



## **Lunchbox Evaluation Report 2015/16**



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## Summary of key findings

During the 2015/16 academic year 17 Oxfordshire schools and around 450 children took part in Lunchbox lunchtime book clubs.

61% were girls and 39% boys - exactly the same as 2014/15. The majority were in year 5 and year 6 and 91% spoke English at home.

The children read 37 titles between them and each school received up to 60 new books by the end of the year. Popular titles included:

- Pugs of the Frozen North by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre
- The Bolds to the Rescue by Julian Clary
- Electrigirl by Jo Cotterill
- The Imagination Box by Martyn Ford
- Mysteries of Ravenstorm Island: The Lost Children by Gillian Philip
- The 39 Storey Treehouse by Andy Griffiths

70% of the children who took part gave feedback.

- 92% of the children strongly agreed/agreed they enjoyed coming
- 91% **said** they would recommend it to a friend

88% of the schools 15/17 schools returned their feedback this year – a notable increase from last year when only 56% did.

100% of those schools that gave feedback would recommend Lunchbox to other schools.

Schools said they used Lunchbox to support reluctant readers. Although more girls took part than boys overall in Lunchbox, schools also say they use Lunchbox as a way of engaging boys specifically with reading. This is important to be aware of when planning the books and activities, and helpful for all schools to know that boys who take part, for the most part, really enjoy it.

The Club Leaders' creativity and flexibility was apparent through the range of activities they offered, the level of discussion the children had and fun the groups enjoyed. They each volunteered around 60+ hours of their time per school. They were praised by the school staff who greatly valued their work. Leaders said that balancing the needs of different abilities, communication with school staff and feeling part of the school were hard.

Over half the Lunchbox schools attended spin off events to meet authors face to face; including the extremely successful Bookfeast Festival 2016, plus a range of events which they arranged themselves.

Lunchbox clubs made a significant contribution to the Oxford Schools Improvement team's reading strategy: *Building an outstanding reading school: six strategies for making reading for pleasure work in your school.*

## 1. Introduction

Bookfeast is a charity dedicated to developing the habit of reading, in order to nourish minds and fire imaginations. Bookfeast creates projects and social experiences that encourage children and adults to enjoy and talk about books, and make the link between reading and writing.

Bookfeast's work with primary schools is all about making reading fun, and encouraging children to enjoy reading and to read more, which they do through an annual Schools Festival for schools, author and creative writing events and Lunchbox.

Following a successful pilot of Lunchbox in five Oxfordshire primary schools in 2009, Bookfeast has gone on to work year on year with Oxfordshire schools to run Lunchbox book clubs for years 4, 5 and 6 pupils.

The aim of Lunchbox for each child is

- to promote enjoyment of reading
- to encourage reading more
- to explore books beyond comfort zone
- to develop confidence in articulating their responses to books

An additional aim of the programme is

- to help schools to be "Book-Loving Schools"
- to help encourage their pupils to become life-long readers

In 2015/16 17 schools took part. Schools pay £570 per year for Lunchbox programme for which they receive up to 60 new books and 21 club sessions with a trained volunteer Club Leader at the school.

### **Oxfordshire terms**

This report uses the Oxfordshire six term system. In the Oxfordshire state funded school system there are six terms per academic year. The previous system had three terms - autumn, spring and summer – each old term is equivalent to two new terms.

## 2. Evaluation purpose and scope

The purpose of this evaluation is:

- to assess how well the Lunchbox programme met its aims in 2015/16;
- to record and synthesise the data from Lunchbox in 2015/16, so all those involved know what they achieved last year and who was involved;
- to learn and share what went well and what could have gone better.

### 3. Evaluation methodology and sources

The evidence evaluated in this report was gathered through:

- face to face interviews with the Bookfeast Director and Bookfeast Manager about the aspirations for Bookfeast, its successes, challenges and areas for development;
- information on the Bookfeast website <http://www.bookfeast.net/>;
- photos of the activities at the clubs;
- Bookfeast Manager’s annual report;
- Schools Festival 2016 summary report by the Bookfeast Manager;
- Previous independent evaluations of Lunchbox;
- Analysis of comprehensive reports and surveys from those involved as listed below.
  - Three end of cycle surveys, and the end of year annual survey from each of Lunchbox Club Leaders.
  - End of club survey from each child
  - Annual end of year survey from each school

The surveys by numbers of schools, pupils, teachers and club members who gave feedback via an evaluation survey during 2015/16 are given in table 1.

**Table 1: Surveys by number**

School taking part	Childrens’ feedback	Teacher feedback	Club Leader feedback
Dr South’s, Islip	22	1	1
Enstone Primary	7	1	1
Harwell Primary	26	1	3
Larkrise, Oxford	23	1	0
Madley Brook, Witney	27	1	3
North Kidlington	16	1	2
Orchard Meadow, Oxford *	6	1	0
Pegasus, Oxford *	13	1	2
St Aloysius, Oxford	20	1	0
St Barnabas, Oxford	26	1	1
St Christopher’s, Oxford	28	1	2
SS Mary and John, Oxford	25	1	2
St Michael’s, Steventon	24	1	3
Windale, Oxford*	7	1	0
Windmill, Oxford	16	1	0
Witney Community Primary	26	-	3
Wootton	8	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>320/450</b>	<b>15/17</b>	<b>24/51</b>

- These three schools comprise Blackbird Leys Academy Trust and have one teacher responsible for the Lunchbox Clubs. One return was made for the three schools.

#### 4. What we know about the impact of reading for pleasure

Bookfeast - with Michael Rosen as its patron, a leading campaigner and activist in creation of book loving schools - has an evidenced based approach to the benefits of children reading outside a classroom setting and reading for pleasure.

Evidence shows that pupils who can read are overwhelmingly more likely to succeed at school, achieve good qualifications, and subsequently enjoy a fulfilling and rewarding career (1). However, decoding is only part of the story, pupils need to develop speed and fluency to become mature readers and the Department of Education says, "The best way to do this is to instil a passion for reading", and that book clubs are an excellent way of encouraging pupils to read broadly and frequently. (2)

Reading for pleasure is important for both educational purposes and personal development (3). Adults who enjoy reading find it has positive impact on their wellbeing and resilience. However, research from the University of Liverpool in 2015 found that whilst 58% of people read regularly, 16m adults in the UK – almost a third of the UK adult population – are lapsed readers, who used to read but either rarely read now or don't read at all. Dr Josie Billington who did the research said: "Whilst the cumulative societal benefits of reading have been widely acknowledged, it's important also to recognise the gains to be had from reading on our personal health and wellbeing." (4)

The National Literacy Trust commissioned research into reading hard copy books as opposed to on screen reading. It found of the 35,000 young people aged between eight and 16 at 188 schools in the UK, on screen reading is on the increase but that they are almost twice less likely to be above-average readers than those who read regularly in print (5).

The notes and guidance for the statutory teaching of the National Curriculum encourages a wider reading of both fiction and non-fiction to establish a love of reading (6). In other words, teaching children to read words and be good at listening and comprehension is not enough – it is pleasure and passion for reading books developed in childhood which stays with young people though to adulthood.

## 5. Detailed findings

### 5.1. Schools who took part in Lunchbox in 2015/16

Bookfeast worked with 17 schools in 2015/16 to run Lunchbox clubs for Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils. This is about 5% of Oxfordshire’s maintained primary schools.

The schools were a mix of urban and rural schools from across Oxfordshire, with nine urban schools based in Oxford, two in the market town of Witney and five in villages across the County.

### 5.2. Pupils who took part in Lunchbox in 2015/16

In 2015/16, around 480 children signed up and an estimated 450 attended regularly over the year. Usually 8-10 children join per session so 24-30 children per year per school take part.

The children were asked to give the demographic data via an end of term survey **320 filled out a survey** (see Table 1). It is important to note that not every child who regularly attended filled out a survey.

The profile of those who joined was very similar to previous years, with more girls than boys attending, the vast majority speaking English at home and at school, and the two main year groups being years 5 and 6. See Table 2 for details.

**Table 2: Participant’s Profile, 2015-16**

	number	%
Girls	196	61%
Boys	124	39%
Year 4	26	8%
Year 5	158	49%
Year 6	136	43%
English speaking at home	290	91%
Non English speaking at home	30	9%

### 5.3. What happens in the clubs

The clubs have three cycles per year. They meet weekly during the lunch hour for 35 minutes for seven sessions over two terms. There are 21 sessions in an academic year.

Each club reads two books per cycle, i.e. one book per term. Each child who attends gets to read two books. At the end of the year the school keeps the six sets of up to 10 new books.

## Book Choosing

The first session of each cycle is (book choosing) where the Bookfeast Manager brings a picnic hamper described by her as 'food for the brain', and unloads her wares which are a choice of books for the children to look at, hold, talk about and respond to. The club members then choose two books they are going to read in the cycle by voting for them.

At this first session they meet the Club Leader and see who else is in the club. Children are introduced to the idea of being in a special reading club, e.g. by being given bookmarks with the Lunchbox logo on. The children are then given a target page to read to before the next session.

## Activities, discussions and scrapbooks

At subsequent sessions the children talk about the section of the book they have read, and then do a range of activities related to the book. Before they leave they are given the next target page to read to.

Each club keeps a scrapbook of all the bits and pieces children do in the activities around the books. These may be arty, crafty, word games, colouring, writing reviews, author interviews etc. Scrapbooks vary in content but reflect each club's output and individuality. Some schools display scrapbooks in the entrance hall or classroom.



*(Photograph: Pages from the Harwell School Lunchbox scrapbook)*

## 5.4. What the children said about the clubs

### Responses rate

Each child who took part in Lunchbox self-reported their experiences via a survey at the end of their club time. In total, 320 filled out a survey; it is important to note that not every child who regularly attended a club filled out a survey. Based on regular attendance the rate of return is 70%.

### Summary responses to questions 1-7

This year's survey was simplified in response to the evaluator's recommendations in 2014-5. The advantage of the individual surveys is that every child who takes part gets a chance to say how they felt about taking part. The majority of their responses are considered and appear to reflect their experiences.

The children were asked how much they agreed with the following seven statements on a scale of strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree. The results are in Table 3.

**Table 3: Summary of answers for questions 1-7**

Questions 1-7	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Not Sure (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	Total
1. I enjoy coming	210 (66)	85 (26)	19 (6)	2 (0.6)	2 (0.6)	320
2. I spend more time reading than before joining	102 (32)	85 (26)	90 (28)	35 (11)	8 (2.5)	320
3. Lunchbox gives me exciting ideas to talk about	135 (42)	101 (32)	73 (23)	10 (3)	1 (0.3)	320
4. I read a wider variety of books than before	105 (33)	94 (29)	88 (28)	30 (9)	3 (0.9)	320
5. Lunchbox has helped me talk about books	110 (34)	108 (34)	76 (24)	20 (6)	6 (1.8)	320
6. I would like to carry on	216 (66)	50 (16)	35 (11)	13 (4)	6 (1.8)	320
7. I would recommend the club to a friend	194 (61)	97 (30)	18 (6)	10 (3)	1 (0.3)	320

### Key messages

Most children greatly enjoyed coming, would like to come again and most would recommend Lunchbox to a friend.

- 92% (of whom 66 % strongly agreed) of the children said that they enjoyed coming
- 82% (of whom 66% strongly agreed) said they would like to continue coming to Lunchbox
- 91% strongly agreed/agreed they would recommend Lunchbox to a friend

Children were less clear whether Lunchbox had increased the amount of time and variety of books they read. Just over half the children thought it had, and just under half were unsure or disagreed.

- 58% strongly agreed/agreed they spent more time reading now than before joining Lunchbox. However, 41.5% of the children were not sure or disagreed
- 62% of the children strongly agreed/agreed that they read a wider variety of books since joining Lunchbox. 38% were not sure or disagreed

Around three quarters of the children think Lunchbox has helped them to have new ideas for books to read and things to write about and helped them talk about the books.

- 42% strongly agreed and a further 32% agreed that Lunchbox gave them new and exciting ideas for books to read and things to write about
- 34% of children strongly agreed and 34% agreed that Lunchbox has helped them talk about books



### Those who found it hard

There were a few children (5%) who self-reported they hadn't enjoyed coming. Club leaders and teachers also noted when a child was struggling to keep up with the reading or not enjoying the club for other reasons. When the school supported the Club Leaders and/or the child to come it was possible to rescue the situation e.g. two children received extra support by a Teaching Assistant outside the club and then both felt able to return. However, this was not always the case and occasionally children dropped out permanently.

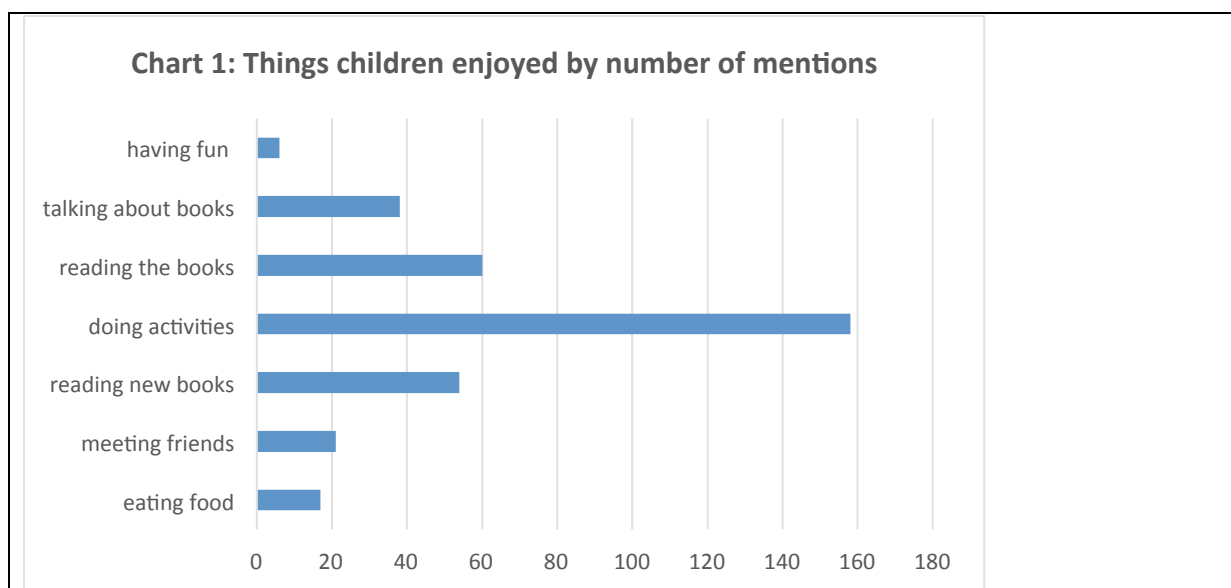
*"lunchbooks unfortunately gives to many pages to read." (Boy, year 5, Witney)*

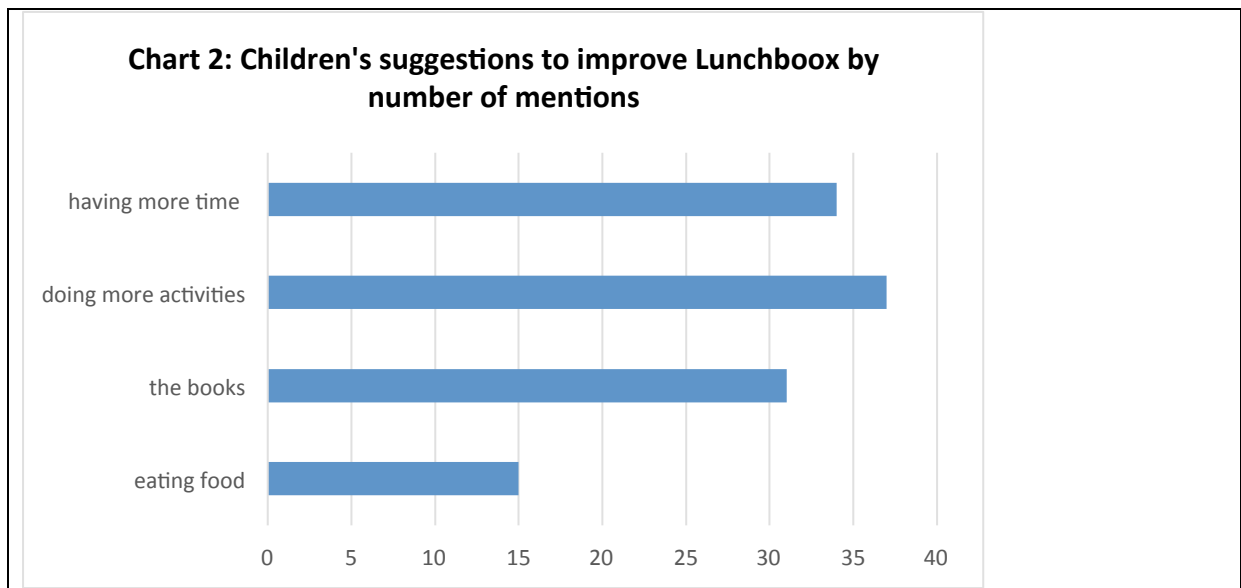
### What the children enjoyed

The children were asked to say in their own words what they enjoyed and to suggest improvements. The children made over 300 comments about what they enjoyed in the clubs which fell into six broad categories food, friends and being in a group, trying new books, doing the activities, enjoying reading as an activity and discussing the books. This is shown in Chart 1.

### Suggestions to make the club better

The children were asked to say in their own words what would make the club better. They made over 100 mentions which fell into four broad categories as shown in the table below.





**Doing activities:** The children overwhelmingly enjoyed the activities related to the books.



Their comments mostly referred to the ‘activities’ or ‘making things’. They included a variety of activities, and the drama, art, colouring, computer work, quizzes, word searches and games were given special mentions. The top suggestion to improve the clubs, unsurprisingly, was doing more activities and, within that, more drama. The children clearly want to do more of what they enjoy.

***“You get to draw and culler and lern about books.” (Girl, year 5, SS Mary and John)***

***“Try more fun and less coulering.” (Boy, year 6, St***

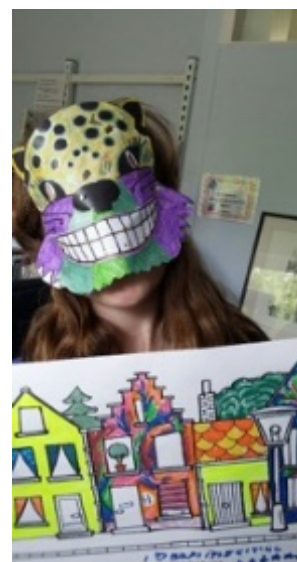
***Aloysius)***

*(Photographs: Harwell School: The Bolds (left) The Bolds to the Rescue (right) by Julian Clary)*

**Talking about the books:** The children said they enjoyed sharing opinions and discussing ideas about the book, and that they enjoyed listening to other children’s opinions and ideas. Some suggestions were to be allowed to keep the book, to read the books in lesson and one group actually gave the titles of books they would like to read.

***“I like that you can express yourself. “ (Girl, year 5, Madley Brook)***

***“The best thing about lunch books you get to descuse about the books and also everyone reads the same books.” (Girl, year 6, Larkrise)***



*“You get to bring books that you rekmend and you read a bit to show why.” (Girl, year 5, Windmill)*

**Trying new books:** The children referred to trying ‘different’, or ‘new’ books or different varieties.

*“Its realy exeting and it's got new things every week.” (Boy, year 4, Wootton)*

*“We can recommend books to read.” (Girl, year 6, SS Mary and John)*

*“I get to read different types of books and I now try to read things I'm not used to. “ (Girl year 6, St Michael’s)*

*“It gets me try books I would probably never read.” (Girl, year 6, St Michaels)*

**Reading the books:** The comments covered enjoying the act of reading but also the content and genre of the books. This was followed in decreasing frequency by choosing books/voting, reviewing books and taking books home. The suggestions from the children related to asking for specific books and they gave titles, or occasionally for specific genres.



*“It helps me to understand more than i used to and the books are amazing.” (Boy, year 5, Pegasus)*

*“I like the Books they give are interesting.” (Girl, year 5, SS Mary and John)*

*“The books were really good and it encouraged me to read.” (Boy, year 6, St Michael’s)*

*(Photograph right: Larkrise, Hamish and the Neverpeople by Danny Wallace.*

**Being with friends and being in a group:** A handful of children from across different schools mentioned that they like the group element of the club; not just being with their friends but operating as a group or community.

*“Reading the same books as my friends and being able to discuss sensibly.” (Girl, year 5, Windmill)*

*“It brings you together and you can share good opinion.” (Boy, year 6, Wootton)*

**Eating food:** A handful of clubs occasionally have edible treats which relate in some way to the stories e.g. Caramel Wafers are Tom’s favourite biscuit in the Tom Gates books, and chocolate in The Great Chocoplot. The children said they enjoyed this and in their suggestions asked for more.

*“We could serve snakcs that look like books.” (Girl, year 6, Larkrise)*

**Having fun:** Fun is often mentioned in conjunction with the activities and reading, but sometimes mentioned on its own.

*“I Enjoy Lunchboox because it helps you Enjoy reading in fun way.”(Boy, year 5, Harwell)*

*“You do very fun things not boring things like maths.” (Boy, year 5, Witney)*

**Having more time:** was a key suggestion which was from children who had given positive feedback of their experience, they wanted longer time at each session or more sessions.

*“MORE WEEKS!” (Girl, year 5, Harwell)*

*“A bit longer because then there is time for more books and fun.” (Boy, year 5, St Christopher’s)*

**Already great:** 20% of the child responded to the suggestions by saying they were already very happy with it and had no suggestions to make.

*“Its the best it can be right now! “ (Boy, year 6, St Christopher’s)*

*“No it brellent” (Girl, year 5, Pegasus)*

**Benefits of reading:** The vast majority, 91% of children, spoke English at home. 9% reported that they spoke another language at home.

Children who said they did not speak English at home said that Lunchboox had a positive impact on their reading.

*“It helps me to understand more than i used to and the books are amazing.” (Boy, year 5, Pegasus)*

*“It helps me when I first come.” (Boy, year 6, St Christopher’s)*

A small number of the children who do speak English at home also said their learning had benefitted.

*“It makes me a better reader.” (Girl, year 5, Windale)*

*“I discover different words.” (Boy, year 6, St Christopher’s)*

## 5.5. What the teachers said about the clubs

### Who is a member?

The decision about club membership rests with the school, and in 2014/5 Club Leaders reported that selection criteria was unknown to them. It appeared that sometimes the children chose to come, but sometimes they reported they were told to come. In the 2014/5 evaluation this lack of clarity was identified and given an action point which was to find out more about how each school is deciding who comes, as it was thought that it may schools are placing children in Lunchbox Clubs because these children need extra support, and Lunchbox enhances the children's experience of reading.

### Teacher's Annual Survey

In 2015/6 a new annual questionnaire for teachers was developed by the Bookfeast team per the recommendations in the 2014-15 evaluation report. The intention was to provide Bookfeast with robust information about how a school perceives the impact of Bookfeast. 15 questionnaires were returned from 17 schools which was a notable improvement from 56% to 88%.

All schools (bar one who missed the question) reported noticeable positive effects on the reading habits of participating children. A third said all the following effects were visible: that children were; reading more fluently, reading more frequently, chatting about the books they were reading, sharing Lunchbox books with other children and buzzing after a Lunchbox session.

*"The children are very enthusiastic about the books they have chosen and are reading. They enjoy sharing the activities and discussions centred on the texts. The reading bookmarks make targets clear so they know the pace at which they should read to get to the correct point for the next session."*

(Jane Eagle, English Subject Leader, Witney)

*"The children are enthusiastic about the activities which are organised by the Lunchbox group leader".*

(Ann Ling, Literacy Co-ordinator/Year 5/6 Class Teacher, North Kidlington)

*"Other children who have not been involved with Lunchbox have asked if they can be so the interest in the scheme is growing! Also, we have seen a fantastic improvement in one particular child who displayed disruptive behaviour during unstructured times on the playground since his involvement in indoor activities, including Lunchbox. He has reported loving Lunchbox."*

(Sam Coleman, English Co-ordinator, SS Mary & John)

## Key messages

- Schools were asked if they targeted children with lower reading abilities, boys and reluctant readers with Lunchbox – a third of schools targeted all of these, a third targeted boys, though not always exclusively, and the remaining third targeted reluctant readers and lower ability readers. One school pointed out that their reluctant readers were not those with lower abilities but those who needed encouragement.
- Schools were asked what they did with the 60 new books they gained during the year. In two schools the Lunchbox children got to keep them. In most schools the books were used as guided readers and class readers and/or donated to the library or classroom shelves to be used by other children.
- Six reported involvement with other Bookfeast activities on offer during the year – nearly 50%.
- 100% reported they thought that the £190 two termly fee was good value for money.
- 100% said they would recommend Bookfeast.
- 100% said they were satisfied with the administration, organisation and volunteering.
- 4/14 were unsure if they would renew – this was cited because of budgetary considerations in two cases, only one school said they would not renew.

The feedback from schools was not only overwhelmingly positive about Bookfeast's provision and staffing, but also for the content of Lunchbox sessions and the children's responses to them. The visible changes in behaviour as a response to the books were recognised by teaching staff, and parents too gave positive feedback. Schools use Lunchbox to support their reluctant and lower ability readers – 10/14 schools i.e. 70% use the clubs to encourage boys to read. This fact will influence the way Bookfeast develops its work as boys are a target audience, though not necessarily the majority of attendees.

*“Our Y6 boys were not keen to join at first but then decided en masse to join and - have really enjoyed the sessions! The different groups like sharing the books. It has helped children to recommend books to one another and to explain why they like them.”*

(Dawn Clements, Literacy Co-ordinator and Deputy Head, St Michael's)

## 5.6. What the Club Leaders said

### Role of the Club Leaders

The Club Leaders work as volunteers and their role is to prepare each session and lead it. The skills and commitment of the volunteers is paramount to the success of a Lunchbox

Club. The number of hours they give each year has not been measured, but is *at least* three hours for each session (travel, preparation and delivery) which would amount to around 60-70 hours per year per school.

The Manager reports,

*“We are delighted that the majority of our wonderful volunteers are continuing to support the project and are staying with their clubs.”*

(Bookfeast Manager’s report, Summer 2016)

Two informal gatherings for Club Leaders have been held during the year, in addition to an autumn training evening. These regular meetings are valued by volunteers as an opportunity to network, swap resources and ideas and to chat about any problems.

### **End of session evaluation**

The main source of data for this evaluation is the end of term Evaluations which Club Leaders complete three times a year at the end of each cycle. This is the record they keep of each session. During 2015-16 Club Leaders agreed to start recording the responses of the groups to each book and the activities after each session to give a fuller picture of what happened in the sessions for the evaluation.

However, the response rate to both has dropped to around 50% overall and five clubs made no returns. It maybe that having two forms is too onerous so it would be helpful to clarify the reason for this by speaking with leaders.

### **Creativity**

The Club Leaders recorded a plethora of creativity and an enormous amount of fun. Some highlights are listed below and all accomplished in half an hour.

*(Photograph: St Barnabas, Beetle Boy by MG Leonard)*

- drawing, colouring and collaging pugs
- making playdough aliens
- junk-model superheros
- making beetles from pine cones and sticks
- writing postcards to yourself
- writing spells and designing a gargoyle
- decorating and eating biscuits
- making wooden spoon puppets of characters in the story
- making ‘stop the world’ clocks
- a literary treasure hunt around the school



*Session 1 “ A quick quiz – oral response, mixture of funny and serious, literal and inferential questions to get the children talking about the book .The children felt the book was intriguing – they found it quite sad at this point and we were all slightly puzzled by the comments on the blurb about it being funny! They made salt-dough models of Perijee-type aliens which I took home to bake in the oven.” (CL, Madley Brook)*



*(Photograph: St Barnabas, Perijee and Me by Ross Montgomery)*

These activities are greatly valued and enjoyed by the children as cited in their surveys. The leaders also reported the spontaneous work produced by the children in the clubs and how they were delighted to show the Leader and other club members, e.g. one boy in the year 5 Witney wrote a murder mystery play which the Club Leader read out and the children

acted out in the last session. Another group at SS Mary and John secretly produced a Big Book of Little Poems for the Leader based on all the books they had read that term.

### **Discussion**

Club Leaders report that the popularity of the activities can sometimes be a barrier to generating a more in depth discussion relating to the book and there is a risk that the activities take over. However the quality of discussion around the books was noted by many leaders and included subjects such as children’s rights, parenting skills and rules, the impact of technology on our lives, the meaning of body language.

*“We had a good discussion on how they thought the ending of the book could have been better and how they would end the story. They were honest and wrote their favourite bits from the book. The children picked out characters from the hat and had to act out this character to other students. They had a lot of fun doing this”. (CL, North Kidlington)*

One of the highlights was the club at St Christopher’s who all wrote postcards to Dave Cousins. Their postcards were put up on the author’s website and they each got a response from him with a drawing. The leader reported that receiving a response from the author was the source of real excitement and delight for the children. This is an excellent example of the way Bookfeast is able to connect children with the writers and vice versa.

### **Challenges**

Leaders reported a major challenge is that groups have a range of abilities and usually they don’t know who they will get in a group and their abilities before they meet the children. In one school a child read 30 pages by the end of term which was a huge achievement for her, whilst another child in the same club had read the same book three times over.



Getting the book right for the group when there are faster readers and slow ones in same groups is hard, so occasionally slow readers decide not to stay or aren't able to finish the books. Four boys in one group decided not to return half way through the sessions.

The keen readers do sometimes race ahead which makes the discussion of the plot or ending tricky. However, they do get the chance to go to the Lunchbox library box which offers extra books to supplement the club reading book. This had been used in several schools with the children enjoying being book monitors for it.

Minor issues include the children losing and forgetting books as they need to remember them each week.

Some leaders do feel well supported in their school, but a significant minority do not always know if they are valued by school because of limited and or no communication/contact with teachers.

This feeling of isolation is sometimes exacerbated by clashes with other school activities, e.g. cycling proficiency, forest school or trips, leading to cancelled sessions at short notice which can be hard for leaders who need to keep their children motivated. Plus the issue of other lunchtime 'pulls' especially for the boys e.g. football, which can result in some erratic attendance of the clubs.

Occasionally finding a suitable space in the school is hard – when space is at a premium one leader hadn't enough table space for the activities and this was also mentioned by a pupil in the feedback.

### **Praise for the leaders from children and teachers**

The children specifically praised the Club Leader in at least three schools. In one school the children remembered it was a leader's birthday and made her a card and hid around the library jumping out to surprise her and sing happy birthday.

In one school a teacher came and sat in on the club and made positive suggestions about how to improve the club. In the school where some boys dropped out the leader spoke with the head teacher to work out how the school could support them to return with some success.

In another school the Headteacher used the Lunchbox scrapbook around the school to show children in a variety of settings and then gave the whole of the Lunchbox Club the weekly, Headteacher's Award in assembly.

One school had a Lunchbox stall run by club members at its Autumn Fayre and the children were heavily involved in setting up and running the stall, supported by parents and teachers.

*“The stall at the Autumn Fayre was so well manned by LB students who were really so proactive in setting up activities (guess the number of pages, collaborative story writing, book quizzes for different ages with over 50 second hand books being donated as prizes (4 students got together and organised this – they even put a note in the school newsletter asking for donations). (CL, Windmill)*

The clear message from feedback is that the children and staff do value the Club Leaders and this is sometimes directly expressed, but a majority of the time in a busy school environment unexpressed weekly but reported at the end of the year. Additional evidence is that schools do renew their subscriptions and those who were unsure made it clear in their feedback that this was a financial decision and did not reflect negatively on the Club Leader.

### **5.7. The books**

A total of 37 different titles were read over the course of the year by the clubs, most of these being newly published fiction titles. Top books in terms of popularity and scope for a wealth of related club activities included:

- Pugs of the Frozen North by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre
- The Bolds to the Rescue by Julian Clary
- Electrigirl by Jo Cotterill
- The Imagination Box by Martyn Ford
- Mysteries of Ravenstorm Island: The Lost Children by Gillian Philip
- The 39 Storey Treehouse by Andy Griffiths

The occasional classic was sneaked into the hamper selection, and interestingly one Club Leader reported that Mrs Doubtfire by Anne Fine was a runaway success.

#### **Terms 1 & 2**

Araminta Spook: Skeleton Island by Angie Sage

Charlie Merrick’s Misfits: I’m a Nobody Get Me Out of Here! by Dave Cousins

Chicken Mission: The Curse of Fogsham Farm by Jennifer Gray

Demolition Dad by Phil Earle

Stinkbomb and Ketchup-Face and the Bees of Stupidity by John Dougherty

The 39 Storey Treehouse by Andy Griffiths

The Imagination Box by Martyn Ford

The Marsh Road Mysteries: Crowns and Codebreakers by Elen Caldecott

The Parent Agency by David Baddiel

Witch Switch by Sibeal Pounder

#### **Terms 3 & 4**

Barry Loser and the Case of the Crumpled Carton by Jim Smith

Demolition Dad by Phil Earle  
Future Ratboy by Jim Smith  
Hamish and the Worldstoppers by Danny Wallace



Marsh Road Mysteries: Spooks and Scooters by Elen Caldecott  
Mr Baboomski and the Wonder Goat by Richard Joyce  
Mrs Doubtfire by Anne Fine  
Mysteries of Ravenstorm Island: The Lost Children by Gillian Philip

Pugs of the Frozen North by Sarah McIntyre and Philip Reeve  
*(Photograph: Harwell School, Mr Baboomski and the Wonder Goat by Richard Joyce)*

Puppy Academy: Star on Stormy Mountain by Gill Lewis  
Stop Those Monsters by Steve Cole  
The Bolds by Julian Clary  
Wilf the Mighty Worrier by Georgia Pritchett

### Terms 5 & 6

Beetle Boy by MG Leonard  
Broccoli Boy by Frank Cottrell Boyce  
Creature Teacher Goes Wild by Sam Watkins  
Electrigril by Jo Cotterill  
Elsbeth Hart: School for Show Offs by Sarah Forbes  
Hamish and the Never People by Danny Wallace  
Harper and the Scarlet Umbrella by Cerrie Burnell  
Long Arm v the Evil Supply Teacher by Sam & Mark  
Ottoline Goes to School by Chris Riddell  
Perijee and Me by Ross Montgomery



*(Photograph: St Christopher's, Electrigril by Jo Cottrill)*

Pugs of the Frozen North by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre  
Stitch Head: The Monster Hunter by Guy Bass  
The Bolds by Julian Clary  
The Bolds to the Rescue by Julian Clary  
The Nowhere Emporium by Ross Mackenzie



The Person Controller by David Baddiel

(Photograph: Harwell School, *Pugs of the Frozen North* by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre)

## 6. Bookfeast Festival and other author events

The Bookfeast Schools Festival is a very well established annual event in Oxfordshire. Lunchbox schools are strongly encouraged to attend the Festival and 7/17 did, and met a range of authors. It is not within the scope of this report to comment further. A summary report from the Manager is available on request.

In May 2016 1800 pupils from 22 Oxfordshire primary schools attended. Authors taking part included: Atinuke, Sarah Courtauld, Julia Golding, Adam and Charlotte Guillain, A.F. Harrold, Cas Lester, Gill Lewis, M.G. Leonard, Christopher Lloyd, Lauren St John, Robin Stevens, Sean Taylor, Sam Watkins, Marcia Williams and Katherine Woodfine.

In addition, to extend the reach of the Bookfeast Festival, arts organisation *Flash of Splendour* delivered five unique Shakespeare workshops for children in Years 5-6 at schools around the county. Around 400 children also took part in additional and enriching experiences after their author sessions – a creative writing trail (Pitt Rivers) and tours of two exhibitions: Animal (Story Museum) and Shakespeare's Dead (Weston Library). A handful of Lunchbox schools took part in these events.

Pegasus School hosted a big event with popular Lunchbox author Elen Caldecott in February, and all three Blackbird Leys Academy (and Lunchbox) primaries attended this.

In term 5 North Kidlington Primary Lunchbox club children were lucky enough to attend a session at another local school with Jo Cotterill whose book, *Electrigril*, they were currently reading.

Through Bookfeast, Harwell and Pegasus schools will both be hosting special events with Jo Cotterill in October 2016, a great follow-on bonus for the Year 5 children who have been reading Jo's book during terms 5 and 6 of 2016.

No formal feedback from the Lunchbox children was gathered at these additional events but the Director and Manager reported that staff and children who attended gave some very positive feedback, further evidenced by the photos on the Bookfeast website <http://www.bookfeast.net/>. It would be reasonable to assume that this included the children and teachers who have been part of making Lunchbox happen.

## 7. How Lunchbox helps to make a book-loving or outstanding reading school

The concept of a book-loving school has been articulated by Michael Rosen and he has developed a 20-point plan to help schools to do this. He shares ideas and activities to help

make school a place where everyone reads and talks about reading and the profile of books and reading is high. He also sets out key questions for schools to evaluate how book-loving they are. Last year's evaluation measured Lunchbox against these 20 questions and found it had made a significant contribution.

A current report by the Oxford School Improvement team keys more explicit support to schools: *Building an outstanding reading school: six strategies for making reading for pleasure work in your school*, is by James Clements, an English adviser who is supporting schools and local authorities to develop the teaching of reading, writing and drama. He is the creative director of Shakespeare and More, a not-for-profit organisation that promotes effective English teaching. The report is available at [www.oxfordprimary.co.uk](http://www.oxfordprimary.co.uk).

The six strategies are:

1. Supporting staff
2. Teaching the reading curriculum
3. Engaging parents
4. Developing the reading environment
5. Targeting resources
6. Celebrating reading

Lunchbox clubs are a key part of building an outstanding reading school, contributing in particular to strategies 3, 4, 5 and 6. This is clear from the schools' own feedback, and that of the Club Leaders and children. Specific examples are:

- The clubs supported 480 children – in 17 schools
- The clubs introduced the children to 37 new titles
- Bookfeast Schools Festival 2016 was attended by 7/17 Lunchbox schools where children met authors and listened to them presenting their work
- The children took part in a range of fun and stimulating discussions and activities to explore the themes in the books and their responses to them
- Lunchbox noticeboards in schools displaying children's activities responses to the books
- Assemblies by the children talking about the books in schools
- Displays about the books in corridors to share with other children
- Schools setting up mentoring schemes for Lunchbox alumni to encourage the next cohort
- Children to read their Lunchbox books in class
- The 60 new Lunchbox books are put in a library and classrooms and they are used as readers in the classroom
- Children talk about their Lunchbox experiences positively to teachers, other children and parents.

## **8. Conclusions**

This evaluation has looked at the responses and experiences of the children, Club Leaders, and school staff who made Lunchbox happen during 2015/16.

Most children who came very much enjoyed coming to Lunchbox, they would like to come back and would recommend it to a friend. They especially liked the reading and getting new books to try and the activities. The social nature of the clubs and the edible treats made it fun and they enjoyed talking about the books.

Schools used the 60 new Lunchbox books in various ways – as guided read sets, for class bookshelves and in the library so that other children could benefit from an influx of interesting new reading matter.

Club Leaders signed up to volunteer again and they coped well with mixed ability groups and the occasional sudden cancellation of a session. All Club Leaders produced inspiring book-related activities week after week.

Schools used Lunchbox to target boys and reluctant readers. They valued the work of the Club Leaders and ensured the books they received were made available throughout the school. They would recommend Lunchbox to other schools.

The children made helpful suggestions on how to improve next year. These comments strongly reflected what they already enjoyed: activities and food for example.

Club Leaders do not always feel valued and part of the school community. The schools reported 100% satisfaction with the running and administration of the clubs and often praised the Club Leaders, so it is really important that Leaders are given this feedback regularly by the Project Manager.

In 2015-16 Lunchbox gave around 450 children in Oxfordshire the chance to read great books, to talk about them, to explore them through a range of creative activities. They had fun outside the classroom - 30 hours of contact time from a trained Club Leader. Lunchbox enriched the curriculum and actively helped give the children who attended opportunities to read for pleasure thus making a positive and measurable contribution to the Oxford School Improvement team, *Building an outstanding reading school: six strategies for making reading for pleasure work in your school*.

***“I like lunchbox because its a better reason for Mondays.” (Boy, year 6, St Christopher’s)***



*(Photograph: Pugs of the Frozen North by Philip Reeve and Sarah McIntyre)*

## References

- (1) OECD 2002 and NLT – Literacy Changes Lives: An Advocacy resource, Dugdale and Clark (Sept 2008)
- (2) Department of Education Report 2015: Reading: the next steps supporting higher standards in schools
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## Acknowledgements

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Bookfeast was founded in June 2010 by Angie Prysor-Jones. Bookfeast is committed to diversity and encouraging people to want to read more. It works with people of all ages in a wide variety of ways and has set up *Lunchboox* book clubs for Primary School children, *TeaBooks* book groups for older people, alongside a Schools Festival and other community events.

For more information about this evaluation or about Bookfeast

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