

Newsletter

For Volunteers and Schools

Literacy Volunteers 1996-2026



Issue: January 2026

Supporting children with literacy and communication in primary schools and communities

Hello Everyone

Welcome back everyone and I hope you all had the chance to relax and enjoy yourselves over the festive holiday period. We are all excited as we approach the 30th anniversary of the founding of Literacy Volunteers and you will see within the Newsletter that we are preparing for a series of events to celebrate this important milestone.

Based on the feedback received, the two Bromley Library fund-raising tours in October/November were a great success. We will be happy to consider organising another event later in the year subject to demand for those Volunteers and supporters who were unable to join us in October. The support Jacob Dunne provided during the November tour highlighted how lucky we are to have such a fantastic and inspiring patron where he talked about the profound impact of establishing a love of reading can have on the lives of young people in our city.

It was a pleasure to attend my first Volunteer Network Meeting in Arnold where I was given the honour of congratulating Lois Cracolici on reaching her 10 year milestone with Literacy Volunteers. Once again, congratulations and well done Lois!

Looking back at 2025, it's very pleasing to see that Literacy Volunteers had another successful year in generating donations to support the work we do. This was largely due to the hard work and efforts of our staff, who continue to combine with their normal duties, the task of identifying and applying for sources of additional grants and funding. The highlight of our fundraising efforts was the success achieved in securing long-term funding, in the face of intense competition, from the 1001 Critical Days Foundation, which has underpinned the funding needs of our Early Years team for the next three years. This was an incredible endorsement from an independent

panel of the quality and impact of the work our Early Years team does in Nottingham.

It is pleasing to see the contribution from our Volunteers at a grass roots level towards our fundraising targets, such as Margaret Hamilton, who donated the proceeds of a raffle to Literacy Volunteers. Another great example is the donations collected by the families of former Volunteers of David Young and Paul Richardson who both sadly passed away in 2025. The financial resilience of Literacy Volunteers is dependent upon maintaining the diversity of our funding supported by the ongoing generosity and efforts of our donors, fundraisers, corporate sponsors and local authorities for which we are incredibly grateful.

I wish you all a successful and enjoyable 2026 and I look forward to catching up with you during events taking place over the year.

Mike Collis
Chair of Board of Trustees

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

This year, Literacy Volunteers is proud to be celebrating its 30-year anniversary.



Over the past three decades, the Charity has supported thousands of children across Nottinghamshire, helping them to develop confidence and essential literacy skills, and making a lasting difference to their lives.

To mark this milestone, we will be holding a celebration event this July to recognise the impact of our Volunteers, supporters, schools, and partners, and to reflect on everything that has been achieved since the Charity began.

We'll also be marking our anniversary in lots of special ways throughout the year, so please look out for more information and updates coming soon.

We are incredibly proud of what has been accomplished over the last 30 years and would like to thank everyone who has been part of this journey.

30th Anniversary celebration

Bromley House Library Fundraiser

Two successful and well attended fundraising evenings were held by Literacy Volunteers at Bromley House Library last term.

Our October evening was for our Volunteers and the November evening was attended by Nottingham's Corporate Community.

A fascinating and informative talk and tour was held for guests, run by the Bromley House Library staff and their volunteers.

As well as staff team members Lorna Jaggard, Emma Collis, Sue Marriott and Chair Mike Collis attending to look after guests, we were delighted that our patron Jacob Dunne could come along and make an impactful and inspiring speech to our corporate guests and promoting the Charity.



We had lots of wonderful feedback from guests about how much they enjoyed the evening and also how some hadn't known about the library's existence and what a hidden gem it was. The Charity is delighted to announce we raised **£1484** from the two evenings.



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2006

We'd like to send a big thank you to our Corporate supporters who either attended the Bromley House Library Fundraising Event or kindly made a donation:

- John Sykes - Skye Corporate Finance**
- Rob Carroll - University of Nottingham Business School**
- Austin Moore - Moore Law LLP Solicitors**
- Kirk Fletcher - Connected Data Limited**
- Patrick Ellward - Opus LLP**
- Jonathan Lowe - Maven Capital Partners**
- Richard Brightly - Maven Capital Partners**
- Andrew and Julie Fowler - Claven Group Limited**
- Keith Pickering - Alantra**
- Nicola Cathorpe-Owen - Rotheras Bray Solicitors**
- Navdeep Sethi - Batfast Sports**
- Anna Mayfield - Gateley Solicitors**
- Shiv Nand - Gateley Solicitors**
- Andrew Borkowski - Borkowski Consultancy**
- Anthony Davy - Prime Nurture Services**
- David Griffiths - Sterling Commercial Finance**
- David Browne - Provantage**
- Mark Hughes - Browne Jacobson**

Volunteer Network Meetings



Our Volunteer Network Meetings are going from strength to strength. Four really successful meetings were held over



November last term in Wollaton, Arnold, West Bridgford and Mansfield. We were very pleased to see each meeting so well attended by our Volunteers.

Our presentation for the term was on **Reluctant Readers**



and from the feedback received, Volunteers found it useful and appreciated the extra handouts that were distributed. Some of these handouts will be distributed in due course by the Volunteer/Schools Co-ordinator team to Volunteers and especially those who could not

attend the meetings. There was plenty of opportunity for Volunteers to catch up with fellow Volunteers and the LV team over a cuppa and to pick up resources.



Flying High Partnership Award

Flying High Partnership Staff Awards 2025 nominated two of their Volunteer Awards to **Paul Hughes, Greythorn Primary** and **Roger van Schaick, Killisick Junior School**. They were both really delighted to receive certificates from their schools last term for their work in school.

NATIONAL YEAR OF READING 2026

The National Year of Reading 2026 has been commissioned by the Government and designed as a private/public funded collective action campaign. It is part funded by the Department for Education, with additional funding and support from multi-sector partners including Arts Council England, Julia Rausing Trust, all major and independent book publishers and the Booksellers' Association, Amazon and Spotify. The National Year of Reading 2026 aims to change the nation's reading culture both during the Year and beyond. We have registered to become an official Pledge Partner, so we will be kept updated and will see how we can be involved or benefit further as their plans evolve.

10 Long Service

A special thank you and recognition from Literacy

Volunteers has been given to another amazing long serving Volunteer, Lois Cracolici. Lois has given us 10 years of brilliant service, dedication and most importantly 10 years of fantastic and hugely valuable help to so many children at Killisick Junior School.



The school really appreciate Lois's contribution as a Literacy Volunteer and Karen Carpenter, Deputy Head at Killisick Junior and who knows Lois well commented, "We are indeed, very lucky to have Lois. She is a super star and children make so much progress in terms of their confidence and English ability with her help."

A presentation was made to Lois at the Arnold Volunteer Network Meeting by Chair Mike Collis and her V/SC Emma Collis to mark her very special milestone. Thank you Lois!

DAVID YOUNG/PAUL RICHARDSON

Literacy Volunteers is immensely grateful to Volunteers and their families who remember us when the Volunteer is no longer with us. We would like to extend our thanks to the family of David Young, a former Literacy Volunteer of 15 years at St Peter's C of E Academy, East Bridgford who passed away near the end of last year. David's family contacted us and kindly let us know donations from David's funeral would be donated to Literacy Volunteers. We are also very grateful to Jo Hindes, who raised a donation in memory of her father Paul Richardson, a past Volunteer.

Early Years Updates

The Early Years team have been delighted to have 2 new students from NTU join them in the Learning to Love Books sessions, one of whom will be helping us create a wall display for the office and joining us in the story telling sessions to tell a story which she has created some of her own resources for.

We have learnt a lot from having puppet training delivered by Carol from 'Puppets plays and story days'.

Carol showed Marie, Lorna and Abbey different ways to use puppets to enhance the sessions and help engage the families. A really useful half day of training; we are already using some of the techniques.



Some of the great stories we have read this term have been *The Train Ride* and *12 ducklings*. With some families suggesting books for us to read to the whole group.



At the end of term we provided 70 families with story boxes containing 2 fabulous books *You Matter* and *Dear Santa* and we finished off a successful year by celebrating with parties.



Thank you to Bassetlaw Volunteer, **Margaret Hamilton** who held a raffle at her recent birthday party raising £60 for Literacy Volunteers. Margaret was a Literacy Volunteer prior to Covid and reapplied during our Bassetlaw relaunch last year. She is really enjoying reading with children each week and has seen great improvements in their reading, self-esteem and confidence since starting her sessions last July.



THANK YOU!

We would like to say thank you to the following people and organisations for their donations, support and help over the past few months:

Nottinghamshire County Council
Nottingham City Council
Small Steps Big Changes
Nottingham Community & Voluntary Service - with a special mention for Dave Thomas
Bassetlaw Community & Voluntary Service
Your CVS
Elizabeth Greeley - NTU
Andrew Tucker
Maven Capital Partners
Jacob Dunne
Bromley House and everyone who attended our Bromley House Tours
Margaret Hamilton
Kate Scott
Alison Fowler
Jo Hindes
The Cumberland Trust
1001 Critical Days Foundation
Daisy Parente - Welbeck Estates
The family of David Young
Carol Smith
Richard Willis
Abbey - NTU Student
Everyone who has donated to us or shopped via Give as You Live
Our Board of Trustees

And, once again, a huge **Thank You** to our amazing Literacy Volunteers!

DIARY DATES - Volunteer Network Meetings

Friday 20th March 10-12pm - SM

Quaker Friends Meeting House Mansfield

Friday 27th March 10-12pm - KP

Bassetlaw Community Voluntary Service, The Old Abbey School, Worksop, S80 2BU

Wednesday 29th April 10-12pm - KM

Meeting Room 1, Arnold Library, 161 Front Street, Arnold, NG5 7EE

Monday 11th May 10-12pm - ET

Middle Street Resource Centre, 74 Middle Street, Beeston, NG9 2AR



SAFEGUARDING

There have been **3 Safeguarding incidents** last term, and these were all dealt with appropriately.

When was the earliest legislation regarding safeguarding established in the UK: **1860s, 1870s, 1880s?**

The first act of Parliament relating to the protection of children was the Prevention of Cruelty to, and Protection of, Children Act 1889. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, founded in Liverpool in 1883, recognised child abuse as a major social concern and established the need for specific laws to protect children.

Sue Marriott: Lead Volunteer/Schools Co-ordinator (City North, Ashfield, Mansfield)

Emma Collis: Literacy Volunteers Trainer

Emma Trowbridge: Fundraiser and Volunteer/Schools Co-ordinator (City West, Broxtowe, Derbyshire)

Karen Plant: Volunteer/Schools Co-ordinator (Bassetlaw)

Kirsten McConnell: Volunteer/Schools Co-ordinator (East, South Notts)

Lorna Jaggard: Lead Early Years Team, **Marie Ainsworth:** Early Years Co-ordinator

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