

NEWS RELEASE – 09.09.10

Grant SHINE's light on Crest students

NINETY students from two London academies will benefit from an independent education experience thanks to a £17,000 grant from a charitable trust, over three years.

The students, aged between 11 and 13 from Crest Boys' and Crest Girls' academies in Neasden, have been funded by the SHINE Trust to take part in the 'Serious Fun on Saturdays' programme, where the pupils get three hours extra literacy support on a Saturday morning at Highgate School in north London.

The sessions, which are designed to be fun – but with a focus on learning – are carried out by the skilled independent school's teachers to enhance the support pupils already receive from the Academy. The programme will also involve independent school students mentoring state school pupils, some of whom rarely enjoy any additional educational support.

The young Crest students will be able to use the independent school's extensive facilities and the programme aims to inspire them to develop educational and sporting interests as they progress through their home academies.

Crest Boys' and Girls' academies are sponsored by leading academy chain E-ACT, who supported the application for grant funding. Highgate School works with E-ACT to support educational and social development at the Neasden academies.

After just one year as E-ACT academies, the two previously under-performing schools' GCSE results have improved dramatically, supported by the partnership with Highgate.

A spokesman for E-ACT said: "Our partnership with Highgate is proving enormously important in transforming the academies into high-performing state schools and we are extremely grateful to Highgate for supporting this opportunity. This additional grant from the SHINE Trust is another exciting initiative that will ensure opportunities for students for the next three years."

John Lewis, from Highgate School added: "We are looking forward to further strengthening our links with the academies through this scheme. We aim to use our excellent facilities for the benefit of the wider community, and the Serious Fun on Saturdays programme helps us achieve that."

The thirty students from Crest academies (who will be chosen at the start of the new school year) have not made enough progress in English and these extra sessions at Highgate aim to bring them up to speed, while also giving them access to an inspiring environment

The programme, which lasts over three years, begins in November and runs for 10 weeks. Along with additional literacy lessons, selected pupils will also take part in new sporting activities and cultural trips in and around the capital.

Ends

Notes to editors:

1. For more information please contact E-ACT's media office on 0207 903 5460 (out of hours: 07595 711118)
2. For interviews please contact Ruth Dwyer at SHINE Trust on 0208 393 1880.
3. For more information about Highgate School visit www.highgateschool.org.uk

4. **Serious Fun on Saturdays:** Highgate School is hosting the latest of SHINE's Serious Fun on Saturday programmes. SHINE has partnered with sixteen independent schools to date (including Eton College and Westminster School) to set up Serious Fun programmes for local state schools students. Sessions are designed to be serious – with a focus on learning – but also fun, taking place in a new and exciting environment and using creative and alternative teaching methods. Each programme aims to leverage the strengths of their host school, making every project unique. However, all of SHINE's Serious Fun projects have the following common characteristics:

- creative, cross-curricular tuition that approaches core subjects from new directions;
- access to top-quality facilities and teaching resources for local students from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- a chance for students to meet and mix with pupils from other schools and in different years;
- close partnerships between schools and teachers from both state and independent sectors.

Serious Fun on Saturdays is one of a number of initiatives funded and developed by **SHINE**, the education charity. SHINE was set up to give academic support to underachieving children and young people, in order to raise their attainment levels at school. Other SHINE projects include intensive one-to-one literacy and numeracy support, homework support and internet-assisted learning.

Since August 2000, SHINE has committed more than £12 million to projects helping almost 24,000 students from more than 850 schools in London and Manchester. Further information on SHINE – including details of projects – can be found at www.shinetrust.org.uk.

5. E-ACT is a multi-academy sponsor and social enterprise specialising in transforming education and opportunities for young people. For more information visit www.E-ACT.org.uk