



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

### **THE MONTESSORI SCHOOLS FOUNDATION**

#### **YEAR ENDING 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2005**

This first year of The Montessori Schools Foundation's existence has been a dramatic one for all involved.

A central theme of the Foundation's aims is the promotion of Montessori education. The main ambition in this regard is to support the establishment of a school, where children may attend without paying fees.

Early in 2004 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) assessed an application for Targeted Capital Funding to build a new Brighton & Hove Montessori School. This would be the first state sector Montessori school in the UK. The application received one of the DfES highest priority ratings and a sum of £3.7 million pounds was set aside for this project.

The Foundation's single largest income sum this year was a project advance of £31,500 from the DfES. This welcome injection of cash enabled us to employ a second part time project worker and top professionals to assist us in developing the project proposal further and submitting it to Brighton & Hove Council.

Unfortunately the proposal was rejected by our Local Authority and was then referred to the Independent Adjudicator. The Adjudicator also rejected our plans despite making many very positive comments, erring on the side of caution in uncharted territory we believe.

Although this was a considerable blow to our morale we are unashamedly proud of the commitment shown to us by the Department for Education and Skills. We remain committed to our aims and know we are at the forefront of minds of national education policy setters.

Shortly after this disappointment the Government announced its plans to publish a White Paper in the Autumn of 2005 that would make it easier for a variety of new educational providers to open schools in the public sector. The Montessori Schools Foundation will be actively involved in the consultation process ahead of new legislation expected early in 2006.

Other income this year derived from our calendar of school events such as cake sales, book sales, Christmas show etc. We are extremely grateful to all the staff, parents and friends of our small school for their ongoing support and fundraising efforts. The Foundation shares profits with the Home School Partnership to ensure current pupils benefit from funds raised as well as those who will attend Brighton & Hove Montessori School in the future.

In the forthcoming year we will be able to focus on increasing, improving and diversifying our fundraising activities whilst political uncertainty leaves our major project "in limbo" for an unknown amount of time. We will continue to employ one part-time member of staff and look to recruiting further Trustees to broaden the scope of expertise available to us.