



**PRESS RELEASE 9th June 2010**

**Eureka! Oakfield Science Group scoops national award in Adult Learner's Week**

A Merseyside science group for people with learning disabilities has been successful in this year's Adult Learner's Week awards. The National Group Award recognises Oakfield Science Group's commitment to learning about all things scientific, ranging from magnetism to the claims made by kitchen towel manufacturers.

The Oakfield Science Group is attended by a range of people with learning disabilities who attend the Oakfield Day Centre run by disability charity United Response. The group was set up after a number of people who visit the service expressed a keen interest in science.

Over three years the group's 11 learners have developed a range of skills through the group's sessions. Recording the results of experiments has helped the group develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Their team working skills have also come on in leaps and bounds, with the group now discussing and agreeing the topics they want to study.

"I enjoy working with my group as it teaches us to work together and we learn from each other. We talk about the things we want to study and know about, like space and buildings and make a list of places we want to visit. I and my group feel more confident asking questions," says group member Keith Cosgrove.

Su Sayer OBE, United Response chief executive said, "We are delighted that Oakfield Science Group has been recognised in these awards and send our congratulations to the whole group. The award recognises the commitment of the group to learning and the real impact that education can have on the lives of people with learning disabilities. It's particularly exciting that this sprang directly from the group's passion for science."

Ends

**For more information or photographs please contact Alexis Camble in the United Response Press Office on 020 8246 5200 or email [alexis.camble@unitedresponse.org.uk](mailto:alexis.camble@unitedresponse.org.uk).**

**Notes to editors:**

United Response is a top 100 charity operating in England and Wales, providing a range of support and services for more than 1,500 people with learning disabilities, mental health needs or physical disabilities. We employ over 2,000 people across the organisation and have won many awards for our pioneering work since being founded in 1973.

Our mission is to enable people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and physical disabilities to take control of their lives.

Our vision is a society where disabled people are equal participants and have access to the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

The services we provide depend on each person we work with. We can provide 24-hour support for people with profound physical needs, or just a few hours for those who need less support to live their lives. We can job coach someone into meaningful paid employment. We can provide outreach support for someone with a mental health need or help people who find it difficult to communicate by making information more accessible. The key to our success is that we work with each person to do the things they want to do, supporting them to communicate what they want and tell us how we are doing.

In support of our vision, we also campaign to improve the lives of people with disabilities in society. This may mean lobbying decision makers such as MPs to ensure that people's voices are heard or it might mean working directly with disabled people so that they can be more directly engaged in the democratic process. We also work with employers to ensure that more people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and physical disabilities get a fair opportunity to work.

In 2008 alone, we were shortlisted as best employer in the Third Sector Excellence Awards and highly commended for our Annual Report. We also won a highly prestigious National Training Award for the investment we make in our staff. To find out more please visit [www.unitedresponse.org.uk](http://www.unitedresponse.org.uk).