



Vranch House

Annual Report & Accounts 2012 - 2013



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 2012 - 2013

Board of the Society

Chairman: Mr Andrew Barge (to 26/11/2012)
Sidney Torlot (to 31/03/2013)
Julia Tolman-May

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 (to 26/11/2012)
Miss P Hale
Mrs J Parsons+
Mr W Richards
Mrs R Pavitt (from 26/11/2012)

+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 (to 26/11/2012)
Sidney Torlot (to 31/03/2013)
Julia Tolman-May

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

Nina Darke
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

William - Class 1
Grace - Class 1
Caitlin - Class 1

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT to the 2013 AGM

I cannot begin this report without paying tribute to my predecessor as Chairman, Sidney Torlot. Sidney was a remarkable man. His commitment to Vranth House as a Trustee was evident in his membership of the old Appeals Committee, as Chairman for 10 of our most challenging years and, latterly, as Chairman for a second time. He saw it as his duty to support all the staff in the work of the charity and in all the many years of attending the various management committees of which he was a member or which he chaired he never missed a meeting. Sidney was a gentleman in every sense of the word; literally gentle, invariably courteous, strong in adversity and always patient. He gave to us all an example of dedicated service. Perhaps you would like to join me in a round of applause as a small tribute to Sidney.

You will understand that I took over as Chairman in May of this year – outside the period covered by the reports for this AGM – so I will be reporting on a period from April the 1st to the 26th of November 2012 during which Andrew Barge was the Chairman and then from the 26th of November to the 31st of March 2013 when Sidney Torlot was the Chairman.

I am glad to be able to tell you that your charity has had, in every other respect, possibly the best year of the 52 years since it started in 1961. We enjoyed a cash surplus of income over expenditure of some £123,795. Staff numbers rose to 66, we had 22 school pupils and saw over 2,000 children as outpatients from all over Devon. The Honeylands Assessment Centre is working well and in April of last year we acquired the freehold to the Vranth House site. The Chief Executive and his staff have continued the process of continuous development

to the infrastructure at Vranth House and the Trustees have authorised further capital expenditure for the 2013/14 year. There have been developments in our charitable services which will be reported to you separately by the Head Teacher, Jane Parsons, and by our new Clinical



Chairman
Julia Tolman-May

Director – Dr Ginny Humphreys. Ginny has now reduced her time to 2 days a week, some of which is delivered off-site, whilst many of her regular duties have been assumed by our new Head of Therapies, Kate Moss. At this point and with some sadness I have to announce that Jane Parsons will be leaving us at Christmas as she has gained a position as an Advisory Teacher for children with Visual Impairment and will be moving to Cornwall in the New Year. I am sure that you would all want to join me in thanking her for her wonderful dedication to the children at Vranth House School both as a class teacher and later as the Head. We all wish you every happiness Jane. The new Acting Head Teacher will be our own Inclusion Advisory Teacher, Viktoria Pavlics to whom we also extend every best wish.

It is a pleasure to be able to address you as the Chairman and to pass on the good news that your charity is as vibrant and successful as we have become accustomed to it being despite the many challenges it has faced and will continue to face. This is not a complacent observation as I am very aware that our Management Team is always concerned with reviewing and improving everything that Vranth House does. As Penny Hale used to say; "if there is a rut somewhere into which we might comfortably fall – we've never found it!"

Julia Tolman-May
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 2013

The Board of the Society presents its report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2013.

Reference and Administrative Information

Registered Charity Name: The Devon & Exeter Spastics Society
(Working Title): Vranch House
Charity Registration No: 1002700
Company Reg. 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 to 26 Nov 2012
Mr Sidney Tortot	Chairman from 26 Nov 2012
Mr Clive Rendle	Vice Chairman to 26 Nov 2012
Mrs J Tolman-May	Vice Chairman from 26 Nov 2012
Mr A Ballman	
Mr D Barnes	Resigned 26 Nov 2012
Mr A J Griffin	
Miss P Hale	
Mrs S Mathieson	
Mrs J Morgan	
Mr W Richards	
Mrs C Tailford	
Mrs R Pavitt	from 26 Nov 2012
Col G Wheeler	(Secretary, ex officio as Chief Executive with no vote)
Mr J Parsons	(ex officio as Head Teacher with no vote)
Dr G Humphrey	(ex officio as Head of Therapy with no vote)

Company Secretary & Chief Executive

Colonel G Wheeler

Board of Governors

Mr Andrew Barge	Chairman to 26 Nov 2012
Mr Sidney Tortot	Chairman from 26 Nov 2012
Mr Clive Rendle	Vice Chairman to 26 Nov 2012
Col G Wheeler	Secretary
Mrs J Parsons	Head Teacher
Dr G Humphreys	Head of Therapy
Miss V Parsons	Staff member
Mrs J Tolman-May	Vice Chairman from 26 Nov 2012
Mrs M Wood	Parent Governor

Management Committee

Mr Andrew Barge	Chairman to 26 Nov 2012
Mr Sidney Tortot	Chairman from 26 Nov 2012
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 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 about 55% 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 Vranth 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 Vranth House site. It is worth noting that the children at Vranth 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, together with all the other policy documents, on the Charity's website. 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 Vranth 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 60% 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 purchase of the freehold of the Vranth House site, for normal maintenance and some improvement of the main Vranth House building but the investment plan also aimed at developing a surplus for the following year.

Service delivery remained at much the same levels as the preceding 5 years with an average of twenty-one children on the school roll and over 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, the out-reach FunFit programme which aims to train school staff to recognise and use intervention techniques for Developmental Coordination Disorder. The tenants of the old residential hostel at Hill Barton House gave notice in November 2012 and the Trustees instructed the Chief Executive to sell the property as the security it offered has been replaced by the acquisition of the Vranth House site.

The multi-disciplinary Inclusion Advisory Service continues to make a substantial and remarkable difference to the inclusion of Vranth 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 Vranth 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. The contribution made by the Mobility Project Manager and our Technical Consultant to many of the other Vranth House projects is both invaluable and highly commended. In particular the technical team has taken on the management and operation of the hydrotherapy pool. With the application of telemetry, some capital investment in new plant and a new pool liner, the cost of running the pool has been substantially reduced.

Plans for Future Periods

The new Service Led Agreement with Devon County Council and NHS Devon has operated since 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. It is highly likely that the bulk of Integrated Children's Services (ICS) will be contracted to a third (and possibly commercial) party with whom Vranth House will have to work closely.

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 2013 of £1,620,685 (£2,127,670 in 2012); the reduction reflects the end of the tranches of grant from Hutchison Whampoa which provided half the build cost of the new Honeylands. The Society's Net Current Assets stand at £845,931 (£770,739 in 2012). The Society has tangible Fixed Assets reflecting the purchase of the Freehold of £5,315,136 (£5,392,718 in 2012). It has Total Funds Employed of £6,161,067 (£6,163,457 in 2012). £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 Vranth House site. Adding back depreciation, (a non monetary expense), the Society made a cash surplus in the year of £123,795.

Important transactions in the year include the contract income of £876,352 from NHS Devon in respect of the outpatient and clinical work (£876,352 in 2012). Total income from charitable (not contracted) and all other sources was £316,549, compared with a total of £486,374 in 2012). The income from school fees was much as predicted at £427,784 (compared with £431,084 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 a Mutual Society investment account 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.

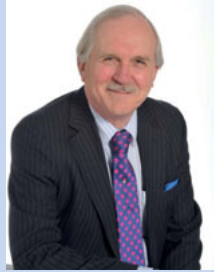
Compliance - This report has been prepared in accordance with the small company regime Section 419(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

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 12th of November 2013 and signed on its behalf.

J Tolman-May
Chairman
November 2013

Chief Executive's Report - Financial Information



Colonel Wheeler,
Chief Executive
Joined 1993

Financial Information abstracted from the Audited Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2013

The figures used in this article are taken from the Auditor's Report for the 2012 - 2013 Financial Year. The headline financial news is included in the report of the Directors and Trustees but the following financial information is worth highlighting:

- Income fell from £2,127,670 to £1,620,685 as a result of the cessation of fund-raised income for the new Specialist Children's Assessment Centre project which was completed and opened in June 2011. Debtors dropped significantly from £67,745 to £35,985 a result of the decline in pre-payments generated by the building project.
- Net Current Assets increased appreciably by £75,192 from £770,739 to £845,931.

- Tangible Fixed Assets dropped with depreciation from £5,392,718 to £5,315,136. The unprecedented recent development in asset value from £1,653,464 in 2011 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 £123,795 – 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 interior rooms at Vranth House) and for further investment in the Hydrotherapy Pool and the New Honeylands building.

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 continue to demonstrate performance compliance with the requirements of the joint contract and to continue to fund service objectives so that all the benchmarks are exceeded (as they were in 2013). 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 national 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 46% of the costs of the statutory services we provide. It should be noted that our statutory partners have frozen our funding at 2008 levels; that in 2014 we are embarking on a 7th year without any provision for inflation and thus that the level of contribution this charity makes to statutory services is increasing year-on-year. It is highly unlikely that this can continue.

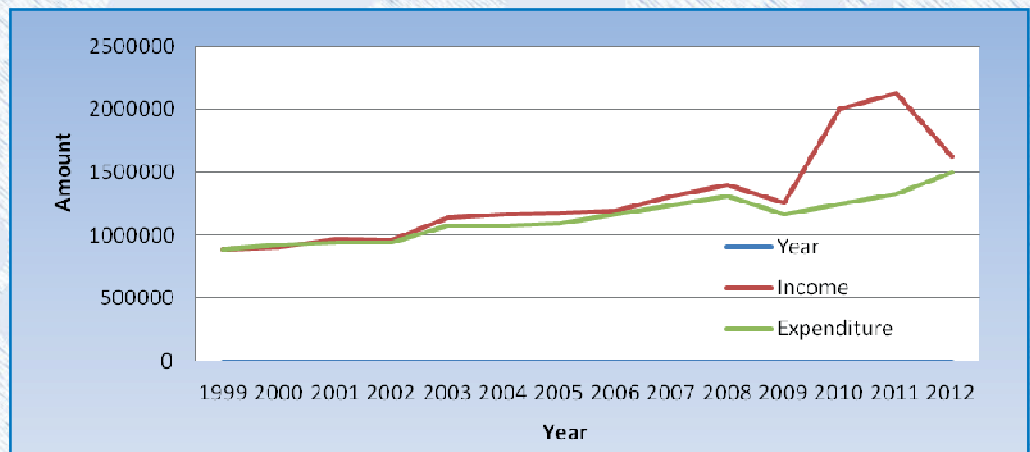
Colonel Graeme Wheeler
Chief Executive

Profit & Loss Account	2013	2012	2011
Gross Income	£1,620,685	£2,127,670	£2,006,039
Gross Expenditure	£1,623,075	£1,326,162	£1,911,766
Cash Gain/Loss for the Year	£-2,390	£801,508	£94,273
Gain/Loss less Depreciation	£123,795		

Summary of Key Financial Ratios

Debtors as a Percentage of:	2013	2012	2011	2010
Total Funds	0.7%	1.00%	5.60%	2.00%
Creditors as a Percentage of:				
Net Current Assets	7.6%	7.50%	17.60%	5.50%
As a Percentage of Total Funds				
Profit/Loss for the Year	2%	13.50%	3.90%	5.00%
Revenue Costs	7.7%	3.00%	4.90%	2.50%

Notes: 1. Profit is shown net of depreciation.



Notes: 1. Expenditure adjusted to show surplus net of depreciation (a non-monetary expense).
2. The Auditor's Report for 2012/13 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.

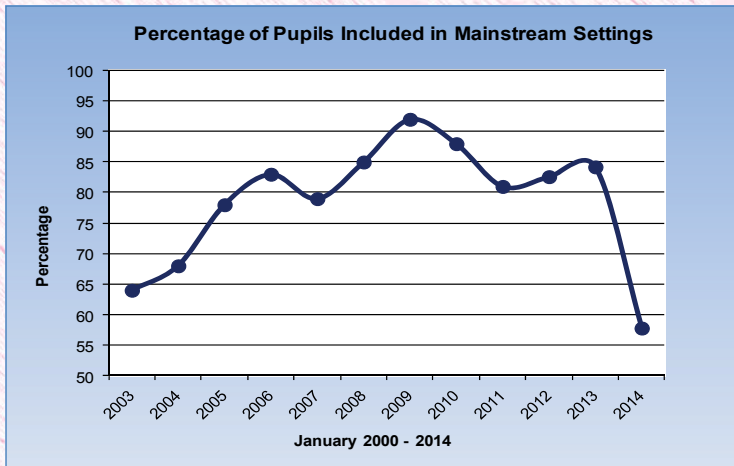
Headteacher's Annual Report



Jane Parsons
Head Teacher
Joined 2004

1) What have been our successes this year?

- We received our first annual monitoring visit from Devon County Council Education Advisors who provided us with very positive feedback and advice.
- Some of our older children were lucky enough to spend a residential weekend at The Calvert Trust with members of staff and everyone had a great time.
- Follow your Dreams Charity returned to provide the 'dreams' for the children, which ranged from Mr Tumble toys to theatre tickets.
- Continuing our links with HCPT The Pilgrimage Trust who take some of our children each year on a fun pilgrimage to Lourdes
- 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 have also been welcoming teaching students for introductory visits from Bath Spa University during this year. Exeter College students also attend on a regular basis as do Peninsula Medical students.

- Class visits during this year included the Donkey Sanctuary, Teignmouth Pier for a party, local parks and areas of interest.

- We continue to support the Sign2Sing charity as we have enjoyed doing for the previous two years.

- We all enjoyed a visit, demonstration and workshop from the Otters Wheelchair Basketball Team during the Summer Term.

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 2012/13. The results are compared to targets set two years previously.

Foundation Stage Assessment

The results for the Foundation Stage Assessment for the 2012/13 academic year are different to previous years as the reporting format has changed. There are now only three levels of assessment: emerging (1) expected (2) and exceeding (3). We had two end of EYFS pupils in school this year, both on shared placements. Their results are displayed below.

PROFILE SUMMARY SCORES																
Communication & language			Physical development		Personal, social, emotional development			Literacy		Mathematics		Understanding the world			Expressive arts and design	
LA	U	S	M&H	HSC	SC/SA	MFB	MR	R	W	N	SSM	P&C	World	Tech	EMM	BI
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Key:

Communication and Language

LA - Listening and attention
U - Understanding
S - Speaking

Physical Development

M&H - Moving and Handling
HSC - Health and Social Care

PSED personal, social, emotional

SC/SA - self confidence & self awareness
MFB - Managing feelings & behaviour
MR - Making relationships

Literacy

R - Reading
W - Writing

Mathematics

N - Number
SSM - Shape, space & measures
Tech - Technology

Understanding the World

P&C - People & communities
World - The World
BI - Being imaginative

Expressive Arts & Design

EMM - Exploring & using media & materials

Our two EYFS pupils are working within the emerging range for all Early Learning subject areas and goals.

Their future targets for the end of Key Stage 1 (2014/15) are set out below and represent challenging targets of at least one level of progress.

2014/5	* P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	Pupils
English: Listening		1			1	2
Speaking		1		1		2
Reading		1	1			2
Writing	1		1			2
Maths: Using & applying			1	1		2
Number		1			1	2
Shape, space & measures		1		1		2
Science:			1		1	2

**P Levels: working towards Level one of the National Curriculum*

National Curriculum Results for School Year 2012/2013

Review of Targets set for Key Stage 1 Assessment for Year 2012/13

Targets were set for 3 Key Stage 1 children for the academic year 2010/2011. Since these targets were set one of these children has moved to mainstream education.

Targets set in 2010/11		*P1	P2	P3	P4	P5/8	L1	Total
Total children: 3								
English 2009/10	S&L Listening	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
	S&L Speaking	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
	Reading	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
	Writing	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
Mathematics 2010/11	Using & Applying	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
	Number	0	1	1	0	0	1	3
	Shape, Space & measure	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Science 2010/11		0	1	1	0	0	0	3

** P Levels – working towards Level 1*

Of the remaining two pupils, one achieved all targets set for them across all subjects and exceeded their targets for reading, writing and Science. Whilst the other pupil exceeded all targets set across all subjects.

Future Target for Key Stage 1 Assessment for year 2016/2017

Total children: 2 2016/17		P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Total
English:	S&L Listening			1		1		2
	S&L Speaking			1	1			2
	Reading		1			1		2
	Writing		1			1		2
Maths:	Using & applying	1					1	2
	Number		1				1	2
	Shape, space & measure		1			1		2
Science 2014			1		1		2	

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

These targets represent at least one level of progress and are considered to be challenging. Both children are full time at Vranck House School.

Targets for Key Stage 2 Results

At the time these targets were set (2008/09) six pupils were assessed.

2008/09 total children: 6		*P1/3	P4/5	P6/8	L1	L2	L3	Total
English:	S&L Listening	1		4	1			6
	S&L Speaking	1	2	3				6
	Reading	1	2	2	1			6
	Writing	3	1	2				6
Maths:	Using & applying	1	1	4				6
	Number	1	1	3	1			6
	Shape, space & measure	1	2	3				6
Science 2014	1	1	4				6	

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

Results at end of Key Stage 2

2012/13 total children: 6		*P1/3	P4/5	P6/8	L1	L2	Total
English:	S&L Listening	1		2		3	6
	S&L Speaking	1	1	1		3	6
	Reading	1	2	2	1		6
	Writing	1	4	1			6
Maths:	Using & applying	1	1	4			6
	Number	1		3	2		6
	Shape, space & measure	1	1	2	1	1	6
Science 2014		1		2	1	2	6

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

4) How have our results changed over time?

- Our pupils continue to make excellent progress when taking their physical and/or medical difficulties into account. We are currently using Durham target setting (cemcentre.org.uk) which are based upon Progression Guidance (DCSF 2009).

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.

5) 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.

6) 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.

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

The total number of pupils of compulsory school age on roll for at least one session - 18.

Percentage of pupil sessions (half days) missed through authorised absence – 11.05% and through unauthorised absence – 0.13 %.

The authorised absence figure is higher than for the previous year (10.3% authorised and 0.15 unauthorised). This reflects the complex medical needs of some of our pupils and represents a fourth year of increase. The results for authorised absence, includes pupils who have received surgery during the year as well as those with complex medical needs. The number of pupils in school with complex needs has been increasing. This data is comparable with national data for special schools for the years 2011-2012 which are 9.6% and 2%. The 0.13% unauthorised absence is due to late arrival in school due to unavoidable transport difficulties. (data taken from DfE Statistical First Release published in March 2013)

8) 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

9) 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.

10) 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.

11) 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 April 1988

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.

In July 2013 the whole of Class 3 (seven children) left the school to transfer full-time to secondary education. It has been great getting to know these children and to see them 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. New younger children have since joined the school and I look forward to getting to know them through their time in the School.

At the end of the Autumn term 2013 the Head Teacher, Jane Parsons, left the school and moved to Cornwall to take up a post as an Advisory Teacher for Children with Visual Impairment. Best wishes are extended to Jane in both her new role and home and also to Viktoria Pavlics who has now taken on the mantle of Head Teacher after a number of years as the School's Inclusion Advisory Teacher.

September 2013 saw milestones being reached for both myself and Adrian Chown. I achieved 25 years of service working in the Vranth House office and Technician Adrian, reached a special birthday that is way past many peoples usual retirement age! Whilst I cannot say that I will be working to such a ripe age as Adrian(!), the milestones do emphasize what a great place Vranth House is to work with amiable colleagues working together in the best interests of the inspiring children and with very supportive management.



Alexander showing Joshua a Mr Tumble toy during a Show & Tell session.



Bethany in sensory group

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

Working in Reception is never quiet; there are lots of children coming in for various Paediatric Clinics and Assessments. Most importantly, I enjoy seeing our children coming into school with big smiles on their faces and it is lovely when they drop by my office for a chat.

All 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 them grow and mature over the years and I always look forward to their visits when they come back to Vranth House for Clinic appointments.

Every day offers a new challenge and I can honestly say that it is a privilege to work with a team that pull together so well and make everyone that comes to Vranth, for whatever purpose, feel welcome!

Working at Vbranch House has given me the opportunity to develop my understanding and abilities to support children with physical difficulties. This in turn helps me to plan fun and exciting learning opportunities to help the children develop their own new skills and knowledge. All the children here are so keen to succeed and are always willing to try new things which I find very rewarding. I love trialling new activities and watching the children develop their new skills and enjoy themselves whilst they are doing this! Seeing the children happy and smiling is a very lucky reward that I have with my job!

I love working with the children in Class 1 and watching them grow over the years they are with us at Vbranch House. It never fails to surprise me how much these children achieve during their time here with us! I am very lucky to have such a rewarding and enjoyable job.



Michelle Woodgates
Teacher ~ Class 1
Joined 2010

JULIE LOBB Teaching Assistant - Joined 2005



I have been at Vbranch 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.



Bethany meets Noah



Autumn trike ride

RONNIE LYE
Teaching Assistant
Joined 1995

Since I joined Vbranch 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 V ranch House since October 2002. Up until July 2010 I was 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 as a nursing auxiliary. Since working at V ranch House I have completed a BA (Hons) degree in Education and achieved Qualified Teacher Status. I have recently completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Education and am hoping to continue in my studies to gain a Post Graduate Diploma and in time a Masters in Education. My role now as a teacher in Class 2 is a challenging one, but one in which I really enjoy. I work with a fantastic multi-disciplinary team and truly inspirational pupils who work very hard to succeed in the challenges set before them.

**CHELSEA ARMSTRONG -
Teaching Assistant
Joined 2010**



I first came to V ranch 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 V ranch so much. I am now one of the teaching assistants in Class 2.

**SANDRA SELLEY
Teaching Assistant
Joined 2007**



I started working here at V ranch 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.



Caitlin and number work



Chloe Bond
Teacher - Class 3
Joined 2011

I started working at Vranth House School after February half term 2011 and I have been the teacher in Class 3 ever since. I trained as a primary teacher, specialising in PE, at The University of Plymouth for four years and graduated in July 2010. Since finishing University I have taught in local schools in and around Exeter, covering long term sickness and other supply. 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 to say I love my job working at Vranth House, and the children I teach are amazing making everyday exciting where I learn something new from them.



Aaron painting

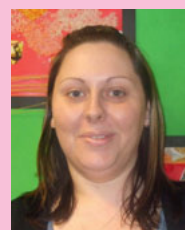
HELEN HOUSE
Teaching & Lunch-time
Assistant
Joined 2004



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 worked at Vranth House since 2008 and find it extremely rewarding. I am currently working as a TA and MTA in Class 3 and have recently added becoming a 1:1 to my job roles for a child in Class 1. I am loving all my roles as an employee of Vranth and feel very lucky to enjoy working with great children and staff.

DEBBIE PROUT
Teaching Assistant
Joined 1991



Although I have worked at Vranth 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.

Head of Therapy's Report



Ginny Humphreys
Clinical Director
Joined 1987

Once again this was a busy year with specific achievements to celebrate and report on.

County-wide therapy services:

Fun Fit, a motor skills programme, has been operating since March 2012 with free training being delivered to teaching staff in all academic learning communities across Devon. Teachers are trained in the identification and an intervention programme for children with poor motor co-ordination skills. To date 73% of all Devon schools have received the training. Feedback from schools states that children are enjoying the Fun Fit groups and making very good progress as the quote below from a head teacher describes.

"A Year 5 boy with particularly bad coordination problems affecting his handwriting and thus all his written work, has dramatically improved his handwriting since starting the Fun Fit programme in April. His literacy score in optional SATs has jumped from from 2a last summer to 3a this summer. (i.e. two years progress in one year!). Also he has gone from well below average to the level expected for his age. Brilliant!!!"

The Specialist Wheelchair Service, also county-wide, continues to address the needs of children when they are over and above the resource available to the mainstream wheelchair service.

The county-wide Specialist Alternative Augmentative Communication Service continues to be appreciated by children, parents, schools and community SLTs. A new development being planned is to provide a regular clinic at Vranth House for children in mainstream schools with expressive speech difficulties referred by community SLTs for assessment and advice on tablet technology.

Locality physiotherapy services:

At Vranth House work continues both with the school children and out in the community from Axminster to Okehampton. We continue to support Honeylands Specialist Child Assessment centre with staff progressing towards a continuum of service from 0-18 years. Physiotherapists working in the special schools in Exeter, Honiton and Barnstaple need to be determined in their quest for efficiency and effectiveness given the resources available and I am pleased to report that they manage their services excellently. The North Devon team of physiotherapists continue to work with high caseloads but their outstanding service is much appreciated locally and their waiting times remain low.

Vranth House Occupational Therapy

The OTs at Vranth House, along with their Physio colleagues and admin staff, have made huge changes in practice to drastically reduce waiting times. At an average of about 13 weeks from referral to treatment they now lead the field with the shortest waits for a child to be seen by an OT in Devon. This has been achieved by some staff learning new skills and by all being very hard-working and flexible.

Targets set by commissioners

For the year 2012-2013 we achieved the targets set. These included considering equity of provision between the North Devon and Vranth physiotherapy services. It was reported to commissioners that provision for community outpatients is similar but in the two main special schools in the area there is significantly less physiotherapy resource at Pathfield School than at Ellen Tinkham School.

Succession planning

From July 2013 I gave up my clinical work, reduced my working hours and Kate Moss stepped up her management role. A succession plan had been in place for 6 months and has proved to work well. More later ...

All therapy staff remain highly motivated, energetic and innovative in their practice. A great bunch to work alongside!

Ginny Humphreys
Clinical Director from September 2013
Joined 1987

Physiotherapy



KATE MOSS - Head of Therapies - Joined 2000

I qualified from Nottingham University in 1995 and have been working in paediatrics since 1997. I now support Ginny who has recently reduced her hours and I have increased mine, taken on more management work and dropped some clinical caseload. More later...

In the last year I have led an evaluation process asking parents about their experience when their child has had contact with our therapy services. I have also been responsible for mentoring and supervising newer members of the team and helping to build their knowledge base in paediatrics. I work with a variety of different children with different physical conditions. I am the physiotherapist for St Luke's mainstream secondary school, Southbrook Special School and am responsible for the children with neuromuscular conditions and those with chronic pain. It continues to be a privilege to work with all the staff, children and families we meet at V ranch House. They are constantly an inspiration to us all.



KATHRYN ESAU - Physiotherapist - Joined 1990

Last year (i.e. from Nov 2012 to Nov 2013) I had the privilege and pleasure to be given a year's unpaid leave from V ranch House to work as a volunteer physiotherapist with children with physical difficulties in Peru, South America. What a rich, humbling, and at times challenging experience it was working with families who have so much less materially than we do here, but so much grace and warmth! After three months'

intensive Spanish language learning, my work involved building relationships with the children, families, staff and carers, reassessing the children's physical abilities and needs, doing home visits, devising exercise and postural management programmes, making or getting equipment made, and having lots of fun!

I returned to my previous physiotherapy role here based at V ranch House Therapy Department in November 2013. I continue to very much enjoy working with children with a variety of physical difficulties who attend mainstream schools, and also Southbrook School. I remain indebted to the staff and trustees of V ranch House for enabling me to have such a memorable year, covering my caseload while I was away, and for holding my post open for me. I really appreciate being part of such a great team!



LUCY WILLS - Physiotherapist - Joined November 2009

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 V ranch House and liaise closely with the orthotics service, paediatricians, orthopaedic consultants, OTs, Advisory Teachers 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 have been based at V ranch House for over a year now and prior to this worked in a rotational Physiotherapy position for three years with the NHS. My role here at V ranch is split between working with children in school who require Physiotherapy interventions and I also have an outpatient caseload. I enjoy this split role as it gives diversity and variation to my caseload and broadens my experiences working in

different settings.



LOUISA HETHERINGTON - Physiotherapist - Joined 2004

I have been working with the V ranch 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, 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.



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'.

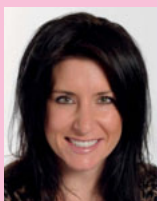
Since January 2012 I have been grateful to be ably assisted part-time by Rebecca Wheeler who has taken on administration for the new services, including FunFit and the Specialist Wheelchair Service, and helps with the relentless tide of paperwork.

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 2,000 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!



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.



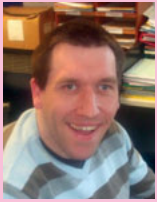
NICKY WHITE - Physiotherapist - Joined 2010

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.



REBECCA WHEELER - Assistant to the Clinical Administrator - Joined 2012

I started at V ranch 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 V ranch 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 V ranch House.



STEVEN ROWE - Clerical Assistant - Physiotherapy Department - Joined 2000

I was a pupil at V ranch 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 !



HELEN HICKS - Therapy Assistant - Joined 2006

I joined V ranch house in 2006 based at Ellen Tinkham School for 7 years as a Therapy assistant. In the Spring of 2013 I was given the opportunity to be an assistant based within the v ranch therapy team, now with extra responsibilities in hydrotherapy with school children and outpatients.



JO NG FONG TIAO - Physiotherapist - Joined 2013

I am the newest member of staff joining the therapy team. Prior to starting at V ranch House, I was working for the NHS at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital on the junior rotations for two and half years. My role at V ranch House is working as part of the motor co-ordinations triage team where we assess children with difficulties with their gross and fine motor skills, I also have my own outpatient caseload to see children who are in mainstream schools to assist in facilitating their exercise programmes and also giving advice to their teaching teams at school. We are here to support and assist these children to be as independent as possible in their school and home environment. I also work at the Exeter Royal Academy for the Deaf Education where I work with the school and college students in 1:1 settings and in group settings.

I love working with all the children and getting to know them and their families and seeing them get more confident in themselves with different activities. I really enjoy the variety my job involves and being able to work with such a great team.



THE ELLEN TINKHAM TEAM

- GILL SCOTT – Physiotherapist,**
- CLARE HARRADINE – Technical Instructor**
- HANNAH REES – Physiotherapy Assistant,**
- CARLY BUDD – Physiotherapy Assistant**

We work as part of the wider team of V ranch House based at Ellen Tinkham School. Ellen Tinkham 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 assess and advise on any special equipment needed and review this on a regular basis. We also take one group of children to Exeter gymnastics club for a gross motor and sensory processing session. We liaise closely with educational staff as well as our occupational therapy and speech therapy colleagues based at Ellen Tinkham.

Gill Scott also provides physiotherapy including rebound therapy and hydrotherapy at Mill Water School in Honiton.

North Devon Community Children's Physiotherapy Service 2013

Vranch's North Devon Children's Physiotherapy Team is based in Barnstaple at the Health Centre.

The team in North Devon comprises three WTE Physiotherapy posts shared between four, with a further fulltime post covered by our Clinical Administrator Michelle Yandell and Therapy Assistant Charlotte Thomas.

Sally Bunney leads the team, supported by Physiotherapists Rob Shaw, Sarah Stone and Ellie Waugh-Baker.

Ellie joined the team in April 2013, and has proved not only to be an excellent Physio, but is also very popular with the children and families she looks after.

When we look back to January 2013, we realise now how settled we are as a team. The start of 2013 was very difficult. Physiotherapist, Kelly Leonard was leaving as her husband, in the Forces, was being posted abroad. This, combined with another member of staff being on adoption leave, placed the team in a depleted position.

North Devon is beautiful and rural, a wonderful place to be a community Physiotherapist! However this can cause difficulties when recruitment is required for a specialist post as employment for partners is limited.

Fortunately Ellie happened to be moving to the area with her husband, so despite losing Kelly, we have managed to maintain a team with a high level of experience.

The 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 for the convenience of families



(Back l-r) Rob Shaw, Sarah Stone, Charlotte Grigg & Ellie Waugh-Baker. (Front l-r) Michelle Yandell and Sally Bunney.

•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 (i.e. primary school age)

Referrals are accepted from a variety of professional sources, in addition to providing open access for advice to parents.

In the present climate, many services are expected to continue or increase without additional funding. Vranch manages to provide an excellent service, substantially over and above that which is funded by the NHS. In North Devon we are actively supported by Vranch to provide this for children and families.

Through regular In Service Training, a Journal Club and service reviews we are able to offer a high level of care based on researched evidence based practice.

Families and children have open access to our service for advice. We hope this makes them feel listened to, and central to our service.

The Nurses



RUTH WHITHORN - Nurse - Joined 1983

I have been a nurse at Vranch 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 Vranch 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 Vranch 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 Vranch House School since starting work here in February 2006.

Vranch 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 Vranch House School and our daily aim to involve and encourage in the challenge to take our standards higher.





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.

Occupational Therapy

SUSAN MITCHELL - Specialist Children's Occupational Therapist - Joined: 2003

Occupational therapy at Vranch 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 continue to run '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 Vranch 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 Vranch 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.



SPECIALIST WHEELCHAIR SERVICE

CLARE WEBBER - Specialist Children's Occupational Therapist - Joined: 2003

I am the therapist for the Specialist Wheelchair Service (SWS) run by Vranch House on behalf of the Commissioners. The SWS enhances the existing service for children and young people, where it has been agreed that their needs cannot be fully met by the mainstream (NHS) service. The criteria for application are:

- There is an identified need for a powered wheelchair and a specialist manual wheelchair, but Mobility Centres only agree to supply one wheelchair.
- There is an identified need for a specialist wheelchair to facilitate access to the full education curriculum.
- There is a difference of opinion between parents and Mobility Centres regarding the model of wheelchair that meets the 'identified need'.

All referrals are considered by the Specialist Wheelchair Panel, and applications arrive via the child or young person's therapist.

I will contact the family, assess the child's needs and abilities at home and at school, and consider their mobility requirements principally for education but exceptionally also for 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 identified need. 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.

I am also a Moving and Handling trainer for Vranch House, I take part in Postural Management training for parents and carers, and I see children referred to the Outpatient Motor Coordination therapy service.



Therapy support for children in mainstream schools

The Inclusion Service

Many of the children at V ranch House now also attend their local mainstream school or pre-school. The Inclusion Service sets up and supports these shared school placements, by liaising with parents and teachers to ensure that appropriate curriculum, adequate facilities and equipment are available, and that various appropriate training is in place for the staff at our partner schools. Support is provided from all members of the school's multi-disciplinary team which includes Education, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech and Language Therapy. We visit the children regularly in their mainstream settings to offer ongoing support and advice, and to discuss any issues which arise during the term. Our aim is for each child to be fully included in their local school, whether that is for half a day each week, or four days.



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 I spend 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 V ranch 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 V ranch House in the absence of the class teachers and take my share in the process of updating the curriculum policies.

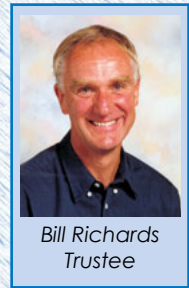
I am seconded for one day a week to the Physical Difficulties Team of the Support and Advisory Teacher Service, covering Exeter, Mid and East Devon. I work with mainstream settings where pupils with physical difficulties are included full time.

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.

From January 2014 I will be taking on the exciting challenge of the headship of V ranch House.

School Development Plans

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

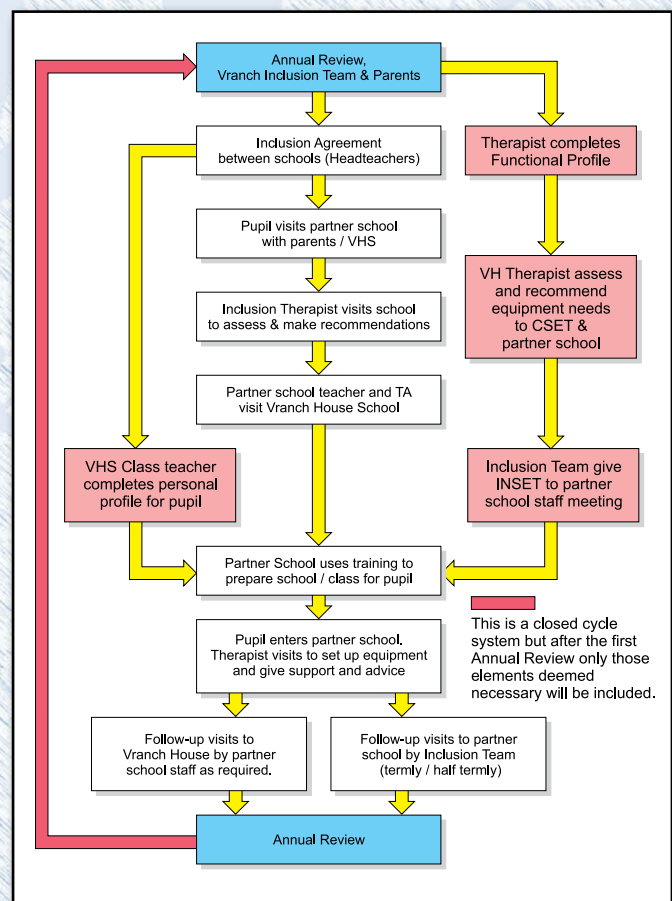


Bill Richards Trustee

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

Speech and Language Therapy 2013



Catherine Ward
Speech &
Language Therapist
Joined 2006

2013 was another busy year for the SLT team with changes through the year. Denise (SLT assistant) is went on maternity leave in 2012 but is now back which is great. From January 2014 – July 2014 she will be working 1 day / week to give her time to focus on her young family. Lorraine has joined our team for half a day / week to help us out which is great news. I'm still at Vbranch 2.5 days / week with the rest of my week being split between supporting an SLT at another special school and leading the Highly Specialist SLT team for the NHS.

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 use a 'Total Communication' approach throughout

the school, with staff using whatever methods of communication are most effective for each child. This includes objects of reference, signing, symbols / photos, eye-pointing and a variety of communication aids. I continue to run training sessions in school and for children's mainstream settings. In the past year this has included intensive interaction, signing, Total Communication and PECS.

In particular, the past year has seen an increase in the number of i-pads that are being used with for communication with a variety of communication apps. On a high tech level, an eye-gaze computer has been purchased by school which increases the options we have for giving the children a voice and really tests my IT skills!!



Denise Hutchinson
Speech &
Language Teaching
Assistant
Joined 1989

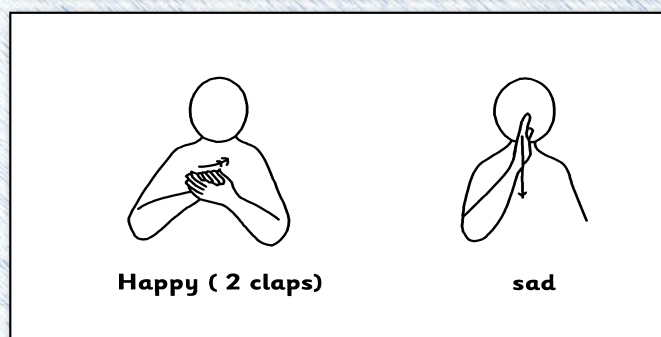
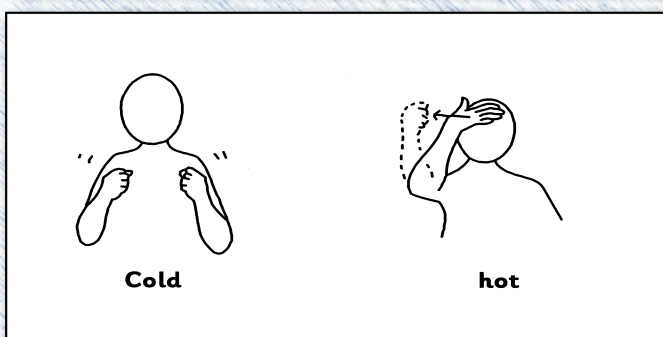
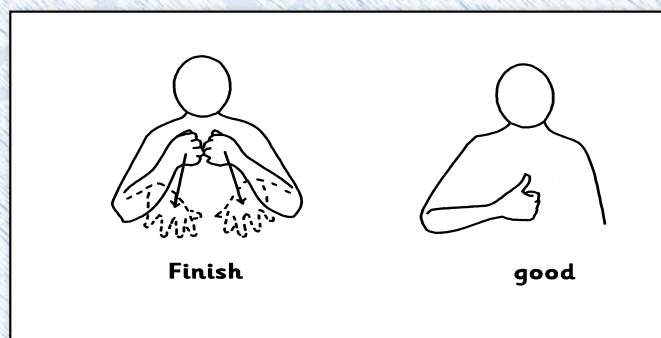
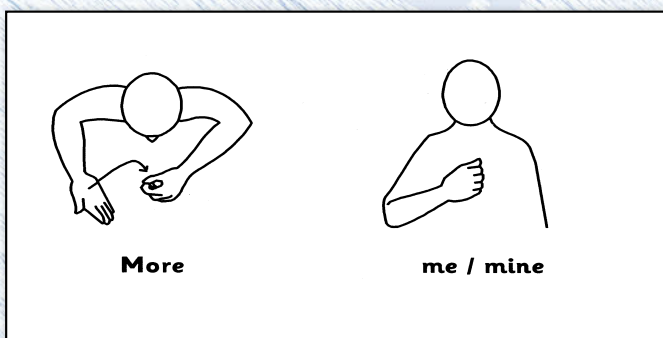
I'm Katie and I joined Vbranch House in September 2012 to provide a new AAC (Alternative and Augmentative Communication) Service. The aim of the service is to provide assessment and support to children in mainstream schools who use High Technology Communication. This is a new and exciting challenge which 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
joined 2012

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 joking	I'm sorry	where	I/me	he, him	is	feel	wait
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	Goodbye	?	Laura	you	was	help	ride
I'm lying.	first	when	man	we, us	were	work	drive
I don't understand	last	?	lady	they, them	have	music	read
I want to talk about something else now	before	how	boy	girl	have	sing	love
talking book please	after	?	girl	girl	have	sing	love
may I go to the toilet	afternoon	yesterday	baby	Speech and Language	had	do	hug
	day	today	teacher	Physio	has	want	like
	night	?	teacher	Physio	has	want	like
	now	tomorrow	helper	friend	maybe	draw	sleep
	about	?	helper	friend	maybe	draw	sleep



Lunchtime Assistants



DAWN STREET
Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 1999

I work at Vbranch 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 Vbranch 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 Vbranch 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 Vbranch. The staff are very friendly and working with the children is very rewarding.



KAREN FINN
Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2013

I joined Vbranch House as a lunchtime assistant in November 2013. The staff have made me feel very welcomed and it is a pleasure being around the children.

LOUISE GILLET
Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2013

In December 2013 I started as a lunchtime assistant in Class 1 at Vbranch House, after 8 years living in Barcelona. Coming here every lunchtime to help and to play with all the children, more than makes up for our horrible weather! I am really looking forward to getting to know everyone.



RACHEL HARRISON
Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2013

I started working at Vbranch House in December 2013 as a lunch-time assistant. Coming to work every day is enjoyable and getting to know the children is rewarding.



CARRIE-ANNE ROBINSON
Relief Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2013



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 Vbranch House I worked at the afternoon club at my son's school and helped out a lot within the school itself. I joined Vbranch 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.



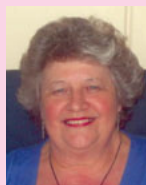
CHARLOTTE DAVEY
Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 2012

I started working at Vbranch 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.



DI STAVES
Relief Lunchtime Assistant - Joined 1987

I started work at Vbranch House as a Lunchtime Assistant in 1987. During this time I also volunteered my help in the Hydrotherapy pool, which resulted with the first of several Halliwick Swimming Courses. I moved to the Therapy Department when a position became available providing cover for hydrotherapy sessions and other therapy activities, gaining experience with school pupils and outpatients. Since retiring in the Spring of 2013 I have maintained my contact with the children and staff by providing relief cover when required as a lunch-time assistant.



DI BROOKING
Relief Assistant - Joined 1982

I decided to retire from work at Vbranch 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 Vbranch in all capacities whenever I can.

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.



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 Vranch 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 Vranch 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 Vranch 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 Vranch 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 Vranch 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 Vranch 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 Vranch 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.).

Some of the projects that I have managed have included the Sensory Room, the installation of a 60 inch TV and two touch screens in the Board Room and new information screen in the foyer. I have also 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 and a webcam outside the school building which captured a fox running around the grounds - perhaps we should call this our 'Foxcam'.



*Doug Steer
Caretaker -
Joined 1978*

Marketing Manager's Report

Andrew Barge, Marketing Manager



This is my first report as Marketing Manager since taking over from Sue Gould in January 2013. Sue was a fantastic servant to Vranck House for 18 years and the contribution she made to the success of Vranck House, not only in fund raising but also in raising our profile and awareness of what we do here is immeasurable. It's an honour to follow her but she is a hard act to follow!

For me it has been a pleasure to increase my day to day involvement with Vranck House having previously been Chairman for the previous seven years.

There are a number of people and organisations that I would like to thank for their support of the charity over the last twelve months.

- The Management, staff and parents for supporting the various fund raising events throughout the year.
- The Exeter Foundation, Exeter Chiefs Rugby Club and Wooden Spoon for their continued support and generosity
- The companies and trusts who respond so generously to our appeals
- The various companies that have helped raise money for us over the year.
- The press and radio for their coverage and help with awareness raising.
- Our wonderful pupils and patients who feature in so many of our photographs that you see in this publication and around the school.
- The fly fishery owners and fishing club chairmen for their support to Vranck House and Sue over many years. The angling competitions have raised considerable sums for us here and we are truly thankful for all that they helped us achieve over many years.
- The Governor of Dartmoor Prison for giving us permission to hold the Jailbreak each April – an event which has raised in excess of £625,000 since 1984.
- 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 Honiton branch of the Young Farmers Club for their very generous contribution to our funds.

Vranck House is an amazing place to work. I'm very privileged to work with such wonderful, staff, pupils and patients.



Jailbreak – Storybook Dads based at Dartmoor Prison broke out and held many members of the public hostage, including singer Seth Lakeman. Terry Waite was on hand to help with negotiations for a release fee!



Jailbreak – JailB8 led by group leader Stella Newman broke out of the jail and escaped to London and back in 24 hours without spending any money themselves on transport.



Jailbreak – Asrus Escapees - Dan Rockett and Tim Treneary raised money for both Vranck House and Asrus Torbay, a charity that supports 10-16 year olds with ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) and their families.



GeoDudes - Connor Price and Tom de la Rosa escaped to Finland and in the process raised valuable funds to support the work we do here at Vranck House.

Fact Sheet

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."





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