



Special Distinction

Over the past twelve months, a small group of supplementary schools has been working incredibly hard on our pilot of the Special Distinction Quality Framework Award.

The schools, along with their mentors, have attended numerous sessions to help us ensure that the Special Distinction criteria and process are robust, and to demonstrate the superb quality of supplementary schools which would be expected at this level.

On 28 and 29 November, we held two recognition meetings, where five schools were recommended by their peers to have the Special Distinction Award. Well done to the following schools and the mentors – Angela Bell, Siobhan Crawley and Ertanch Hidayettin – for all their hard work:

- Afghan Association Paiwand
- Shpresa Programme
- OYA! Organisation of Young Africans
- Znaniye
- Rustam Iranian School.

What makes Special Distinction stand apart from Gold?

A key feature of the Special Distinction Award is a partnership project; this could be run with other organisations, such as a mainstream, supplementary or network of schools.

We are looking for the sharing of best practice in a particular area of your choice. For example:

- imaginative use of resources
- pioneering new types of learning
- bringing about positive changes in other people's attitudes towards teaching
- management within supplementary schools.

We will ask for a 1,000 word report on the project and 500 words from your partner organisation; you will

also be required to prepare and deliver a presentation on your school and partnership at a recognition meeting.

The process for Special Distinction recognition meetings differs from Silver and Gold in several ways:

- It takes a full day, as opposed to three hours.
- You need to deliver a fifteen-minute presentation on your partnership project.
- You must arrange a display stand with a selection of documents that show how your school meets the Special Distinction standards.

Your presentation needs to show how your school meets the ten standards, using your display to provide evidence. Schools will have the opportunity to ask questions and scrutinise their peers' evidence.

Details of the standards for Special Distinction can be found at www.continyou.org.uk/specialdistinction. The fee for Special Distinction is £100, excluding mentoring support.

Requirements before starting Special Distinction

- If your school is interested in going for Special Distinction, you must have already completed your Gold Award. For more information about the Gold standards, please see our website.
- Mentors must have supported a school to the Gold level to be able to mentor a school at Special Distinction level.

Upcoming recognition meetings

It looks as if Spring 2012 will be a busy time for recognition meetings, with four Silver and possibly two Gold meetings coming up.

If you and your mentor agree you are ready for your peer recognition meeting, please email Claire Arthur at claire.arthur@continyou.org.uk.



'The process has been developmental and helped our school to move forward and develop new ways of working, which has been useful.'

(Mrs Shahla White, Headteacher, Rustam Iranian School)