



BOOK CLUBS
IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

For the period from 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023

Charity name: Book Clubs in Schools
Charity registration number: 1185409
Charity's principal address: 37 Southdean Gardens, London, SW19 6NT

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Book Clubs in Schools (BCiS) was established to advance the education of children and young people in the UK for the public benefit, giving priority to those pupils who are affected by social and economic disadvantage, by the encouragement of reading and the promotion of literacy skills through the provision of book clubs and related literacy activities.

BCiS began as a Community Interest Company in March 2014 and became a charity (CIO) in September 2019. The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Book Clubs in Schools (BCiS) supports reading in schools by providing resources for schools to run peer led book clubs. We believe passionately that reading can be a powerful driver of social change and open up opportunities for young people.

We promote reading for pleasure because there is strong evidence that young people who enjoy reading the most perform significantly better in academic assessments than those who enjoy reading the least (Clark and Douglas, 2011). Being a fluent and confident reader enables pupils to access the curriculum across all subjects, extends their vocabulary and supports their attainment. (Cremin, 2020). The impact of reading regularly can be a more significant factor in children's educational success than the effect of their family's socio-economic status (OECD, 2002).

Reading for pleasure is also important for young people's wider wellbeing and knowledge with 55.4%; reading for pleasure to relax; 53.5% to learn about new things and 41% to feel happy (NLT, 2022).

Using book clubs to support reading for pleasure, provides an informal and social environment that strengthens pupils' engagement in reading and develops their discussion skills. By encouraging young people to read for pleasure and discuss their thoughts on a book, BCiS helps them practise critical thinking, build interpersonal skills, and develop their confidence as a reader. Pupils are also able to access volunteering opportunities by becoming a book club leader and develop facilitation and leadership

skills, particularly for those who are at a socio-economic disadvantage. BCiS prioritises schools where over 40% of pupils are eligible for pupil premium support.

All our programmes are designed to be flexible because individual schools have very different needs and structures. For example, our programme can be run across an entire year group or it can be used for targeted intervention to support reading for specific groups.

Our peer led approach is central to our core programmes – it enables the book clubs to foster a more informal engagement in the texts which emphasises reading for pleasure and making connections with books and is more likely to engage reluctant and less confident readers. It also develops discussion skills and the confidence and skills of the book club leaders.

We also work hard to ensure that all pupils can see themselves in the books we use and therefore have a diverse selection of books.

Our main areas of activity are:

Main Programme

Our core programme is delivered in secondary schools and trains older pupils (Y10-12) to lead book clubs for younger pupils (Y6-8) and provides them with week by week guides for the chosen book. Each Book Club meets weekly over a term and all the members read the same book, with pages allocated each week. We have a curated book list that caters for all levels of reading ability and provides a wide range of diverse books. Where we can secure additional funding we also bring in author visits.

This supports schools to develop their reading for pleasure culture and provides a very adaptable model that can be delivered easily without significant staff time requirements. We support more disadvantaged schools to purchase the necessary books.

PRUs and Alternative Provision

Our extended provision in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) is for pupils who have been excluded either temporarily or permanently from mainstream schools due to their behaviour and their inability to engage with learning. These combine a book club approach with active, hands-on and creative activities.

These pupils often do not consider themselves readers and have reading levels well below those expected for their age. We focus on age appropriate but accessible books and support the PRU is exploring the books in a format that encourages engagement even from very reluctant readers.

Summer Book Club

Summer Book Club is aimed at Year 6s as they move into secondary school and involves them all reading the same book over the summer holidays. We provide all the materials for schools to introduce the book, an activity pack for the holidays, follow up activities and a live online author talk. We also work with the publisher to give schools access to discounted copies of the book.

This is key point where pupils experience changes both academically and socially. Making sure reading is a highlight of secondary transition helps establish its importance from the

moment pupils start their new school. It helps build their confidence as readers and means that when they start their new school, they will all have something in common.

Wider Literacy Activities

We also promote reading more widely through author talks, visits and events, and support for initiatives such as the Diverse Book Awards.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Main Programme



Since BCiS started in 2014 as a Community Interest Company, over 18,000 pupils have participated in Book Clubs in Schools from over 75 schools. In 2022-23 we have continued to expand the number of schools involved in the programme and we now run our book clubs across the country with concentrations in London, the South Coast, the West Midlands, North East and North West.

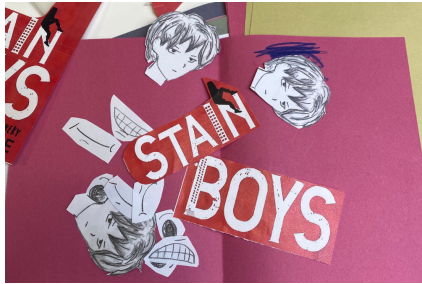
In 2022-23 we continued to invest in our website which our schools use to access all materials and training required to run the programme including project plans, training manuals, curated book list and weekly question and activity guides, and letters to send to parents and the young people. We added additional resources to promote the clubs within schools and recordings of author talks we have supported.

We also reviewed our book list and created clearer categories for different reading abilities and updated the number and range of books available. We strengthened the materials available for students to support making choices about which books to read. Keeping the list fresh and updated is important for maintaining pupil engagement and interest.

Our most recent survey results of participants indicate that out of the pupils who participate in the programme, 73% enjoyed taking part in book club, 66% feel very or quite confident talking in a group (an increase of 9%). 81% of book club leaders observe that pupils taking part are more confident reading and teachers report that the clubs build the confidence of reluctant and less assured readers. Amongst the Book Club Leaders, 100% enjoyed supporting younger pupils, 88% reported learning new skills and 97% felt it was a good way to share their enthusiasm for reading.

We also completed the first year of evaluation working with the Open University to research the programme. This has established a baseline to work from and areas for further research to understand the impact of the programme and ways in which it can be developed further.

PRUs and Alternative Provision



This is a more resource intensive programme than our main programme and relies heavily on grant funding. We are now working with five PRUs and offering a Book Club+ model which alongside the book club links to a creative activity such as animation, photography or author workshop to show how books can be a way into other creative activities.

There are very few reading for pleasure interventions aimed at PRUs and alternative provisions and this programme is filling a gap. Most of these pupils are reluctant readers and strengthening their engagement with books and confidence to talk about what they have read are important skills and support their wider academic success. Next year we aim to collect more formal data about reading levels before and after participation in the programme.

Summer Book Club



The 2023 Summer Book Club used *The Chime Seekers* by Ross Montgomery. Schools were able to access materials for their transition days, an activity pack for pupils to use over the summer, additional resources for teachers and follow up activities to do in

the September term. There was a live Q&A for pupils to join in with at their new secondary schools in September. We worked with Walker Books who provided discounted print copies at half-price and e-books for 99p. Over 220 schools signed up to take part with over 10,000 pupils taking part.

We had very strong feedback from schools about how it made reading a highlight of transition activities and stressed its importance from the start of secondary school.

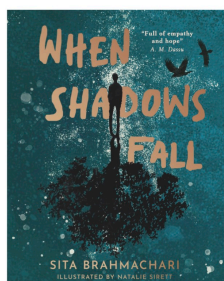
New Initiatives



In the summer term of 2023, we piloted a Picture Book Club a peer led book club format for primary schools and involves Y5/6s leading small book clubs for Y1/2s. The pilot involved 5 schools using curated book boxes with training materials and a set of resources including activity booklets for the younger pupils to complete, stickers and bookmarks. Year 5/6 read aloud to Year 1/2 and talk about the

books both gain in confidence and have fun. The feedback was excellent, and we are rolling this out to any school to use from September 2023.

Wider Literacy Activities



WHEN SHADOWS FALL

Book Club with Author and Illustrator Workshop Y10/12

Book Clubs in Schools are excited to invite **Lewisham Secondary Schools** to explore Sita Brahmachari's book *When Shadows Fall*. Schools will have access to resources to discuss the book with related activities. This will link to a **full day workshop on 28 March 2023** at the Migration Museum in Lewisham.

We were involved in a wide range of other literacy activities designed to promote reading for pleasure in schools. While these are mainly aimed at schools that we are already working with, we also try to engage a wider range of schools too. Activities this year included:

- A term long project with 2 schools in Lewisham exploring a book and its illustrations that culminated in a full day workshop in the Migration Museum with the author, illustrator and a musician.
- Support for author events at Brixton Library.
- Interviews with authors shared as online events with teachers and librarians, including with the Carnegie prize winner.
- Monthly 'secondary book chats' with teachers, librarians and authors online
- A regular newsletter including 'what to read' recommendations for teachers to use in schools

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The funding model for BCiS is based on grants from different funders, often philanthropic organisations, which has allowed the charity to expand its outreach and to support more deprived schools purchase the books required for the book clubs. BCiS also charges schools a small fee to utilise the book club model as this secures commitment from the schools and as we scale, reduces the reliance on grant funding.

In the year ended 31 August 2023 the charity had retained reserves of £2,544 as compared to £8,436 in the prior year. The reduction in retained reserves was driven by additional costs being incurred to drive the charity forward, in particular these costs were in relation to fundraising and programme planning which resulted in a retained deficit of £5,892 in the year ended 31 August 2023 (Year ended 31 August 2022: surplus £4,749).

Despite the reduction in reserves BCiS remains a going concern as it has sufficient cash to manage future operations and the Charity has received a number of significant grants during the year ended 31 August 2023 which will fund projects in the year ending 31 August 2024. Cash held at 31 August 2023 amounted to £23,721 which is an increase as to that held on 31 August 2022 of £21,924.

Fundraising continues to be challenging however BCiS is winning grants from different sources and also additional schools from across the country are enrolling in the programme therefore enhancing the outreach and sustainability of the Charity.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The charity is a CIO with a constitution.

The Board of Trustees was selected to ensure a wide range of skills were included such as marketing, finance, experience of running a charity, fundraising and impact measurement as well as diversity in terms of gender and ethnicity.

Trustees are recruited on the basis of skills gaps in the board and new appointments must be agreed by the existing Trustees. Trustees serve for a period of 3 years. Any person retiring as a charity trustee is eligible for reappointment. A trustee who has served for two consecutive terms may not be reappointed for a third consecutive term but may be reappointed after an interval of at least one year.

The Trustees meet on at least a quarterly basis and review all activities and finances.

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Name	Office	Dates if not the whole year
Catherine Whelan	Chair	resigned In November 2023
Victoria Gray		
Alison Lambert	Treasurer	
Richard Parkin		
Tony Smith		
Beth Ginsburg		appointed Chair in February 2024

Alison Palmer and Katy Donnelly are the directors who manage the charity on a day to day basis.

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees’ report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity’s trustees

Signature(s)

<i>Beth A. Ginsburg</i>	<i>Alison Lambert</i>
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Beth Ginsburg	Alison Lambert
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Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)

Chair	Treasurer
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Date

29 January 2024

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Book Clubs in Schools, Charity number 1185409.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Book Clubs in Schools (the Charity) for the year ending 31 August 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act')

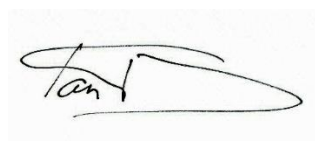
I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act: or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. The accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning of the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Ian Tackley
Fellow of Chartered Association of Certified Accountants
34 Southdean Gardens
London SW19 6NU

30th January 2024

Company Number: CE018909

BOOK CLUBS IN SCHOOLS
Charity Number 1185409
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 AUGUST 2023

BOOK CLUBS IN SCHOOLS

Income And Expenditure Account For the Year Ended 31 August 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Income	54,890	59,218
Cost of Sales	(58,867)	(51,498)
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Gross (Loss) / Profit	(3,977)	7,720
Less: Administrative Expenses	(2,021)	(2,971)
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(Deficit)/Surplus on ordinary activities before interest and other income	(5,998)	4,749
Interest Receivable	106	-
Less: Interest Payable	-	-
(Deficit)/Surplus on ordinary activities before tax	(5,892)	4,749
Tax	-	-
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(Deficit)/Surplus on ordinary activities after tax	(5,892)	4,749
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BOOK CLUBS IN SCHOOLS

Balance Sheet As At 31 August 2023

	Notes	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
Current Assets					
Debtors	2	83		27	
Cash at Bank and in hand		<u>23,721</u>		<u>21,924</u>	
		23,804		21,951	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year					
	3	<u>(21,260)</u>		<u>(13,515)</u>	
Net Current assets / (liabilities)			2,544		8,436
Reserves					
Retained Reserves			<u>2,544</u>		<u>8,436</u>
			<u>2,544</u>		<u>8,436</u>

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions and have been delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

For the financial year ending 31st August 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006. No member of the company has deposited a notice, pursuant to section 476, requiring an audit of these financial statements under the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial period is in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to accounts, so far as applicable to the company.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 29 January 2024 and signed on its behalf.



TRUSTEE



TRUSTEE

The notes on page 4 form part of these financial statements.

BOOK CLUBS IN SCHOOLS

Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 August 2023

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements are prepared on the historical cost basis of accounting and are prepared in accordance with the applicable Accounting Standards.

3. Debtors : amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2021 £
Other Debtors	-	27
Social Security and other taxes	83	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	83	27
	<hr/>	<hr/>

2. Creditors : amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2021 £
Trade Creditors	210	2,215
Amounts received in advance	21,050	11,300
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	21,260	13,515
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