

Infosheet

For Schools and Volunteers

Literacy Volunteers 1996-2020



Literacy Volunteers

Over two decades of service to children

November 2020

GETTING BACK TO SCHOOL



Our top priority, as always, are our children and Volunteers and so we have decided to dedicate our Front Page to stories from them and about them! In spite of the immense challenges, we are happy to have been able to place some Volunteers back into schools last term and also some for this term. Volunteer numbers are down dramatically but with

measures in place, the Literacy Volunteers team has worked hard, with our schools, to allow Volunteers to return quickly and safely.

Below are some wonderful stories from Volunteers and schools about their experiences. We thank them for their comments.

Volunteer's comments

Ray, Volunteer at Woodland View

Primary. Before I attended school, Covid-19 procedures were agreed with the Deputy Head of the School and Sue Marriott my AC, so that I could start my Literacy fun time with the children.

I had two sessions with 4 children aged 5 (2 boys and 2 girls) before half term.

The time was limited to 15 minutes each session in the library and I cleaned the table



and chairs that we used before and after the session.

The children were really keen to read and they had a choice either to play a game or colour in a picture. We had a very enjoyable time together and I felt very comfortable in the situation.

Early days yet but lets hope that we can continue to support our children during this pandemic."

Tamara Stewart at Broomhill

Junior. I had been helping out as a Literacy Volunteer for nine months when we all went into lockdown last March.

I was really keen to get back in September but slightly daunted at how it would work with the new restrictions.

I have been back four weeks now and enjoying volunteering as much as ever. I have the same students and it's been lovely to see them all again after six months.

They were really happy to get back to our sessions and all seem more

grown up. It feels slightly different as I have to sit further from the children and regularly hand gel and wipe down but it feels really safe.

I am part of the year six bubble but it's organised so I don't need to mix with anyone except my students.

The experience of lockdown and current restrictions have been so hard on us all but I've been surprised at how well the children have adapted and dealt with everything. They seem to take it all in their stride and that has had such a positive influence on me during such a challenging time.



Hello everyone. I am **Sue Franks a Volunteer at All Saints Church of England Infant School** in Huthwaite. It's a small school of just three classes – Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. I work with children from Year 2. With around only 80 children in total you can imagine how close-knit the whole place is. Teamwork is key at this school, all the staff are really friendly, warm and welcoming and this passes on to the children and their attitude towards one another.

Because of the current situation I stopped going into school in March. They continued with children of

keyworkers and I kept in touch by e-mail to hear how things were being managed. Following discussions with my coordinator, Sue Marriott, and the Head of School, it was decided that I would start back on 17th September. All precautions and procedures were discussed with me and set out in writing, and I was provided with a face shield, wipes, hand gel and plastic wallets.

I am included in Year 2's bubble and understand where I am allowed to move between their room and the room where I am based on Thursday afternoons.

It was a little strange going back after the several months away but everything has gone smoothly. I was welcomed back by everyone and introduced to the new Year 2 class, most of whom knew my face from the last (almost) two years. All the children happily follow the rules on regular handwashing or sanitising.

I hope that whenever you return to school it will be as reassuring as it has been for me.



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2006



Anne Cowley at Abbey Road Primary.

I've been back in school for 4 weeks now. It's all going well and I think we're all settling into the new routine.

I had quite a few supportive conversations with Emma Collis, my AC, before I went back in to school- just to talk through the Literacy Volunteers Risk Assessment and School Checklist. I also had a catch up phone call after the first session to see

how it had all gone.

School was very welcoming. My first week back started with a comprehensive 'induction' with my contact at school - time for me to ask questions and clarify queries and to get a sense of how everyone in school was feeling, how the children were coping and how the teachers were managing. It was very reassuring on all levels.

Being in school feels very 'safe' with appropriate Covid measures in place and embedded everywhere. I'm able to use the same space as previously, it's a large area which can be well ventilated, weather permitting, so social distancing is straight forward and easily managed. There's plenty of hand sanitiser and wipes to hand too, so my hands have never been so regularly cleaned in such a short space of time.

The children are very engaged in the sessions which flow naturally - possibly more time is spent in conversation than previously but that must be a good thing.

I now decide what games we will play - before I always gave the children a choice. As they are new children to me they don't know any different. I now also use the same word search/crossword etc with each child whereas previously I tried to match the activity to the child. This way there's less paper/need for photocopying.

I find wearing the visor makes reading tricky - (maybe wearing specs make it worse) but it feels better than wearing a mask.

Adjusting games to be Covid safe takes a bit of extra thinking through. With each new game I tell the children that playing it in the new way is an experiment which they seem to like. One game I played regularly with children before Covid, we took turns throwing dice and touching counters. I now move the counters for both of us, the children touch no part of the game and we don't throw the dice at all.

The children seem to have adapted to all the new measures and appear to be taking it all in their stride and I'm following their lead. I'm happy to be back despite the restrictions and it seems to be working for all of us.

Headteacher's comments:

Elizabeth Duffell Head at St Peter's Cross Keys C of E Academy

Helping in the decision to welcome back our Literacy Volunteer was the rigorous risk assessment checklist provided by the Literacy Volunteer Co-ordinator, Emma Collis. It was really clear that this had been an extremely thorough piece of preparation to ensure that both



the safety of children and staff in school and our Literacy Volunteer had been provided for in their return to schools. There was also an opportunity to add any additional risk assessment requirements,

therefore adding extra assurance for both us as a school and also for our Literacy Volunteer. Practical arrangements for social distancing and hygiene procedures were straight forward and easy to agree before the first visit in school.

We decided to continue with the children who already knew our Volunteer well. This decision was planned around the well-being of the children who had already benefited from their support. This was undoubtedly the right decision as the children involved were all vulnerable in terms of self-esteem and confidence. They were all delighted when they learnt that they would be working with our Literacy Volunteer again this term. It has helped to settle them and they really look forward to their time with Julia every week.

Wow, I'm with her again! I know I like her very much because she's fun. She's an alright person.

I like being with Mrs G, she's fun and she's kind. She lets me read with her and we play fun games.

Jo Redfern Head at All Saints C of E Infants School

My name is Jo Redfern and I am the Headteacher of All Saints C of E Infant and Pre-School. We were delighted when Sue joined us nearly two years ago and she very quickly became a valued member of our staff team. We agreed that she would work with children entitled to pupil premium, and this has had a noticeable impact, both on children's confidence as readers and on their self-esteem.

When we went into lock-down in March, Sue could obviously no longer carry out her work with us. Once it became clear that schools would re-open fully in September, we wanted to try and get her back in as quickly as possible. We knew that our children would need as much support as we could offer them after nearly six months out of school, and we were keen to

have Sue back with us.

I have always found our Literacy Volunteers Co-ordinator, Sue Marriott to be very well-planned and organised, and this was very much the case as we worked together to ensure Sue F could safely return to school. I completed the school risk assessment and then there was further communication with Sue M to clarify certain points. Sue F also made some specific requests to ensure her working environment was as safe as possible, which we accommodated. Good communication between the three of us meant that we all felt confident that appropriate measures were in place. I continue to review these regularly, making

any adaptations as local and national guidance changes.

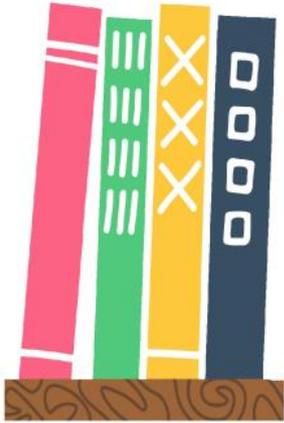
Sue M 'checks-in' with me frequently to ensure things are running smoothly.

The children have been thrilled to have Sue back, and as she says, they happily follow the rules when working with her. They are not at all put-off by face shields or masks! They have adapted really well to the 'new normal', whether in the classroom or working on a one-to-one. Sue's group look forward to their time with her each week and are making progress.

Good planning and communication is the key to a successful transition back into school. Our experience has shown that it's well-worth taking the time to do this properly. The benefits of having Sue back in school have been considerable and we are extremely grateful to her for her trust in us.

I like playing word search with her. She helps me if I say a word. It makes me feel really happy.

I was really pleased because when we were off school I felt alone and when I came back and I saw her again I was really happy. It's good because it feels like I have a friend and she helps me to learn.



Message from the Chair - Julia Gunn

Literacy Volunteers, along with many other charities in the UK, is trying to work out how to deliver planned objectives as Covid 19 continues to disrupt our lives.

Many families are struggling to support their children who have faced a long period off school. Reading research from the National Literacy Trust shows that in 2019 34.6% of five-year-olds in Nottingham did not have the expected reading and writing skills by the time they

started school and 29% of 11-year-olds in Nottingham left primary school last year (2019) unable to read well.

We are aware that the need for Literacy Volunteers is greater than ever and we are working so hard to try and navigate an effective and financially viable route through these challenging times.

Thank you to everyone for being involved - stay safe.

Welcome Back from our CEO - Dawn Claypole

It seems very strange to be saying "Welcome Back" in November but then again it's a very strange time!

Coronavirus is undoubtedly our biggest challenge yet and I have to say that, at this point in the year, our "One to One" reading support work in schools is struggling to pick up. The loss of income from subscriptions has hit us very hard and there's very little we can do.

We absolutely respect the decisions of some Volunteers not to return to school and can completely understand those schools who, as yet, don't want us to return.

The reality for us is that our income has been devastated and the National support on offer doesn't provide for our needs.

The Trustees are aware of the issues we face and will be working with me to assess our options over the next few weeks, but we do face a very bumpy road ahead.

I must take a moment, however, to say a huge **"Thank you"** to all those Volunteers we have had to say **"Goodbye"** to. We wish you

all the very best and we really can't thank you enough for all the work you have done to support the many children you have been working with in your schools.

I know from speaking to some of you, that these decisions have been very hard but just think about the amazing difference you have been able to make!

For those of you who are waiting to return, what we can say is that current research shows that the uptick in transmission rates doesn't appear to be as a result of child to adult transmission and our schools are working very hard to keep you all safe.

I can also say that having read the stories of Volunteers who have returned - that's its clear they are happy to be back working with the children they support and that they and the schools are happy with the arrangements that have been put in place.

Could Volunteers help us in another school?

Are you looking to get back to Volunteering soon but your school is not available at the moment?

Would you be interested in helping at another school if there is a possibility of one being available.

If **your answer if yes**, then please let your AC know as soon as possible and you can discuss what is available in your area.

sue@literacyvolunteers.org.uk,
emma@literacyvolunteers.org.uk,
Emmatrowbridge@literacyvolunteers.org.uk



LITERACY VOLUNTEERS

Our Annual General Meeting for the financial year 2019-2020 will be held on December 2nd at 3pm on Zoom.

We hope that as many of you as possible will attend and if you wish to book a place please email linda.patterson@literacyvolunteers.org.uk to do so.

We will email you a link on the Monday before the event.

This year we really hope to persuade some of you to join us as new Trustees so please use the nomination form attached to nominate yourself and return it to us by November 30th. I know that some of you have expressed an interest before and that we were waiting to compile a list of skills and experience we needed – but this list is complete so if you can offer advice or experience in these areas we would love you to nominate yourself to our existing 5 vacancies!

We are looking for nominations for Trustees who can represent the school voice and/or who have expertise in the following areas:-

Creative - visual/performing artist
– maybe an author/illustrator/storyteller or poet

Cultural Diversity –someone who

could bring a diversity of cultural experience to our Board.

Community - someone working and/or living in communities in Nottinghamshire with particular interest/knowledge of the impact of social/economic deprivation on the impact of literacy skills for children.

Child Development - an education practitioner, development worker or nursery provider.

The detail of the AGM is as follows:-

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS AGM

Wednesday December 2nd 2020 at 3 pm - to be held on Zoom

AGENDA

Words from our Chair re 2019—2020

Resolution One

The Approval of the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on October 9th 2019.

We will propose and ask someone to second that they be accepted as a true record.

Words from our Treasurer

Resolution Two

The Approval of Accounts. Accounts for 2019-2020 have been made available – Request for questions and or clarification.

AGM

Annual General Meeting

We will propose and ask someone to second that they be accepted.

Resolution Three The Appointment of the Independent Examiner.

We will propose and ask someone to second that John O'Brien of CA Plus is appointed as the examiner for next year.

Resolution Four The Appointment of Executive Committee

(There must be no less than 5 and no more than 12 Trustees).

We will accept nominations for, then Propose and Accept Nominations for Chair and Treasurer.

We will accept nominations for, then Propose and accept Nominations for 2 retiring Trustees who wish to be re-elected.

We will accept nominations for, then Propose and accept Nominations for our 5 vacant Trustee posts.

Thank you, Questions and Discussion

We have sent the nomination forms along with the Infosheet and made them available on the website. If you want to know more email me on dawn.claypole@literacyvolunteers.org.uk.

Safeguarding Update



Safeguarding Update: The Team have done some great work focusing on Safeguarding in the last few months. We have updated our Safeguarding Policy, Allegations against Staff procedure, Complaints Policy and produced a Code of Conduct that all our volunteers and staff now sign with regards to their declaration on their commitment to safeguarding the children they support. All staff have completed their Safer Recruitment in Education Training and nearly all our Volunteers have completed the government's Prevent training on line. The Trustees have updated their knowledge and skills on these issues and a lot of work has been done that spells out our commitment to keeping children safe from abuse and harm. Here is our checklist again to serve as a reminder for keeping yourself safe and free from allegations as a result of your volunteering.

Literacy Volunteers

Safer Working Practices in Schools and Settings

Volunteers

Do not hold your sessions in an area of the school where you aren't visible to others

Do not put yourself into a position that might invite an accusation from a child of abuse or harm

Do not give out personal details that mean you could be found

Never meet a child outside school

Never swap phone numbers or give email address

Don't let children know if you use social media

Don't have your phone out at school

Do not take photos of the children you are working with

Do make yourself aware of the schools policy on physical contact.

Do not initiate physical contact with the children you work with but be aware that they might do so with you. If this happens try to move away from the child without making them feel that there is something wrong - let the teacher know at the end of the session

Do not give children cards, gifts or presents.

Don't use resources from home e.g. books and games without agreeing that this is OK with school.

Let school know if you give stickers and bookmarks as rewards for reading well

Learning to Love Books with



Literacy Volunteers

Learning to Love Books is still here!! Before March of this year we delivered storytelling sessions in St Ann's, Hyson Green and Sneinton libraries. During lockdown we have continued to provide a fun learning support to our families through our online stories and our well resourced, educational and imaginative storytelling packs. In addition to receiving the Learning to Love Book storytelling packs in the post, families are also sent a link to join in with our professional storyteller while she reads a story on You Tube. Such is the success of the Learning to Love Books project that Literacy Volunteers have received further funding from Small Steps Big Changes to continue the good work. Sadly, although no longer having a presence in Sneinton, the geographical areas have been extended to include Aspley and Bulwell. The feedback from families who have been involved in the storytelling journey has been fantastic and it's clear that the materials sent out linking up with an online story have helped to develop children's literacy, numeracy and language development. We still have spaces for families to join this project, **please email marie.ainsworth@literacyvolunteers.org.uk for details.**



Learning to Love  Books

**Is your child under 4?
Do they love stories?**

Would you like access to stories on You Tube told by our very own story teller that you can listen to with your child?
Would you like to receive a **FREE** regular storytelling pack containing books, art materials and ideas for family play activities – all delivered to your door?
We can help you with supporting your child's literacy, numeracy and language development.

If you live in St Ann's, Hyson Green, Aspley or Bulwell, sign up with us to take advantage of the wonderful offer.

**To get involved call 0115 8765474
or email Marie:
marie.ainsworth@literacyvolunteers.org.uk**

Or go to our website www.literacyvolunteers.org.uk and download the form. **Don't Miss Out!**

Literacy Volunteers Story Box Project

We are excited to have received funding to supply **300 Story Boxes** to children in some of the County primary schools we work with. The project is based on raising levels of **Reading for Pleasure** for children whose access to books at home may be limited. The books are meant to be read at home alone or with the support of someone in the family.

Story boxes will be developed using exciting books from across the abilities in Key Stages One and Two. Children will be chosen by their school to receive the boxes and in turn the children will choose a Story Box they most like. The Story boxes will be developed and delivered by Literacy Volunteers to our participating schools for the children they have selected.

Each box will be addressed to the pupil and contain a book, some arts resources and extended learning activity sheets that will support and develop their reading and understanding of the exciting book which they have chosen to read. We wanted the children to have an element of choice to aid the motivation to read themselves (or be read to/with).

The additional activities included are based on the books that they have chosen and that they could do alone or with support from a parent/carer etc. We will also be including something for the parents/carers about reading together. We hope to be able to monitor the success of the intervention and identify the outcomes of the projects aim, **promoting reading at home/for pleasure!**

St Peter's Cross Keys C of E Academy is the first school signed up to this project. **For more information email [Emma Collis on emma@literacyvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:emma@literacyvolunteers.org.uk)**

This Story Box belongs to:

Jack



Literacy Volunteers

0115 8765474

contact@literacyvolunteers.org.uk

www.literacyvolunteers.org.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1167357 Literacy Volunteers

Literacy Volunteers and Read on Nottingham 'Doorstep to Digital' story boxes

Literacy Volunteers are coordinating a project on behalf of Read on Nottingham, part of the National Literacy Trust's Community Hub programme, to provide tailored learning resources directly to families with young children in the most disadvantaged communities within Nottingham City.

The story boxes will be delivered through schools, house drops, community and partner organisations and via post. They will include books, age-appropriate family fun activity sheets and materials that support curriculum learning and promote positive mental health and wellbeing. We aim to reach 1,000 families through this project.

Packs will be developed for Early Years (0-2 and 3-5 packs),

 **Doorstep to Digital**

Changing life stories

KS1, Lower and Upper KS2 and KS3, focusing on a range of themes including: Friends, Family and Relationships; Environment, Science and Nature; Around the World; Fantasy; Adventure and Sports.

The project also has a digital side which will see the families who receive the story boxes encouraged to sign up for online activities, run by Literacy Volunteers, to further support their children's literacy and reading at home. There will be at least 6 online sessions and also support groups delivered through What's App, text, email and possibly Facebook.

Contact lorna.jaggard@literacyvolunteers.org.uk for more information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOLUNTEER NETWORK MEETINGS

We are looking to run two Volunteer Network Meetings via Zoom this term. We will limit the number to 10 people per meeting at this time but if we have more Volunteers wanting to do a meeting we will look to see if we can run some more. **Please let your AC know you would like to attend and we will email you meeting details and the link.**

Meeting 1 – Tuesday 17 November at 10.30am – Meeting for all Volunteers. Theme – How has the return to school worked?

Meeting 2 – Thursday 10 December at 1pm – Meeting for all Volunteers. Theme – Catch up.

Covid, cold or flu?

We thought it might be helpful, as we head into the autumn/ winter cold and flu season, to remind you of the difference in symptoms between a cold and Covid-19.

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)

a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

The latest NHS advice about cold and flu symptoms can be found on the [NHS website](#) but common cold symptoms are:

A blocked or runny nose
Muscle aches
Loss of taste and smell

A sore throat
A raised temperature

Pressure in your ears and face
Coughs

Headaches
Sneezing

| | |
|---|--|
| Covid-19 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever• Dry cough• Fatigue• New loss of smell and taste | Flu <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fever• Dry cough• Runny nose• Headache• Sore throat• Muscle and joint pain |
| Cold <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sore throat• Runny or stuffy nose• Sneezing• Cough• Watery eyes• Aches and pains | Allergies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sneezing• Coughing• Itchy eyes• Runny nose |

Autumn/Winter Term School Term Dates 2020

City Schools Term begins 2 Sept 2020, Term ends 18 Dec 2020

Half Term 19 Oct 2020 to 30 Oct 2020 inclusive

County Schools Term begins 2 Sept 2020, Term ends 18 Dec 2020

Half Term 19 Oct 2020 to 30 Oct 2020 inclusive

Derbyshire Schools Term begins 2 Sept 2020, Term ends 18 Dec 2020

Half Term 23 Oct 2020 to 30 Oct 2020 inclusive

**To contact the team: Literacy Volunteers, Woodthorpe Grange, Woodthorpe Drive, Nottingham NG5 4HA
Tel: 0115 876 5474 Email: contact@literacyvolunteers.org.uk www.literacyvolunteers.org.uk
Chief Executive: Dawn Claypole. Office Manager: Linda Patterson. Senior Area Co-ordinator (City North, Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield): Sue Marriott. Area Co-ordinator (City East, Gedling, Rushcliffe) and Trainer: Emma Collis. Area Co-ordinator (City West, Broxtowe, Derbyshire): Emma Trowbridge. Story Sharers Co-ordinator/Coordinator for National Literacy Trust Doorstep to Digital project: Lorna Jaggard.
Early Years Literacy Volunteer Co-ordinator: Marie Ainsworth.**