



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 12 January 2012

**Welcome to the new term and the New Year which we think will be an exciting one for all involved with ARCh!**

Oxfordshire County Council plans to run a campaign this year called **Every Oxfordshire Child a Reader**, as part of its strategic plan for education, with the aim of improving educational standards across the county. It is proposed that many different sectors will be involved - County Councillors, the District Councils, parents, the media, libraries, the Dioceses, our Mosques, the universities, fire and rescue service, businesses, health, police and voluntary sector partners. The campaign is being led by Melinda Tilley, Oxfordshire County Council Member for Schools Improvement, and we are hoping to meet with her very soon to establish how ARCh can get involved.

## Schools Coordinator leaflet

Enclosed with this newsletter is the leaflet we have developed at the suggestion of Don Manley who volunteers at St John Fisher Primary, Littlemore. You may like to pass this to the person who coordinates volunteers at your school or if there isn't one, to the Headteacher.

## Change of Field Worker for Didcot area volunteers

Julia McLaven has now extended her patch to cover Didcot and will soon be contacting those volunteers she will be supporting.



Oxford is bidding to become the **World Book Capital in 2014** and, again, many different local organisations are contributing to the application which has to be submitted in April this year.



In December we held our volunteer meeting at Kidlington Baptist Church and welcomed our newest patron Adam Guillain, [adam-guillain.co.uk](http://adam-guillain.co.uk), as guest speaker. As well as writing children's books, Adam is a talented story teller and he certainly entertained us all with a hilarious account of his own schooldays and a teacher called Mrs Sheffield, showing us just how powerful our imagination can be. We hope that Adam will share some tips with us by running a story telling workshop in the near future.

## Two-thirds of children fail phonics pilot test

Department of Education statistics indicate that only 32% of Year 1 (5/6 year old) pupils who took a trial run in the government's new test passed it.

Critics of the test say that it does not give a true picture of children's reading ability or comprehension. Around a quarter of the schools that took part in the test teach phonics systematically, in contrast to schools that use a variety of methods, such as picture clues and memorising words. The proportion is thought to be similar for all primary schools in England.

Schools minister Nick Gibb said, "We need to face up to the uncomfortable truth that, despite the hard work of teachers, not enough of our children are able to read to a high enough standard."

Phonics and reading will now be a key part of new OFSTED inspections.



## ARCh film

As a result of Awards for All funding we have been working with a company called Emica who are carrying out some filming and training for us. Our last Recall training was filmed and a number of volunteers kindly agreed to be interviewed on camera, thank you to these brave folk! We are looking forward to seeing the results.

The ARCh website is currently being redeveloped by Jo Cox and we hope to be able to upload some of the film

## 2011 Pupil Survey

We received excellent feedback from the pupil survey we sent to schools during the summer. It is always so uplifting to read comments schools make about the work ARCh volunteers do.

Highlights of the results:

**98% of the children we worked with improved in attitude and confidence in reading**

**97% displayed increased self-esteem and**

**96% improved their achievement overall**

We would like to express our thanks to all our dedicated volunteers for these wonderful results.

Also thanks to Louise Wheeler of Insight Oxford who has given us some useful advice on analysis of the results.

## Benefits of volunteering



According to research carried out by Stephanie Brown, PH.D., Associate Professor of Preventative Medicine at Stony Brook University in

New York, volunteering boosts your immune system and helps you live longer. The theory is that helping another person releases the "compassion hormone" oxytocin which limits exposure to stress hormones.

**So by giving to others you are also doing yourself good!**

## Facts & Figures from the Institute of Volunteering Research www.ivr.org.uk

- £18billion – the estimated value of volunteer time to the UK economy in 2010
- 22million people volunteer each year
- 96% of volunteers say they “really enjoy it”
- 87% of employers think that volunteering can help career progression



**ARCh is growing!**  
Our volunteer numbers continue to increase; last term we trained **37** new recruits, bringing our number close to **200!**

### Volunteer awards

Last term 5 of our long standing volunteers received awards to mark their work with ARCh:

Jackie Gould, Dee Brooks, Avis Roberts and Biddy Rounce were honoured at a lunch organised by the Vale of the White Horse District Council and Louis Clarence received an award from Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action Group at a ceremony at Oxford Town Hall.



### ARCh in the news!

Pam Andrews and Sophie Mavor who volunteer in Orchard Meadow Primary in Blackbird Leys were featured in the Oxford Mail last term. The Oxfordshire Guardian also ran an article highlighting the work of ARCh - [oxfordshireguardian.org.uk](http://oxfordshireguardian.org.uk)

### Social Media

Vikki Evans has set up Facebook and Twitter accounts for ARCh so do please contribute if you wish

### Urgent appeal for Treasurer

We are in need of more trustees and in particular someone to take over the post of Treasurer as Teresa Mansfield has had to stand down due to work and family pressures. If you know of anyone who would be willing or you know of a local accountancy firm who may be willing to offer an individual please do let us know.

### Funding

Last term we were delighted to receive funding from **Sanctuary Group** towards the recruitment, training and one year support of 20 new volunteers in the areas covered by the group (Banbury, Bicester, Kidlington, Witney and Chipping Norton.)



We have already trained 13 volunteers living in these areas so are well on the way to meeting our target!

### Thank you to our recent funders

We are pleased to have received financial support from

- ◆ John Ackroyd Charitable Trust
- ◆ St Andrews Church, Sandford on Thames
- ◆ St Hilda's College Oxford
- ◆ Vale of White Horse District Council



### Would you like us to talk to a local group?

We are always happy to talk to groups about our work and are speaking to Banbury Rotary and Oxford Wives Fellowship



## Games

Thanks to an organisation called In Kind Direct [www.inkinddirect.org](http://www.inkinddirect.org) we now have a good stock of board games suitable for younger children.

We must also thank Talking Tables [www.talkingtables.co.uk](http://www.talkingtables.co.uk) who donated their last year's stock of question and answer games to ARCh.

The new games will be available at book exchanges this term so put the dates for these in your diary now!

## Child Protection Refresher Training

Every ARCh volunteer is issued with a Safe from Harm card during their initial training and we urge everyone to read through this regularly.

We also recommend attending a Child Protection refresher training after 3 years of volunteering. We are running a session this term at Bicester Presentation Convent on Tuesday 6th March from 10-12. So please call the office to book your place.

## Schools' contributions

We are all aware that these are difficult times and schools' budgets continue to be stretched. We are therefore pleased to be able to keep the contribution we ask schools to make to £375 for the 5<sup>th</sup> year



---

Last September Creighton Muirhead, Interim head of Raising Achievement in Oxfordshire County Council sent a letter endorsing the ARCh service to all primary schools in the county, saying;

**“Literacy is a community issue, not just a school one, and I believe if we can harness the involvement of the wider community through proven successful programme, such as ARCh then our children will be better prepared for life, more able to access the school curriculum and more successful in the adult world.”**

We now work in 100 out of the 232 primary schools in Oxfordshire and have a waiting list of schools requiring our service.

---



## Dates for your Diary 2012

Date	Time	Event	Venue
Thurs 2nd Feb	10-12	<b>Bicester Book Exchange</b> If anyone is interested in lunch afterwards please call the office to book your place	ARCh Office, Gobles Court, Bicester OX26 6AA
Fri 3rd Feb	10-12	<b>Abingdon Book Exchange</b>	Sutton Courtenay Primary School, Bradstocks Way OX14 4DA
Tues 7th Feb	10-12	<b>Banbury Book Exchange</b> If anyone would like to join us for lunch at the Catering College, please call Vikki on 01295 722227 to book your place	Queensway Primary School, Brantwood Rise, Queensway, Banbury OX16 9NH (Please ring Vikki if you need directions)
Wed 8th Feb	10-12	<b>Oxford Book Exchange</b>	Kidlington Baptist Church, High Street, OX5 2DS
Thurs 9th Feb	10-12	<b>Witney Book Exchange</b>	Witney Masonic Hall, Church Green, Witney OX28 4AW
Tues 6th March	10-12	<b>Child Protection Refresher Training</b>	Presentation Convent, Bicester
Thurs 29th March	2-4	<b>Volunteer Meeting with Korky Paul</b> Invitations will be sent nearer the time	Kidlington Baptist Church, High Street, OX5 2DS

### Term Dates for 2012

From	To
<b>Term 3</b> Tuesday 3rd January	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2012
<b>Term 4</b> Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> February	Friday 30th March 2012
<b>Term 5</b> Monday 16th April	Friday 1st June 2012
<b>Term 6</b> Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	Monday 23rd July 2012
* May Day Bank Holiday 7th May	

**Please remember to check these dates with your school, as holidays vary from school to school**

