

In January 2008 a new endorsed pathway was introduced within the Support Work in Schools qualification (SWiS). This was due to a new Parent Support Advisor (PSA) role emerging within schools that called for a broader spectrum of training.

STAR, having been involved with the SWiS qualification since its pilot stage in 2004, was asked to deliver the new OCR pilot VQ SWiS (PSA) qualification throughout the schools in North Yorkshire. STAR is currently supporting over 115 candidates as they work through their PSA VQ, 31 of these 115 are from North Yorkshire.

Lisa Smith, a PSA based at Harrogate High School, was asked to do the qualification for her new role as an advisor. She was one of the first to complete back in April 2008, putting a lot of time and effort in to finish before she went on maternity leave. Lisa feels that the knowledge and understanding she needs to fulfil her role has been strengthened by doing this qualification. It has helped her reflect on her practice within her advisor role. Lisa said:

*'I really enjoyed completing my VQ, which was mainly down to my assessor Naomi Wardman who was really supportive and kept me focused. For me this wasn't just about professional development, it was about developing myself as a person too. I now have a qualification that proves I am competent in all aspects of my role and it has helped me develop my work greatly.'*

Jane Gibbins, a Parent Support Advisor at Skipton's Parish Primary School was also one of the first candidates to complete the qualification, she is



now thinking about progressing onto a level 4 qualification. She had nothing but good things to say about completing her Diploma through STAR:

*'My confidence has been greatly boosted since completing my VQ; I have had lots of great comments from my colleagues. Naomi, my assessor has been a powerful encouragement and has shown a high level of commitment to me to succeed. I am so grateful for her knowledge, professionalism and friendly personality.'*

STAR assessor Naomi Wardman said:

*'Despite many personal obstacles standing in her path, Jane persisted and worked extremely hard to complete in such a short time frame. This qualification has proved that she is a brilliant PSA.'*

For more information please do not hesitate to contact STAR using the number below.

