



Patoss Annual Review 2020

“Our mission is to help people with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) succeed in their education and workplace by nourishing the professionals who teach, assess and support them.”

Introduction by the Chair – Debby Ardley

After a productive but relatively unremarkable start to the year, in March everything changed. Immediate attention was focused on our Annual Conference, which had been planned to take place at Imperial College on April 25th. It is difficult to overstate the amount of hard work, expertise and sheer determination the Patoss team put into organising and delivering the online Conference within such a short timescale. As a result, the Conference was a great success with over 500 delegates attending.

The impact of the exceptional circumstances of the pandemic meant that new ways of working and learning were required. Demands placed on teachers have been significant and unprecedented. The unforeseen challenges resulting from the closure of schools combined with the inability to meet with learners outside school, meant that our members had to adapt quickly and develop new skills. We considered the best way to support our members was to speed up the planned development of online training. Alongside our more typical training offers, workshops for parents were provided and training on current issues in mental health appeared more relevant than ever. The enthusiastic response to our training on teaching using platforms such as Skype and on how to support learners when working remotely, is testament to our members’ determination to continue to provide high quality carefully tailored support.

The loss of face-to-face teaching, both inside and outside school, will inevitably have a greater impact on the learners we support. Consequently, the expertise of specialist teachers will be more in demand than ever as we emerge from lockdowns and restrictions. Catch-up support is now a recognised term and some of our members have already been recruited by Patoss through our Professional Tutoring Partnership as part of the National Tutoring Programme. The response from our members to this recruitment drive has been considerable.

We have been heartened to see that despite the repercussions of the pandemic, our membership base has remained strong. Although, as is usual over the course of a year, some members have retired, new members continue to join on a regular basis.

The effects of the pandemic also had an impact on our Local Groups. In addition to attending live training events, members are used to meeting up and exchanging

ideas/experiences in person and this is highly valued. Nevertheless, undaunted, many Local Groups offered opportunities for their members to meet up online and some have been able to provide online training.

Despite extra demands on their time, members of the Board have continued to work on behalf of Patoss and their valuable input is much appreciated.

2020 was indeed challenging and at times gruelling but the resilience and professionalism demonstrated by you, our members, is indeed remarkable and we will have entered 2021 with many more skills and abilities. The most engaging learning styles are those that are more interactive. Although face-to-face learning is better than learning exclusively online, blended learning can draw on the best of both worlds and create a better learning experience. Another positive outcome of recent events is that there will be greater appreciation and respect for teachers and their important role in society.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank you all for your continued support for Patoss.

Patoss Support

“I have recently decided to change to PATOSS for my APC, and this course has confirmed for me that PATOSS is the best organisation to be affiliated with, and the first place to look for relevant training.”

Chief Executive Report 2020, Lynn Greenwold

This past year has challenged us all in more ways than we could have imagined. At this time in 2020 who would have anticipated we would face over a year of life so different? Yet, we have found new ways of working to support each other, our colleagues and learners. I have been incredibly impressed with the ingenuity and dedication I have seen exhibited by our members and our wonderful Patoss staff to assure we support each other, maintain and grow our skills to reach those who need us.

Supporting Professional Practice and the Wider Community

As we could not get together face-to-face, Patoss has substantially expanded our on-line training offers to support our community. As a consequence we have managed to reach many more professionals and parents.

These successes are the result of an extremely hardworking very small team and I am full of gratitude and admiration for their dedication.

We are delighted we have been able to reach substantially more members through this on-line training and updates than ever before. Fully 62% of members were able to access our training where in previous years 30% could participate.

We delivered free online training to well over 1000 participants.

Our training remains of the highest quality, bringing experts in their fields and understanding to the fore. As the year progressed we continued to develop various ways of presenting with both recorded, live-online, and interactive sessions. And we continue to explore even more ways to bring members what they find most useful.

National Tutoring Programme -Professional Tutoring Partnership

Patoss is proud to be part of the Professional Tutoring Partnership. Joining together with Real Group, Dyslexia Guild, BDA and Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity we are bringing our specialist teachers into schools to help children catch up and develop their learning skills. Many of our members have joined this partnership to support schools and teachers in giving students who may have fallen behind during the lockdown the tools to get back on track. Our specialist tutors supported by a focused partnership training programme and professional mentors are delivering training in person and online.

Your commitment to this national effort is making such a difference to children who need it most.

An enthusiastic tutor told us that her day's teaching had been the best experience of teaching children, to date. She described the joy of working with children who were so very much in need of help learning to read and write and who engaged completely with the teaching that they would never usually get the chance to experience. She asked to pass on her thanks to the partnership for giving children and tutors this opportunity.

Our Patoss / SEND Solutions online course, Understanding and Supporting Learners with Dyslexia, has now been fully approved by CPD Standards and will be launched after the conference. The training is open to all school staff and aims to achieve effective change in practice, offering practical solutions within a theoretical framework. Pilots have been very well received. Here are a few comments from the feedback.

'It is presented in easy-to-manage chunks with a variety of ways of displaying the information (including graphs and infographics) which has helped me to stay interested and motivated throughout.'

'Extremely useful! I have learned a lot from the course and look forward to using my expertise to help the children and staff in my school.'

Patoss Membership

We are delighted to have welcomed 335 new members to Patoss in 2020.

Once again, my thanks to our wonderful Patoss team and the Patoss Board for all their support and to our members in making us stronger through this difficult time to build an even better future.

What our delegates say about Patoss CPD

- “The entire APC training has enthused me, as it has been so well thought through and presented. It has allowed me to refresh the skills I do have and revisit areas I found more difficult until now. With this information, I can share good practice with my work colleagues and also discuss tests in more depth at a professional level.”
- “This course was essential for me. I needed to understand the regulations set out by SASC which I would need to follow to renew my APC. It cleared up some confusion I had about the required hours of CPD. The course went through each of the SASC requirements for a report in detail and I have referred back to these frequently when writing my reports and when preparing my submission for APC renewal.”
- “Thank you for the online format - excellent. I found it better than face to face as I was able to go back and listen to a slide again until enough notes made and item fully understood. I found the subtitles very useful for ensuring exact and accurate understanding. I liked the fact that I could pause the speaker while I made notes.”
- “The two speakers' extensive knowledge and professional experience, which served to put my mind to rest about areas I was not entirely certain about, e.g. DCD and dyscalculia.”

What our AAA delegates say...

“First of all, many thanks for a course that has clearly been very carefully put together. The resources, clarity of information and content have been excellent. The team is friendly and approachable. I have really enjoyed training via Zoom - I have found doing this training at home to be some of the most effective training that I have ever had.”

What our PPAR delegates say...

‘It has given me confidence in doing a diagnostic assessment and encouraged me to become an assessor.’

My tutor ‘was and is most helpful and supportive in advising me.’

The Patoss Year in Numbers

- Supporting Patoss Local Groups throughout the country: 26 Local Groups
- Registered users on our Patoss website: 27,762
- Supporting our ever-increasing membership: 2934 members
- This year alone Patoss has provided an impressive number of CPD hours: 12,910

Patoss: Devoted to developing human potential.