




ABC to read A Year in Review - 2016

Registered charity number 1102692





“I enjoyed looking at the newspapers, especially things about football.”

JB, aged 7

“I really love reading and learning new words – reading makes me happy.”

MP, aged 8

34% of children left primary school last year unable to read to the required level

70% of pupils permanently excluded from school have difficulties with basic literacy

25% of young offenders have reading skills below that of the average 7 year old

If current trends continue, we will have left behind 1.5 million children by 2025

Poor literacy skills cost the UK economy £81 billion every year

Our vision

Every child a reader, with the self-confidence and skills to make positive life choices and contribute to their wider community.

Our mission

To transform children's lives by working with schools, families and the children themselves to provide high quality support in developing literacy skills and building self-confidence.

We do this by:

- engaging with schools to identify pupils who may need individual support with reading
- attracting, selecting and training volunteers to work with those pupils
- monitoring the effectiveness of volunteers working with pupils
- working with schools to increase the effectiveness of our intervention at home
- monitoring the effectiveness of our intervention by using an annual survey, regular questionnaires and verbal feedback from stakeholders.

Additionally the Charity also supports children's reading through:

- training parents to support their children's reading skills
- providing training to parent helpers to support pupils with reading.

Future plans:

- identify new funding streams
- establish more reading mentors in schools where children need our support
- build new partnerships.

The impact of ABC to read after the support of our volunteers

96% of children improved their attitude to reading

95% of children improved their reading accuracy

93% of children improved their reading comprehension

96% of children showed an increase in their general self confidence and self-esteem



ABC to read's performance during the year

ABC to read has continued to provide public benefit by assisting over 500 primary school children in Berkshire with their reading and literacy skills. **ABC to read** was awarded Investing in Volunteers, which is the only standard that focuses on volunteers


During the year the Charity has:

- trained 70 new volunteers with 140 volunteers active at the end of March 2017
- supported over 500 children in over 70 schools
- developed and run training for parents in order to show them how they can support their children at home
- prepared a fundraising strategy in order to maintain external funding in the light of government pressures on school budgets
- prepared a marketing piece called 'Our Story' to give a more emotive vision of **ABC to read's** work
- provided ongoing support towards the national 'Read on Get on' campaign
- presented at networking events and local clubs and participated in radio and TV interviews and achieving a high level of social media presence
- supported 6th form students in their social projects by training them to become reading mentors
- been chosen as the nominated charity for Henley Literary Festival
- raised funds through a variety of private and public organisations and fundraising events to cover the costs of running the charity
- continued to replenish its stock of books and games in order to reflect the interests of the children we support
- reviewed and updated its policies, processes and procedures including The Constitution, Trustee Recruitment, Finance, Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality, Data Protection and all volunteer policies.

The Trustees would like to thank Salesforce, Hilton Hotels, Kyocera, IGM Computers, Richfield Print, Reading Writers and Quintiles UK who have continued to provide much 'in kind' support during the year.

In addition, the Trustees would like to thank everyone who donated funding during the year, in particular the following organisations:

- Elizabeth Jane Foundation
- Freemasons
- RBS - Skills and Opportunities Fund
- The Early Charity
- Berkshire Community Foundation - Three Fund award
- Berkshire Community Foundation- Sports Relief Community cash
- Greenham Common Trust and Hungerford Town Council
- Garfield Weston
- Allchurches Trust Limited
- The Gordon Palmer Memorial Trust
- Schroder Charity Trust
- The Edgar Milward Charity
- The Sobell Foundation
- Warburtons
- The Beatrice Laing Trust
- Reading Neighbourhood Network
- The Edmund Godson Trust
- Heathrow Community Fund
- Xerox Trust UK
- Swire Charitable Trust
- The Woodroffe Benton Foundation
- Prudential
- Persimmon Homes Thames Valley
- United Way (Costco)
- McTaggart Third Round
- The De La Rue Charitable Trust
- Cardy Beaver Foundation
- The Sir Jules Thorn Charitable Trust
- Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation
- American Women of Berkshire and Surrey
- The Payne-Gallwey Charitable Trust
- Haines Hill Charitable Trust
- W H Smith Community Grants Fund
- R S Brownless Charitable Trust
- The Colefax Charitable Trust
- The Sanderson Foundation
- Neighbourly Ltd - Starbucks.



“We have really seen an improvement in her confidence – she is more descriptive in her written work and seems to be able to access all areas of her learning more independently.” **Teacher**

“She enjoys her session with the volunteer and is very animated throughout – the male influence is very good.” **Teacher**

“The volunteer has excellent questioning skills and is able to bring out the best in this child during their session together.” **Teacher**



“Finally, his self-confidence had grown and he believed in himself.”

John and Margaret’s story

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John was sitting in the classroom, wishing he was outside playing football. All around him his friends were reading exciting stories about wizards and adventure, about footballing heroes, about Roman soldiers. On the page in front of him was a boring sentence about a cat going to the vet. No wonder his mind was drifting!

“Perhaps I could move on to better books if I tried harder,” he thought – but “No”, said that little voice in his head, “you’re not clever enough for that.” Before he knew what was happening, his frustration at missing out on the exciting stories took over him and he shouted out ‘This book is rubbish!’ Everyone turned to look at him and the teacher asked him to stand outside the room for a minute: he’d been shouting out all week and enough was enough.

The next week, his teacher introduced him to a lady who was going to help him, she said. Her name was Margaret and he had to go and sit in the library with her while his friends read their exciting stories. When he said he hated books and wouldn’t try to read anything, she said ‘Why don’t we play a game instead?’

She said she had heard he liked football, so she had brought some football cards with her and they played with those for a while. Next week she had brought pens and paper and they played Pictionary, drawing pictures and describing them to each other. Slowly, John began to look forward to his time with Margaret each week. After a few sessions, Margaret suggested that they look at a football book together. This was much more interesting than cats and vets! John was embarrassed at first about the words he couldn’t read, but Margaret read the tricky ones until he got used to them. When he reached the end of that first book a few weeks later, he was delighted. Perhaps he wasn’t stupid after all, he thought!

By the time Margaret had been helping him for a term, John felt he was ready to sit still and read his book in class as well as in the library. He wasn’t allowed to read the stories about the wizards yet, but he had moved on to green books and he was almost ready to move onto grey. Finally, his self-confidence had grown and he believed in himself.

ABC to read recruits, trains and supports volunteers like Margaret to help children like John find the joy in reading and developing literacy skills for life.

To become a volunteer or find other ways to support us, please contact 0118 9511336 or visit our website www.abctoread.org.uk

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Bankers

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Our area

The map shows the areas that **ABC to read** covers.



“Helping us on our journey to help as many children as we can, we continue to be fortunate to receive generous gifts from many trusts, foundations, businesses and individuals who wholeheartedly support our aim for every child to reach their true potential. On behalf of everyone at ABC to read I would like to extend my thanks to all of those who have helped us and we hope that you will continue to do so. I would also like to thank the staff and trustees for their commitment and dedication and our band of reading volunteers who generously give their time and love of reading every week and without whom none of our work would be possible. We look forward to transforming more children’s lives in the years ahead.”

Marcia Rowlinson, Chief Operating and Development Officer

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