

PROJECT: Staff work with Blackbird Leys pupils to develop literary skills

OUP volunteers help foster a lifelong love for reading

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READING can be a struggle for some children.

But now Oxford University Press staff are volunteering their time to help change this for youngsters at a Blackbird Leys primary school.

A total of 10 employees are travelling to Pegasus School in Field Avenue once a week to help the pupils develop their literacy skills in the school's new Reading Room.

OUP, which is owned by Oxford University, has also provided reading materials to help volunteers as they work with children in the school's reading room.

The company gave the school £5,000, which partially funded the room.

OUP employee and volunteer Marc Stewart, who started the scheme in September, said: "Oxford is a hub of learning and education, but it's also home to a significant number of children who find reading a real struggle.

"By volunteering with ARCh (Assisted Reading for Children) through OUP, I feel that I'm able to make a positive contribution to the lives of these children, and to the wider community in which we all live and work."

Kathy Hodder-Williams, early reading leader at Pegasus School, said: "I am really excited by this project.

"It is fantastic to have such enthusiastic and committed people coming into the school and giving their time to the children.



WORD SEARCH: Vikki Rose from Oxford University Press helps Ben Stroud, seven, with his reading, and *inset*, Jane Rendle, of ARCh

Picture OX63444: Antony Moore

"One of the boys, who rarely speaks in class, relishes the chance to explore texts and discuss his favourite topics with an interested adult.

"Another boy, who can be challenging in class, is beginning to widen his choice of books.

"I have spent a long time trying to persuade him to read other books instead of Roald Dahl and I noticed that today he was holding a new book when he went down to read with his OUP volunteer.

"It is encouraging for us as a school to have outsiders coming in and supporting us in our bid to give the children a lifelong love of reading."

The staff volunteering programme, run in conjunction with Oxfordshire charity Assisted Reading for Children (ARCh), follows a pilot scheme last year where employees volunteered in schools around the county.

Jane Rendle, development manager at ARCh, said: "ARCh is delighted to be in its second year of working with OUP.

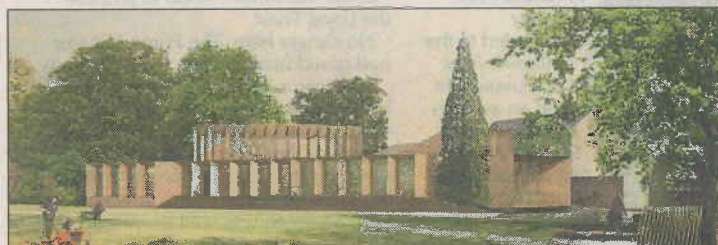
"We currently have 18 OUP staff trained as ARCh volunteers, 10 of these are now inspiring children to read in the new Reading Room at Pegasus School and it has proved to be a perfect partnership between a large publisher and local charity."

College plans new lecture theatre

AN OXFORD University college has announced plans to turn a tennis court into a state-of-the-art building.

Worcester College hopes to build a new lecture theatre to seat 160 people in the Nazrin Shah Building.

It will create a space for the gathering of a full year group of



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