



Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year!

Having spent years as a teacher in the 1970's, I remember how busy we were at school in the run up to the end of the Autumn Term. Probably the last thing you need is an email from Investors In Families, when carol concerts and Christmas products are crowding out some of the other things you need to do!

If you don't have time to read this now, don't worry. And, if you press "delete", we'll be in touch again early in 2019!

I am just back from Beijing, speaking at a national early years' conference and visiting a brand new, 200-place kindergarten: I am working to promote the British approach to the early years to Chinese educators – and working with families is one element that the Chinese have not developed in the same way as we have with Investors in Families.

As you may have noticed from the header of this email, we have modernised our logo with seven hands, which reflect both the core aims for education in Wales and the colours of the rainbow. All schools with the IIF Quality Mark will receive a high-resolution copy of the new logo to use on your website and publications.

IIF Membership

IIF membership continues to increase, with enquiries every week from schools all over Wales. Our stand at the National Education Show in Cardiff attracted plenty of attention – especially with our giant chocolate cake as the star prize in our raffle! It was won by Jan Frost, from Cardiff. (Perhaps next year the second prize should be a basket of fruit!)

We now have over one hundred primary, special and secondary schools in current membership, with accreditations and school visits taking place every week.

Sue Davies is the Director for Wales, with Lynsey Woodhouse developing our membership in North Wales.

IIF Steering Group

Sue Davies has set up a Steering Group of staff from all types of settings, from nursery to secondary school, to work out a development plan for IIF. This plan will enable schools that have achieved the IIF Quality Mark to continue to develop their work with families to achieve an enhanced recognition.

IIF Library

We are about to launch a parallel Library to the one we have, which will not have those activities that are culturally specific to Wales.

It will be in English, but I am looking at translating it into Mandarin (not personally, you understand).

If you are starting an activity and **cannot** find anything close to it in the Library – because a new issue has come up – and you are embarking on it, please let Kerry know. It might then be possible to start a closed discussion group on the way forward and to produce guidance for member schools.

IIF Spring Conference – 21 March 2019.

As you will have seen (or should have!) the arrangements for our Annual Conference are almost complete [www.iifwales.com]. After the success of our 2018 event, we are returning to the SWALEC Stadium in Cardiff, where there will be another opportunity to start the day with a quick-cricket tournament in the indoor cricket school. Another dance class has been organised during the registration period and there will be a variety of music during the day.

The conference proper will focus on Delivering Family Engagement – Celebrating Excellence in Schools in Wales. Central to the development of Investors in Families is the range of break-out sessions led by schools. They will be sharing the excellent practice that is already evident in many of our member schools.

The extended lunch will enable schools to share their portfolios of evidence and network with colleagues in similar schools.

Plans for 2019

Summer Seminar Series 2019:

South Wales:

Cardiff – 13 June 2019

or Swansea – 27 June 2019

North Wales:

Chester – 20 June 2019

FamCo

The framework for our new FamCo (Family Co-ordinator) qualification for Investors in Families school co-ordinators is being developed for launch in early 2019. We are currently working on the content and securing external accreditation for the qualification. More news will be available at our Annual Conference.

Working with partners

As IIF continues to grow across Wales, we are discussing with a range of non-education partners how we can adapt the IIF Quality Mark to include them. Glamorgan County Cricket Club is our first external partner to be awarded the Quality Mark.

Looking forward to 2019

The New Year is looking very bright for Investors in Families. As well as increasing the number of registered schools and welcoming new schools to our conference and seminars, we look forward to the Steering Group developing a new structure for the quality mark, to allow registered schools to develop their work with families.

In 2019 our library of effective will be available to schools outside Wales, with interest already being shown in England - and China. Most exciting of all, however, will be the launch of the pilot course for our new Family Co-ordinator (FamCo) qualification.

And so, on behalf of the Investors Team, I'd like to wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to meeting you again in 2019.