touch screens in the Board Room over the summer holidays, fitted a webcam to a bird box so that the children and staff could watch events unfold and have on record baby blue tits born in the summer half term. I also fitted a webcam outside the school building which recently captured a fox running around the grounds - perhaps we should call this our 'Foxcam'.



*Doug Steer
Caretaker -
Joined 1978*



Fly Fishing Biggest Bag Final at Temple Fishery. Individual Winner Graham Morris 1st left. Team winners Graham Morris & Derek Burton centre. Best Fish, Richard Lister right.



Jailbreak - Torbay Police - Dick Scagell, Mike Elms, Jerry Day & Mike Griffiths disguised as Knights on a Crusade. The team led by Mike has raised £37,500 in 13 escapes.



Jailbreak - Woods Rock Cub - Dy Taylor as Alice Cooper, Karen Jones as Janice Joplin, Theresa Williams as Joan Jett, Rob Giles as Ian Hunter (Mott the Hoople), Ellie Hudson-Hopton as Sheena Punk Rocker and Nigel Follet as Jon Bon Jovi. On his knees at front is Robert Middleton as Lemmy.



Jailbreak Plymouth Camra - Front Row - Andy Richardson (wearing hat), Duncan Bradbury. Back Row - Colin Stewart, Lee Norton & Geoff Davies (wearing hat).

Marketing Manager's Report



**Sue Gould, Marketing Manager
Joined Scope 1985, Vranth House
1995**

A growing number of people have contributed to the school's success in raising funds and in raising public awareness of the wonderful work carried out by our highly professional, enthusiastic and dedicated staff. On behalf of the school, I would, therefore, like to say a mighty 'Thank you!' to the following individuals and organisations: -

- Volunteers Julienne & Arthur Phillips, David Robertson, June Gamett, Theresa Phillips and Tina Rabbitts for all the funds they raise at various fairs
- The Management, staff and parents for supporting the variety of fundraising events
- The companies and trusts who respond so generously to our appeals
- The various organisations and institutions that have nominated us as their charity
- The press & radio for their extensive coverage.
- The wonderful children who featured in so many excellent press photographs and their parents for giving permission for publication
- The companies who annually donate £2,500 worth of prizes in our Charity Challenge Fly Fishing Competitions, in particular BVG Airflo
- The fly fishery owners and fishing club chairmen for their enthusiasm and for encouraging anglers to enter these Competitions
- The anglers who raise such considerable sums
- The Governor of Dartmoor Prison for giving us permission to hold the Jailbreak each April - an event that has raised over £610,000 since 1984
- The celebrities who come along to give their support on the day and on the way
- The armed forces, Police, Fire & Ambulance Service, hospitals, councils and companies who circulate information to help recruit teams
- The many 'escapees' who take part annually
- The hundreds of companies, organisations and individuals worldwide who help these participants by providing free transport, accommodation and sponsorship
- The Management Committee and the Chairman for their trust and encouragement
- The Exeter Chiefs Rugby Club & Wooden Spoon for their great generosity

Without doubt, Vranth House is a centre of excellence with a very kind heart and it is a privilege and joy to work here.

**Sue Gould
Marketing Manager**

Fact Sheet



Fly Fishing Fundraisers Final at Temple Fishery - Winner John Twine with 4th right, Top Fundraiser - Richard Lister 6th right - raised £12,457.50 since 1999, Couple Most Raised centre, Keith & Mary Ratcliffe - £10,778 since 1992

What is Vranth House?

An Independent Day School in Exeter for children with significant physical difficulties, mostly with cerebral palsy.

A Centre for the treatment of outpatients with all forms of physical difficulties.

A provider of various therapies in other schools in Devon.

In North and East Devon we are the principal provider of paediatric therapy to all children with physical difficulties and the major provider of therapies for children with cerebral palsy.

Who owns and runs it?

Vranth House School, a registered charity, number 1002700, which started in 1960. The school opened in 1969.

How many children do you help?

We have day places for up to 28 children and treat a further 1,200 outpatients each year.

What ages are they?

Pupils are aged from 2 to 12 years, outpatients are mostly under 17 years.

What problems do they have?

Pupils all have significant physical

difficulties, most have cerebral palsy (spasticity). Outpatients have a wider range of conditions, some comparatively mild.

What causes cerebral palsy?

It is caused by an injury or malformation to the part of the brain that controls movement, this injury often occurs at the time of birth.

What are its effects?

Messages from the brain get jumbled up on route to the muscles, causing stiffness, jerky or unwanted movements. This makes it hard, sometimes impossible for children to walk, use their hands and speak.

Can cerebral palsy be cured?

No, but its effects can be greatly reduced by appropriate treatment at an early age.

Do the children have other problems?

Yes, many do. They include:

- * Learning difficulties
- * Speech & language difficulties
- * Problems with sight & hearing
- * Feeding & swallowing difficulties
- * Emotional & behavioural difficulties

What treatment do you provide?

Teaching is integrated with intensive yet sensitive physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, occupational therapy and speech & language therapy.

What services do you provide outside the school?

Our physiotherapists treat pupils with disabilities in mainstream schools and specific special schools in Devon. A team of 4 physiotherapists operate exclusively in North Devon.

We have a growing number of

innovative projects in the community, many in partnership with bodies such as schools, universities, Community Trusts and Health, Education and Social Services.

Opportunity Technology Centre

Optech is a new centre to provide assessment, review and training programmes for computer access to the curriculum, early mobility, multi-sensory activities, communication and toys and play.

Who provides funds?

No fees are charged to parents. The Local Education Authority provides funds for basic schooling and the Health Authorities provide core funding for salaries for our professional staff.

We supplement this funding to give the finest education and treatment possible. The buildings, contents and equipment of the school are our responsibility.

What does Ofsted think of you?

Our last Ofsted report in May 2012 said: "Vranth House School provides a good quality of education. The outstanding quality of welfare, health and safety of pupils, including safeguarding, and the outstanding provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensure that pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development. A good curriculum, supported by good teaching and assessment, results in pupils making good progress in improving academically and in attending school. The school is particularly successful in achieving its aim to ensure almost all pupils receive part of their education in a mainstream school."





Vranch House

Pinhoe Road, Exeter, EX4 8AD

Telephone: 01392 468333

www.vranchhouse.org