

Devon School Library Service News

Bowhill Community Primary School Library

'is a fantastic, attractive new library'
'a hundred times better than the library we used to have'



'I think it's very well organised and really good'

'It's really different and the carpet is nice'

'I think it's full of lots of books that are interesting and fun'

'I think it's better because it's got easier books which are better for the younger ones'



'I love it!'

With a little help from your friends

This brilliant library is what **Bowhill** achieved with **SLS help**. If your school library is ready for a make-over, get in touch with your local School Library Centre as the first step (contact details on the back page). **Working together we can really make a difference.**



Devon
School Library
Service


Autumn 2006

www.devon.gov.uk/school_library_service




Supporting Learning in Schools

When John Stocker Middle combined with Cowick First School to become **Bowhill Primary** they needed a new library. What happened could almost be a case study exemplifying the key points in the recent Ofsted report ***Good school libraries: making a difference to learning*** (pub.2006)

 **Leadership by supportive and knowledgeable headteachers and senior managers was the most important factor in improving provision.**

Headteacher **Bobby Sutton** provided the leadership and Year 4 teacher **Kath O'Hanlon** was the driving force behind this project. It was Mrs Sutton who decided to re-subscribe to the SLS Comprehensive Service and Mrs O'Hanlon who contacted SLS staff to help the school create a vibrant library to appeal to all age groups, encourage wider reading and be at the heart of the curriculum.

 **Schools Library Services provided good support for schools, including specialist audits and advice, additional resources, training and opportunities for networking.**

Devon SLS Library Advisers **Christine McFarlane** and **Jo Hyde** were able to offer advice, ideas, good practice and hands-on help. They worked with Mrs O'Hanlon on the school's vision for the library and together agreed an action plan to take things forward, then Jo set to work to design the best possible library that space (and the budget) would allow.

Christine ruthlessly weeded the stock, getting rid of out-of-date books in poor condition so that all the books in the new library would be relevant, current and enticing. These days books have to compete with so many other things for children's attention that they must be both attractive to look at and pleasant to handle.

Christine then conducted a stock audit to make sure all aspects of the curriculum were covered, with books to appeal to children of all ages and abilities. She used the new SLS deposit collection to plug any gaps in coverage so that when the library opened, the children encountered an attractive room filled with tempting books.



 **In effective schools ... librarians monitor and evaluate the library's impact and use.**

The school already had the *Junior Librarian* library management system and gave teaching assistant **Debbie Hoskin** time in the library to put all the new books onto the computerised database. Mrs Hoskin will also manage the library on a day-to-day basis, with the help of four parent volunteers in the library at school lunchtimes. Christine gave the parents basic library training, including how to operate the library computer.

 **The best libraries were ... created through imaginative use of space and resources.**

Before its transformation, the library was a dreary space full of old furniture, a dumping ground for stuff no-one knew what to do with. Jo Hyde, our expert library designer, used her planning skills to realise the school's vision of an attractive, welcoming and usable library. (See opposite for Jo's account of her part of the project).



When all the new furniture arrived, Christine and Debbie laid it out according to Jo's plan, with a mixture of new shelving and some of the school's existing shelving, and put the books back on the shelves.

SLS provided clear guiding and shelf labels, and posters and displays to enliven the area.

Telling them what they've got!
Christine McFarlane in class session



Pupil librarians were an essential part of the best library teams and contributed significantly to the success of the library. The library offered these pupils many opportunities for personal and social development.

The school advertised for pupil librarians and anyone interested applied in writing. Christine talked to Years 5 and 6 about the job of a librarian and encouraged them to apply. Applicants were interviewed by Mrs O'Hanlon and, once appointed, received training from SLS. The pupil librarians work at lunchtimes on a rota, alongside the adult volunteers.

Christine spent a day at school when each class came to the library to look around and have a brief introduction to what they would find on the shelves. The children were very enthusiastic and wanted to start borrowing books right away - brilliant!

Bowhill School Library is now open for business. As Mrs Sutton said: ***'Our new library is FANTASTIC! It is a lovely space to be in and the children are using it enthusiastically. Mrs O'Hanlon and Mrs Hoskin have worked incredibly hard along with Devon School Library Service to provide Bowhill Primary with a delightful and effective facility.'***



But the work's not finished yet...



Schools promoted reading and library use effectively ... to develop independent learning

Bowhill has a wonderful new library and can now prepare for the next stage of development. When the time is right, SLS can help to promote reading to all pupils in the school through ideas, book talks and staff inset, and can also work with teachers on integrating information skills into programmes of work, possibly using our *Where it's @* information pack.

Find out more about how Devon SLS can help your school by contacting your local School Library Centre (contact details on back page).

Designing Bowhill School Library by Jo Hyde, SLS Library Adviser

I visited the school and spent some time talking to Kath O'Hanlon and writing her "wish list" of what the new primary school library should look like. There was a lot of library-type furniture inherited from the "old" schools, some of which could be used to refurbish the new library. The school had a limited budget, so any design had to acknowledge that.

Armed with the wish list, furniture list, measurements of the room and ideas, I began to draft a plan. With a projected pupil roll number of 430, the school will need a library of about 5,500 books (HMI recommends 13 library books per pupil). Each classroom would hold about 100 books, so the library had to house about 4000 books. I would need a room with elastic walls to get pupils in as well!!

Kath and I had made the decision to divide the room into an area for study, with tables, chairs and non-fiction shelves, and a second area, snug and comfortable for browsing fiction, with room for a story rug. The library is rectangular in shape with windows along both sides, reducing the amount of shelving that could be put up without blocking the light. We used cubes from the infant school and existing tables and chairs to divide the room.

I drew a plan incorporating all the school's ideas, with a rough indication of costs. With brick walls (not plasterboard) it was possible to save some money using wall-mounted shelving. The school chose the colour of the shelving and ordered other items such as a tall kinderbox to hold the picture books for older readers, a paperback stand to show fiction titles face-on, and a reading rug for pupils to sit on while enjoying a story.

The partnership between Bowhill Primary School and Devon SLS has been a huge success. Our aim was to put a dream onto paper and then to see the reality of the design coming to fruition, resulting in a bright, attractive library where children want to be.

It's clear that the pupils are pleased with the transformation and very happy with their new library. For SLS it's another job well done. I really enjoy working with schools to change rooms into libraries and see visions become reality.

INSET from SLS

Making the most of it: good ideas for primary school libraries

Primary school staff new to running a school library should sign up for this popular half-day course. It will be offered on **23rd November at Great Moor House, Exeter**, and at **Barnstaple Library on 27th November**.

Back by popular demand, the amazing **Pauline Carr** will be demonstrating how to **Show off with Style!** on **May 10th 2007**. This instructive and entertaining event is always oversubscribed and places are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment. Venue to be confirmed.

Throughout the year, at a venue somewhere near you, after-school **Book Talks** with SLS staff. (see leaflet for details or check our website : www.devon.gov.uk/school_library_service and click on INSET)

Recommended websites

www.mrmen.com bright, attractive and fun - young children will love to explore this site.

www.meettheauthor.co.uk very addictive site with video clips of authors talking about their books.

Book reviews

Lyn Gardner

Into the woods

This jolly adventure is an exuberant romp through Storybook Land, full of cartoonish characters, outlandish events and LOTS of food, with the added bonus of Mini Grey's humorous line drawings scattered through the text. A good introduction to various versions of the Pied Piper, and a great opportunity to play 'spot the fairy tale'.

Suitable for KS2

Kes Grey and Nick Sharratt

006 and a bit

Anthony Horowitz and Charlie Higson may have invented cool James Bond-type heroes for the junior and teen fiction market, but Kes Grey brings us one cool spy called 006-and-a-bit (aka Daisy). This quality picture book is a great stimulus for imaginative play, with disguises, gadgets and spy codes galore.

for KS1

Mini Grey

The adventures of the dish and the spoon

In this wonderfully inventive take on the traditional nursery rhyme, Dish and Spoon are the Bonnie and Clyde of the culinary world! They set out to find fame and fortune in New York City and hit the big time, but blow their money on fast living and end up in jail. 25 years pass before they meet again and discover the old showbiz skills are still there. A very fast-moving picture book with limited text but teeming with stunning visual images. Read it with a Humphrey Bogart drawl for best effect and be prepared to shed a tear!

for KS2 and upward

Topic Boxes

Topic box, topic box, topics all the way.....

oh what fun it is trying to turn around **6,000** boxes of **93,700** books during the Christmas season. Don't forget to send in your topic requests for the January term, the earlier the better. Please **post, email, fax** or **phone** them to us by **December 1st** to give us a fighting chance of getting the new topics to you at the start of term.



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