

Another First - for Hertfordshire

Colbrook (south Oxhey), Highfield (Letchworth), Sele (Hertford) and Westfield Community Technology College are the first schools in Hertfordshire to achieve the Quality in Study Support award.

The trial of the Quality in Study Support (QiSS) national recognition scheme took place in Hertfordshire between February and July this year. The scheme supports the reflection and self-evaluation of study support and out of school hours learning provision and is based on the Study Support Code of Practice from the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF).

A further four schools are working towards the QiSS recognition award and plans are in place to trial this scheme during the 2007/2008 academic year with providers of study support other than schools.

Study Support is an integral part of the government's raising standards agenda and is a key element of the extended schools core offer. The QiSS recognition scheme provides evidence for Ofsted and parallels with other quality marks. It challenges and supports the quality development of study support provision, the sharing of good practice through the development of local networks and the appointment of Local Critical Friends.

The role of a Local Critical Friend is to support a school, centre or group of schools to review and develop its study support and out of school



Critical Friends from the pilot scheme, Jo Grant-Salmon (left) and Robin Atkins (right), along with study support and out of school hours learning manager Sandra Wood (centre).

hours learning provision, using the Study Support Code of Practice as the basis for discussion and review. They offer guidance with the preparation of portfolios of evidence, comment on the presentation of information and preparation for delivery to the recognition panel for external assessment.

In order to offer schools and other providers the opportunity to obtain the QiSS award we need more volunteers to take on this role of critical friend. It is an unpaid role but undoubtedly will contribute to an individual's continuing personal development (CPD).

If you are interested in volunteering to be a 'critical friend', want further information on the QiSS recognition process or any other information on study support and out of school hours learning please contact Sandra Wood, study support and out of school hours learning manager, on 01992 556883.

