

### Introduction

#### Did you know...?

- One in five people in the UK struggles to read and write.
- The National Year of Reading highlighted reading as 'The critical life skill... It's a survival skill... without reading, you are excluded from society in a way that generations have never been before. There is less and less you can do without reading'.
- There are 4,515 public libraries in the UK.
- The first public lending library opened in Campfield, Manchester, in 1852. Writers Charles Dickens and William Thackeray attended the opening.

#### Who is this guide for?

- Library staff
- School staff at all levels
- Providers of services in the community sector
- Cluster managers supporting schools



## About this guide

This guide offers advice on how libraries and schools can work together to offer study support, out-of-school-hours learning (oshl) and extended services programmes that will engage children and young people in reading and using libraries. It is aimed at library staff, school staff (at all levels), providers of services in the community and cluster managers who are supporting schools.

It will give you lots of ideas for including a library club in your school's study support programme, as well as tips, helpful hints and tried and tested ideas for activities that you and your members can enjoy.

The guide is designed to examine the good practice that is already in place and ways in which you can build on that; it offers practical advice for setting up and running your own library-based study support group.

### Case study – A joint approach Newcastle Libraries and Information Service

In Newcastle, the library service has been embedded in every aspect of the lives of children and young people. The service encourages people to read, from six months through to adulthood, and works with a broad range of partners, including Sure Start, the health service and Job Centre Plus.

Once children reach school age, they have access to a range of after-school and holiday activities that are run through the libraries, such as the national Summer Reading Challenge and Chatterbooks clubs. Older students are involved in shaping the library service by helping to design the new city library and choosing new stock.

The service benefits from having a designated library person who is responsible for raising the profile of the library among schools.

The library service is part of the Education and Libraries Directorate and the teams work together closely, participating in strategic planning groups, including the Early Years and Development Partnership, the Children's and Young People's Partnership and the Newcastle Learning Partnership. The library service plans, markets and evaluates activities that are run with partners represented on these groups; these include the family learning and health services. Both of the latter services provide access to families who may benefit from library service support.

## Extended services and libraries

By 2010 every school in England is expected to be providing access to the 'core offer' of extended services. One of the five elements of the core offer is a varied menu of out-of-school-hours activities. Study support has a key role to play in this varied menu. Study support can include the following:

### Breakfast clubs

Providing nutrition, a sociable atmosphere and learning opportunities, leading to improved attendance and concentration levels.

### A varied menu of activities

Providing a safe place to be while children are engaged in a range of subject-based, creative or sports activities, outside or in formal lesson time.

Schools can introduce a wide range of study support activities by working closely with libraries. Visit [www.continyou.org.uk/studysupportetc](http://www.continyou.org.uk/studysupportetc) for ideas and practical information about how schools can work more closely with library services to develop, run and sustain study support activities as part of their extended services provision.

Different types of library-supported activities include:

- reading clubs and breakfast reading clubs
- community cohesion clubs
- homework clubs
- targeted reading clubs
- transition support reading clubs
- children and parent reading clubs.

Of course, not all of these activities need to take place in a classroom or even on a school site. In fact, for some children and young people, a library, whether on a school site or on their home territory, is a good place to meet with friends and engage in learning outside of curriculum time.

Libraries can be an exciting place to do homework, join a reading club or just spend time doing research or reading for pleasure.

### Teaching outside the classroom

This programme was launched by Children's Minister, Kevin Brennan, on 4 March 2008. It encourages teacher training providers to offer their students placements in a diverse range of educational settings, such as libraries. The placements will complement existing teaching practice in schools, and will develop teachers' knowledge and skills about how to work with partners in order to bring teaching outside the classroom.

### Framework for the future

*Books, reading and learning* is one of the four work strands of *Framework for the future*, published in 2003 by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The framework sets out the government's vision for public libraries up to 2013, and outlines a series of projects and improvements to encourage reading in libraries and to support people of all ages in their reading development. *Framework for the future* emphasises the important role that libraries should play in their communities and encourages library services to do more to engage local people.

## What can pupils achieve through library clubs?

Members of a library club can gain a range of skills, knowledge, understanding and experience through the activities the club might offer. For example:

- an introduction, for some, to the world of books
- experience of the benefits and challenges of working in an area or locality that may not be familiar to them
- a deeper understanding and appreciation of the technological storing and retrieval of information
- an insight into how information was stored before current technology
- first-hand experience of the ways in which libraries work
- increased levels of competence and confidence with ICT, and enthusiasm for a wide variety of written and printed media
- skills that can be applied to other areas of curriculum and non-curriculum learning, such as communication, research and analysis
- the opportunity to research information for areas of school curriculum work, or for pupils' own or their families' interests.

### Case study – A library-based homework centre

Edmonton Green Library's Homework Centre is one of four homework centres located in Enfield's libraries.

The children come to the homework centres from schools all over the borough, drawn by the comprehensive range of books, as well as internet access and the trained staff who help young people with their homework assignments.

Three of the centres are located in areas of significant deprivation, and hundreds of young people, either living in or at school in the area, regularly spend their evenings there, working independently and in groups.

Funding from the Prince's Trust helped set up the first centre in order to combat low attainment, and its success convinced the local authority to set up others. The Enfield Library Service has an open-door policy, but actively promotes its service to pupils from Years 5 to 11, especially to those who need to take more responsibility for their own learning.

The Enfield Library Service also focuses on the needs of refugee communities through special projects, and on the needs of young people in public care. More recently, it has worked with Youth Services, which runs a programme placing sixth-form volunteers in library homework centres to act as study mentors to younger pupils.

## Where can library clubs be held?

Library clubs don't always have to be held in a library. You could use a library as a base and hold sessions in a range of locations, such as community centres, play spaces or at a local business. To maintain interest, consider using different locations. Go on a visit or use specialist facilities such as an ICT room. You will need plenty of comfortable seating, in an informal layout if possible.

## Who can set up and run a library club?

Anyone can set up and run a library club, for example:

- library staff
- school staff – teachers, learning mentors, teaching assistants, other interested staff
- play/youth workers
- older pupils (under supervision)
- volunteers (parents, grandparents or other adults who are interested in reading and literacy).

There may not be a public library facility close to your school. However, there are other ways in which libraries can be involved in supporting and even running an out-of-school-hours club in partnership with a school. Each local authority will have a lead person who works for the Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) service and who can help to set up a club in partnership with the public library service.

### Top tips

- Always make sure you have arrangements in place if key staff members are off sick.
- Remember to work within your organisation's security, health and safety, and child protection policies when inviting outside people to help with the club.

### Case study – Chatterbooks club Park Middle School, Staffordshire

Chatterbooks reading club is run by the local library service. Staffordshire piloted the national Reading Agency initiative in 2002, and ran the scheme as a launch pad for traditional reading groups.

The two-hour sessions are held weekly over six weeks, either in schools or in the library. In the first hour, the children play a memory game to help them concentrate, followed by some fun with reading exercises. Later, parents and carers join in for games related to the learning activity, working in teams with other families.

The same staff (one teacher and one member of the library service) attend all six sessions. This helps them get to know the children and offer tailored support.

## The purpose of a club

Be clear that there is a real need for a club, and that it will attract interest. Consult with young people, teachers, parents and your community to identify the need. Once interest is established, continue to consult children and young people at all stages of the planning.

### Who is the club for?

The Every Child Matters outcomes should form the basis of the aims and objectives of your club, and will help you decide whether to identify a target group, such as Eastern European children, Key Stage 3 boys, or pupils on free school meals.

Decide whether it would be appropriate to involve parents of younger children – reading is a great activity that children and parents can enjoy together.

### Top tips

- Even if your club targets a particular group of students, aim to reserve some places for other students, which you can allocate on a first-come-first-served basis.
- Parents and children can enjoy the stories together by reading to each other. This can provide an excellent opportunity for parents to spend quality time with their children. Reading with a child is also a great conversation starter. Encourage parents to talk to their children about the ideas and messages conveyed in a story, and also ask the parents what they feel about the ideas.
- If the club is held at a community or public library in a rural location, or on a library bus, family or friendship groups may be most effective and convenient as the children will already be in their home locations.
- Involve your members as much as possible in deciding on, organising and evaluating the activities. Not only will this give them a greater sense of ownership, but they will also have an increased commitment to making the club successful.



## Activities to consider

### 1 Visits

How about an outing to see a film or theatre production that is based on a novel? There might be a local author who writes about your area, or a novel may have been given a local setting. Consider a visit to the setting to see if members can spot landmarks, or just soak up its atmosphere.

### 2 Readathon

Take part in the National Readathon fundraising challenge and raise money for good causes while indulging in a favourite pastime. Visit [www.readathon.org](http://www.readathon.org) for details.

### 3 Talks about reading by visitors

Invite other staff, older children, parents, governors, librarians or community figures to visit the club and talk about their own reading and the books they enjoy. They could read aloud or bring along books they read as a young person. Older pupils from secondary schools may be able to use such visits for community service credit.

They will also be effective role models and give positive messages about reading as a 'cool' activity for teenagers.

### 4 Author visits and contacting authors

Meeting and speaking to a published author is an unforgettable experience for young readers. Your local children's librarian or school's library service will have many contacts with authors. Ask who they suggest and whether they can give you email addresses or phone numbers. Some authors give contact details on their websites. There are also agencies such as Speaking of Books that arrange author visits to schools (tel: 020 8692 4704).

### 5 Twinning with other clubs

Find out from your county literacy advisory teachers or library service whether there are other reading clubs in your area. Consider twinning and holding a joint meeting at a community venue, or visit each other's clubs. Keep in touch by email or through a website. Share readers' comments or challenge each other to quizzes. Find out what activities go down well in their clubs and use them yourselves. Twinning with clubs from other schools can help tap into a wider base of resources, volunteers and ideas.

### 6 Chat about books

Get everyone talking about the books they're reading or have just finished. It's one of the most effective ways of encouraging reading for pleasure – word-of-mouth recommendation is by far the most powerful marketing tool for books. You may all be reading different books, or you could focus on one book or one author.

### 7 Author of the month

Focus on one author over several meetings to give members a chance to read several books by the same author. Ask members to find out information about the author's life from books or websites. Write to or email the author with feedback about the books (don't be disappointed if you don't get a response, but be persistent).

## 8 Hot seat

Choose a character from a book that is familiar to everyone. Nominate a member to adopt the character's persona and encourage the other members to ask questions about events in the book or why the character has behaved in a certain way.

## 9 Readers' comments

Rather than full book reviews, help your members to record readers' comments – their own or those of other readers. Members could interview each other, friends, family or teachers about books they have read. Comments can be short, honest statements about a book and how the reader has reacted to it. They are easier to use in displays, in newsletters or on websites, and are more accessible to less fluent writers than longer reviews.

### Case study – Boosting social inclusion St Helens Library Service

St Helens Library Service demonstrates how study support can meet a range of its corporate strategic objectives, one of which is to boost social inclusion. In four economically and socially disadvantaged areas of St Helens, the library service aims to raise attainment and self-esteem among pupils at risk of disaffection by providing study support. Some young people prefer to attend activities away from school, so the activities are held in libraries and community centres that have flexible opening hours.

The study support scheme offers young people between the ages of 7 and 16 a range of educational activities that are intended to feel more like 'fun' than 'learning'. These can include activities such as making Egyptian masks or celebrating the Chinese New Year. Schools refer pupils to the scheme, promote it, and help library staff to evaluate pupils' progress and achievements. This project has also expanded to support a GCSE exam revision programme for Key Stage 4 students, held on Saturday mornings.

The project has resulted in improvements in ICT, literacy, numeracy, research and information skills, key skills and the development of independent learning. Children gain a sense of achievement, which raises their confidence and self-esteem. It also improves their communication skills and prepares them to be lifelong learners.



## Literacy and library projects

### Promoting reading and learning

Bookstart is a national programme that gives free books to babies and young children. It has been running since 1992, and, since 2005, the Sure Start Unit has allocated funding to increase its scope significantly. From April 2006, every child in England has been entitled to receive a pack of books at age 9 months, 18 months and 3 years. These packs include advice to parents on sharing books and information about joining the library. Public libraries are instrumental in delivery and enhance the programme by running 'rhyme time' sessions and other activities for parents and their children. Bookstart is administered by Booktrust.

### Summer Reading Challenge

The Summer Reading Challenge is a national programme, run by the Reading Agency, for children aged between 4 and 11. Children are encouraged to read six books over the summer holidays and they receive certificates and medals for doing so. This programme combines reading with fun and creative activities in public libraries and on an interactive website.

The national Summer Reading Challenge emphasises reading for pleasure and bridges the long summer holiday when many children might not otherwise read.

The Challenge is free to join. Children are free to read whatever library books they want, at any level, in Welsh or English. Listening to audiobooks or being read to also counts.

Visit [www.readingagency.org.uk/children/summer-reading-challenge](http://www.readingagency.org.uk/children/summer-reading-challenge).

### Children's Book Week

The first full week of October is Children's Book Week in Britain, and many libraries and schools celebrate the week by organising events and activities.

Visit [www.booktrust.org.uk/Campaigns/Childrens-Book-Week](http://www.booktrust.org.uk/Campaigns/Childrens-Book-Week).



## Essential checklist

Below is a summary of all the main issues to consider as you plan your study support library club. Taking the time to get everything right before you start will help to sustain your club.

### Find out what's needed

- What already exists and what gaps are there in your existing study support programme that could be filled by a library club?

### What do you want to achieve in your club?

- Would it be helpful to work with the library service in setting up and running this club?

### Find the right time for your club

- If you are introducing a new club, when is the best day/time of day for it and how often should it run to attract members?
- Will the club be better meeting at weekends or during the school holidays?
- What might affect pupils' ability to come to your club, for example, transport, involvement in other clubs and community commitments?

### Find the right place for your club

- Is school the best place for the club?
- Is there a library in your locality? If not, is there a community setting or a school space where staff and resources from a library could be based?
- In more rural areas, is it possible to arrange for the library bus to accommodate a club for all children and young people in a particular village?

### Find the right staff

- Who is the best person to run your club and how many staff will you need for each activity?
- Who else will be available to support library staff?
- Can older pupils help run activities?
- Involve other people in running your club – for example, parents, grandparents, or other adults who are interested in reading and literacy.
- What existing or new partners could support your club?
- How will you approach them?

### Cover the costs

- What resources (money and otherwise) will you need to provide your planned activities?
- What funding are you eligible to apply for and how long will the application process take?

### Keep it safe

- What are the health and safety considerations of this provision, including any training and checks for staff and insurance cover for activities?
- Do you need to undertake a risk assessment for the planned activity, including an assessment of access and safety of pupils en route to the library, and so on?

### **Involve pupils**

- Have you asked pupils what they are interested in?
- How can you involve pupils in developing this new concept?

### **Decide which pupils to target**

- How will you identify which groups or individuals will benefit from your club?
- How will you encourage them to take part?

### **Promote your club**

- How can you give your library club its own identity within the school?
- How can you turn library activities into publicity opportunities for the school?

### **Keep it going**

- How will you review the success of your club and decide what you need to change in order to improve it?
- Who will you ask for views on your library activities, and what will you ask them?

#### **Case study – A rural solution**

##### **Mere, Tisbury and Wilton Bookstart, Wiltshire**

This cluster of twelve primary schools in rural Wiltshire only had access to mobile library facilities that did not carry the Bookstart packs and materials. To exchange their vouchers and gain their entitlement to free books for their young children, parents faced a long bus ride into town, with babies, toddlers and buggies in tow – a barrier even for intrepid readers!

The extended services co-ordinator and the community librarian worked together to host a Bookstart event at one of the primary schools. Other schools and pre-school groups within a five mile radius were invited. The event promoted the Bookstart materials and the idea that reading together is fun for parents and children. Anyone who could not get to the event was offered transport. There are plans to extend the event to other schools in the cluster and to repeat it on an annual basis.

Two of the schools in the Mere area of the cluster also linked with the Mere Literary Festival and invited poet Paddy Hughes to the schools to spend a day running workshops with the children. Poems that children produced in these workshops were selected for inclusion in a published book, and the young writers were invited to an evening presentation to perform their work and to receive copies of the book.

## Useful resources

### Study support – [www.continyou.org.uk/studysupportetc](http://www.continyou.org.uk/studysupportetc)

Information about the benefits of study support.

### The Big Lottery Fund – [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)

A lottery revenue distributor for charities and the voluntary sector, for health, education and the environment.

### Lottery Funding – [www.lotteryfunding.org.uk](http://www.lotteryfunding.org.uk)

A joint website run by the lottery funders in the UK, which allows users to search for information on all current funding programmes.

### Department for Culture, Media and Sport – [www.culture.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/Libraries](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/Libraries)

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport – visit the informative libraries section.

### The Museum, Libraries and Archive Council – [www.mla.gov.uk](http://www.mla.gov.uk)

The government's agency for museums, galleries, libraries and archives, which delivers strategic leadership in all regions of England and identifies good practice, offers advice, support and resources to funding bodies and other groups. Its aim is to raise professional standards and champion better services for users and readers of all ages and backgrounds.

### World Book Day – [www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com)

An event designated by UNESCO as a worldwide celebration of books and reading, and marked in over 100 countries.

### Teaching Outside the Classroom – [www.teachingoutsidetheclassroom.com](http://www.teachingoutsidetheclassroom.com)

A programme offering a comprehensive package of support, including bespoke guidance, for providers who wish to develop inspiring, creative placements for student teachers.

### National Year of Reading – [www.yearofreading.org.uk](http://www.yearofreading.org.uk)

2008 was the National Year of Reading. Visit this interactive and informative website which has a wealth of good material to download; Wikireadia, particularly, offers a vast array of guidance and expertise for anyone supporting readers.

### The Reading Agency – [www.readingagency.co.uk](http://www.readingagency.co.uk)

A charity that aims to inspire people to read more in the belief that reading can transform lives. The Reading Agency runs the Summer Reading Challenge and promises to 'work with anybody who wants to get more people reading more'.

### Book Trust – [www.booktrust.org.uk](http://www.booktrust.org.uk)

An independent national charity that encourages people of all ages and cultures to discover and enjoy reading. The website offers many good quality resources for use in schools.

### Bookstart – [www.bookstart.co.uk](http://www.bookstart.co.uk)

A national programme, run by Booktrust, which encourages parents to share and enjoy books with their children.

**Open the Book – [www.openingthebook.com](http://www.openingthebook.com)**

An organisation that works with libraries to promote reading and a 'reader-centred' approach.

**Kent Book Company Ltd – [www.kbc.eu.com](http://www.kbc.eu.com)**

A book supplier, whose website includes book reviews and news about authors.

**National Centre for Language and Literacy – [www.ncll.org.uk](http://www.ncll.org.uk)**

A company that supports teachers and parents through an excellent collection of resources, publications and an extensive programme of courses and conferences.

**National Literacy Trust – [www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk)**

This is an independent charity that aims to change lives through literacy. Its vision is of a 'society in which everyone has the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills that they need to fulfil their own and, ultimately, the nation's potential'. The Trust supports anyone who works with learners by offering research, information and learning programmes.

**Reading Champions – [www.literacytrust.org.uk/Campaign/Champions](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/Campaign/Champions)**

A programme delivered by the National Literacy Trust, on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), and which uses the motivational power of male role models to inspire other boys and men to read more.

**Talk To Your Baby – [www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/talktoyourbaby)**

A campaign run by the National Literacy Trust to encourage parents and carers to talk more to children from birth to 3. Its founding belief is that talking to young children helps them become good communicators, which is essential if they are to do well at school and lead happy, fulfilled and successful lives

**Early years' books websites**

Achuka – [www.achuka.co.uk](http://www.achuka.co.uk)

Angelina Ballerina – [www.angelinaballerina.com](http://www.angelinaballerina.com)

Barefoot Books – [www.barefootbooks.co.uk](http://www.barefootbooks.co.uk)

Child's Play – [www.childsplay.com](http://www.childsplay.com)

Children's BBC – [www.bbc.co.uk/kids](http://www.bbc.co.uk/kids)

Eric Carle – [www.eric-carle.com](http://www.eric-carle.com)

Eric Hill – [www.funwithspot.com](http://www.funwithspot.com)

Jan Pienkowski – [www.janpienkowski.com](http://www.janpienkowski.com)

Kids at Random House – [www.kidsatrandomhouse.co.uk](http://www.kidsatrandomhouse.co.uk)

Meadowside Children's Books – [www.meadowsidebooks.com](http://www.meadowsidebooks.com)

The Oddies – [www.oddieworld.com](http://www.oddieworld.com)

Puffin – [www.puffin.co.uk](http://www.puffin.co.uk)

Quentin Blake – [www.quentinblake.com](http://www.quentinblake.com)

Walker Books – [www.walker.co.uk](http://www.walker.co.uk)

## Library information for your area

### Scotland

#### School Library Resource Services in Scotland – [www.culturalprofiles.org.uk](http://www.culturalprofiles.org.uk)

A comprehensive guide to culture in Scotland, aimed at both cultural professionals and the general public.

#### National Library of Scotland – [www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk)

Scotland's largest library and the world centre for the study of Scotland and the Scots. It is described on the website as 'an information treasure trove of Scotland's knowledge, history and culture, with millions of books, manuscripts and maps covering every subject'.

### Northern Ireland

#### Northern Ireland libraries – [www.ni-libraries.net/libraries](http://www.ni-libraries.net/libraries)

A comprehensive and informative website giving details about the libraries in Northern Ireland.

#### School Libraries of the Future Project Northern Ireland – <http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/tinney>

Provides an overview of the School Libraries of the Future project.

### Wales

#### National Library of Wales/Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru – [www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=6](http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=6)

The website of the national library of Wales, which provides information about the huge collection of works, in both Welsh and English, about Wales and the other Celtic countries.

#### Welsh Assembly Government – [www.wales.gov.uk/subchildren/index.htm](http://www.wales.gov.uk/subchildren/index.htm)

Visit the children and young people pages.

#### CyMAL: Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales – [www.cymal.wales.gov.uk](http://www.cymal.wales.gov.uk)

A division of the Welsh Assembly Government; it provides advice and support to museums, libraries and archives in Wales.



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This Libraries Mini Guide is one of a series of free guides to setting up and running study support clubs in and around your school, including Engineering, History, Magazines and Museums. The Mini Guides can be downloaded from [www.continyou.org.uk/miniguides](http://www.continyou.org.uk/miniguides).