

FIRST AUTISM THERAPY OF ITS KIND IN SCOTLAND FINDS SURE FOOTING IN STIRLING UNIVERSITY INNOVATION PARK

Stirling University graduate, Ruth Glynne-Owen, is coming back to her roots and is determined to make a difference for pre school children with developmental and communication delays, through her recently launched charitable organisation, Speur-Ghlan.

Set up in Stirling University Innovation Park Beta Centre, the new charity was born through donations from friends and family. Those foundations were then built on with £10k lottery funding for a pilot project which makes it the first of its kind in Scotland. Focusing on 7 children initially, the project has already made a huge difference to the lives of families attending the individual and group intervention sessions, tailor made for each child to match personalities and abilities.

“The historical way to look at early signs of autism and communication challenges in the UK is to ‘wait and see what happens.’ But there is 25 years of research to show that early intervention in such cases results in massive improvements in development for the individual,” noted Ruth Glynne-Owen – the organisation’s founder, who specialised in autism for her Masters degree and has spent the last five years researching this field nationally and internationally.

Every child’s development is top of the agenda for any parent, and those noticing problems at a very early stage are faced with the frustration of inaction as they have little guidance or support to address the problems at such a young age. Ruth’s Speur-Ghlan Centre hopes to change that by providing a service from its central location to parents throughout the country.

The Centre itself acts as a nurturing station for both children and parents and Ruth picked the location particularly to maximise access for clients across the country, and utilise the excellent training skills of the university itself, where she hopes many of the play workers will originate.

“Links to the University, my own experience of learning here and the geographical ease of the Centre were the deciding elements in my plans to get started. I haven’t looked back, and with the option to expand premises as the organisation grows, the choice has been ideal.”

Lynn Blaikie, the Park’s Business Development Manager was pleased to see such an innovative company taking up the new tenancy. She noted, “The vibrancy of this new project and the obvious dedication to the organisation by Ruth, is an exciting injection of enterprising spirit to the campus. Ruth’s work is breaking new ground, and I am sure the charity will continue to develop and expand with the complementary skills of the university itself and the supporting services nearby.”