



ABC to read A Year in Review - 2017

Registered charity number 1102692





I am grateful ABC to read took me on as the work gives me pleasure as well as keeping my little grey cells working.

Volunteer

I love it because I like it when we play games after reading. I've got better at reading because the lady tells me it's much better. I think it would help me next year as well!

Child

I am currently working in GF Junior School. It has a fabulous environment with very supportive staff. The 3 boys I look after have very different but extremely pleasant characters.

Volunteer

I love it! It has a lot of fun activities. I like people saying I am doing my best. I like practicing my expression! **Child**

I really love reading and learning new words – reading makes me happy. **Child**

Why is literacy important?

- People with low literacy skills may not be able to read a book or newspaper, understand road signs or price labels, make sense of a bus or train timetable, fill out a form, read instructions on medicines or use the internet.
- Lacking vital literacy skills holds a person back at every stage of their life. As a child they won't be able to succeed at school, as a young adult they will be locked out of the job market, and as a parent they won't be able to support their own child's learning.
- A third of businesses are not satisfied with young people's literacy skills when they enter the workforce and a similar number have organised remedial training for young recruits to improve their basic skills
- The Berkshire Community Foundation 'Vital Signs' survey 2016 asked local people what causes were most important to them - learning support for children was the second most important cause chosen.



£2.5 billion: Annual cost to the taxpayer of low literacy levels (KPMG, 2009)

5.1 million: Number of adults in England who lack basic literacy skills

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The impact of ABC to read's volunteers

- 99% of the children improved their attitude to reading - of this figure 39% made an 'excellent' improvement.
- 99% of the children improved in reading accuracy - of this figure 22% made an 'excellent' improvement.
- 99% of the children improved in reading comprehension - of this figure 20% made an 'excellent' improvement.
- 99% of the children's general self-confidence and self-esteem increased - of this figure 29% made an 'excellent' improvement.
- 97% said that their sessions with their ABC to read volunteer were 'ok' or better - of this figure 93% said they were 'great'.
- 85% showed an increase in the children's reading levels - of this figure 25% increased their reading age by 12 months or more.

Figures taken from school evaluation reports

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.

During the year the Charity has:

- Trained 70 new volunteers with 130 volunteers active at the end of March 2018
- 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
- 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
- Raised funds through a variety of private and public organisations and fundraising events to cover the costs of running the charity
- Continued to replenish our stock of books and games in order to reflect the interests of the children we support
- Put together a video showing Our Story to give a more emotive vision of ABC to read's work
- Recruited, author James Carter as an additional patron
- Provided further training to our volunteers including lone working and health and safety, getting the best out of volunteers
- Training to staff based on volunteer management and data protection
- Provided Story time in IKEA
- Attendance at the Royal Borough Volunteer Sector Awards
- Given away books at Whitfest to children from the local community
- Participated in Henley Literary Festival Charity of the Year
- All policies and procedures reviewed to ensure that ABC to read are compliant with the new GDPR regulations

The Trustees would like to thank Salesforce, Hilton Hotels, Kyocera, IGM Computers, Reading Writers and Quintiles IQVIA 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:

- The Cumber Charitable Trust
- The Prince Philip Trust
- Reading Rotary Club
- Asda
- Vision
- American Women Berkshire Surrey
- Gilchrest
- Greenhall Foundation
- McDonalds Atul Pathak Award
- David Knight
- Newbury Freemasons
- Thomas Wall Trust
- Thatcham Town Council
- Berkshire Community Foundation
- Greenham Common Trust
- Windsor Maidenhead Charitable Trust
- Moto in the Community
- Wipro Technologies
- National Citizen Service
- Bracknell Forest Council
- United Way Costco
- Monica Ragibaliti
- Hudson Foundation
- Rank Foundation
- Tesco Bags for Help
- Beatrice Laing Foundation
- Ernest Cook Trust
- St Laurence Lands Fund
- Reading University RAG





Wow what a difference – our child did not want to go and read and had a poor attitude to reading. Now she is reading lots of books with our volunteer.

Parent

Her attitude towards reading was always quite negative but the volunteer has exposed her to a breadth of texts that have been age appropriate.

Volunteer

I love going reading with [volunteer]. She is always nice and helps me with tricky words.

Child

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 by:

- 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 volunteer works well as a team with the teacher in her class. She has a lovely rapport with all the children she reads with. **Teacher**

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Volunteering with us

We can only do the work that we do thanks to our amazing volunteers. Each one of them works with up to 3 children to support them in building their skills, confidence and motivation.

Our volunteers also benefit; they gain training, experience and new skills from supporting the children. While some are

retired and want to give something back to their local community, others are interested in becoming teachers or working in schools and want to enhance their CV. Some are simply passionate about reading and want to pass this on to a new generation of readers.

A 2017 local survey by Reading Voluntary Action examined isolation and loneliness in Reading. We have given over 70 volunteering opportunities this year in order to not only assist in giving children a life skill, but to also help reduce isolation in our community.



Trustees (as at 31st March 2017)

Mr Paul Dieppe (Chair)
Mrs Pauline Harper (Deputy Chair)
Mr Stephen Smith (Treasurer)
Mr Mike Edwards
Mrs Jenny Cooney
Mrs Jane Nicholls
Mr Joseph Lally
Mrs Sarah Browning
Mrs Claire Herriott

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, CEO

Patrons

James Carter
Julie Cohen
Dan Freedman

Accountants

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Bankers

Lloyds TSB, National Clubs & Charities Centre,
Sedgemour House, Deanegate Avenue, Taunton TA1
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His reading, comprehension and enjoyment has progressed greatly since starting the scheme. He is now putting his hand up in class to read aloud and it's great to see him able to concentrate and work independently when given a text. He also appears to enjoy the sessions with the ABC to read mentor and comes back with a smile on his face. **Teacher**

I like playing with the games especially the letter shaking game. I really like reading with the lady and drawing pictures about the books we read. **Child**

Toni has been brilliant with the children. She is very patient and has done an amazing job. The children love going to the sessions and can't wait for the next session!" and the child said "I love going to Read with Mrs Carter. **Teacher**

ABC to read

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