

Celebrating the work of ARCh volunteers in National Volunteers Week 2014

ARCh simply wouldn't exist without volunteers. So what better time to celebrate the amazing work they do than National Volunteers Week.

Victor Puddick shared his experience as a volunteer:

Once I retired I had the time to become a volunteer. I picked up a flier about ARCh, and, being married to a teacher, and being very familiar with school life, I was encouraged to make contact and to take up the opportunity to do the training course. My wife thought I would make a good role model for children who lack confidence in reading.

As a child I really struggled with reading (and writing) so it is good to be able to build a relationship with three children over the course of a year and to see their attitude to reading and books, and word games, flourish. As an avid reader myself I enjoy sharing reading experiences with the children. However much they lack confidence in their reading abilities, I can honestly tell them that I have been there, and I can encourage them to enjoy what we do during our half hour sessions. Most of the children I have worked with really look forward to their ARCh time, and come eager to continue the book we were sharing at the previous session.

The act of working with the children is very rewarding and the training and support given by ARCh gives you confidence in your ability to communicate a love of reading. ARCh provides each volunteer with a box of resources (books, games and puzzles) suitable for the age group you there to help.

There is also the enjoyment in being part of the wider ARCh team. You get to know other ARCh volunteers through going to the book exchange mornings and their larger meetings where there is normally with an interesting speaker. You also become part of the school community and you can get involved, if you wish, with some of the school's other activities – I have even helped with costumes for the end of year show!!

Another volunteer, Sandy Gallaher, shared her experience:



I volunteered for ARCh as I wanted to help young children to read while they are in primary school because they can be so disadvantaged if they arrive in High School with poor reading ability.

I have found over my 5 years with ARCh that the time spent with the children has been very rewarding for me.

Sometimes the children are chosen not solely for their need for help with their reading but also for their need for one to one attention. As well as reading we play games and it is such fun to see how much they enjoy their sessions.

As an ARCh volunteer you have the opportunity to make a difference to the lives of the children which whom you spend time and at the same time achieve a sense of fulfilment. I would encourage anyone who wants to help young children gain in self-confidence to volunteer to work with ARCh.

Find out more about becoming a volunteer [here](#)