Learning Together in a Reciprocal Network
Guidance Notes

You will need:
- Maximum 12 people who meet face-to-face to aid networking and discussion
- 1 facilitator (you can also take part in the network)
- Time: Minimum 90 minutes
- Packs of post-it notes in two contrasting colours e.g. yellow and blue

Introduction (5 mins)
- Get participants to briefly introduce themselves and where they came from
- Outline the session (script)
  “The basic premise of a reciprocal learning network is that:
  1. Everyone has learning challenges and
  2. Resolution or ideas to address them can be found in the power of a reciprocal network to support each other”

  “After this introduction I will ask each of you to write down one learning challenge on the yellow post it note. It can be about anything. For example, you may be looking for information on a particular topic or challenge around how to use a particular social media platform or related to a setting etc. Once everyone has written down their learning challenge, we will take it in turns to go around the room and read them out.”

  “As you are listening to a person, think about ways you might be able to help them. This could be recommending they talk to someone you know or directing them to a resource. If you can help them, write your email address on the top of a blue post it note and your suggestion. Keep hold of it and write a separate blue post-it note for every bit of advice. Once everyone had read out their challenge, we will go back around to hear possible suggestions within the network. Now let’s begin…..”

Individual Learning Challenges (10 min)
- Ask each member to write down one learning challenge on the yellow post it note where they would like some advice and support.
- This could be a question about technology, a particular topic or related to a setting etc.

Sharing Learning Challenges (30 min)
In turn, each member of the network reads out their learning challenge. The rest of the network listens and thinks about the challenge. As a listener, if you feel you have some information or a contact that would help, on the blue post it note:
- Write your email address
- Write your advice – this may be a person or a resource or an idea…..
Move on until everyone has read out their challenges and listeners have had a chance to write their ideas.

Sharing Potential Solutions (30 min)
The facilitator goes around the network, in turn, asking people to read out their original learning challenge and then asks for any ideas or solutions to be read out too.
These are then collated on the board. It is important that these ideas are shared with the larger group too as this information could be useful for more than the original person who identified the challenge and may generate more ideas.

Closing (10 mins)
Each person collects all their new ideas from the board. NB: if you have more time e.g. 2-2.5 hours you can make time at the end for people to talk together around the ideas they have shared, to enhance the learning opportunities within the network.