



REPORTING ON
THE STORY-GO-ROUND PILOT PROJECT



Under the auspices of the Story-Go-Round Pilot Project, over **250 school-age children** participated in **42 sessions**, held at **19 host venues**, with **58 library staff** trained.

BACKGROUND

Bag Books exists to help enrich the lives and support the learning of children, teenagers and adults with profound intellectual and physical difficulties.

To achieve this, we provide specialist educational resources (called multi-sensory story-packs) and offer training to carers and educators of those living with severe learning disabilities (SLD – a developmental age of up to six years in adults) or profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD – developmentally aged below 18 months). We also provide storytelling sessions for children, young people and occasionally adults.

We see a world where everyone – irrespective of their differing abilities – can enjoy the learning, communication and simple fun of a story.

This document measures our work against the set Goals, Aims and Objectives and notes both successes and challenges; finally, conclusions are drawn.

SCOPE

This Pilot Project took place in January 2007; it was originally intended to target **Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk**, working in partnership with the respective county library services.

GOAL SET

To facilitate local libraries in offering an **ongoing, independent multi-sensory storytelling service** for school-age children with intellectual impairments in their community.

AIMS SET

1. To **exemplify** multi-sensory storytelling by providing a session of fun and learning for children with special needs in their local community libraries.
2. To **enable** local library staff to continue providing regular multi-sensory storytelling to these local children and their families, by training them to use story-packs.
3. To **encourage** these libraries to continue providing multi-sensory storytelling as a service to their local community, by providing story-packs for each host library.
4. To **continuously test methods** to achieve this, and apply them in continuing to develop the project, helping children all over the UK.

OBJECTIVES SET

The Pilot Project's staged objectives were structured to meet its aims.

1. To **exemplify** multi-sensory storytelling by providing a session of fun and learning for children with special needs in their local community libraries, by
 - a) *producing a brief leaflet*, outlining the people and process involved;
 - b) *contacting libraries* in Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, offering the Tour to come to their library, without charge;
 - c) *recruiting a professional storyteller*, and *background checking him/her* (including CRB), in line with our Child Protection procedures;
 - d) *training the storyteller* in how to deliver multi-sensory stories, how to handle children with additional needs safely, and how to give the children the most stimulating and rewarding experience possible;
 - e) *providing ongoing support and monitoring to the storyteller*, during the Tour, including site-visits and daily telephone support;
 - f) *gathering and collating feedback* from the storyteller and participants;
 - g) *working closely with the Persula Foundation*, who have experience of delivering successful storytelling to other beneficiary groups; and
 - h) *demonstrating accessible storytelling* to those parents, carers, special school staff and librarians attending the storytelling sessions with the children
2. To **enable** local library staff to continue providing regular multi-sensory storytelling to these local children and their families, by training them to use story-packs, by
 - a) *providing training for librarians*, on the day or at their earliest convenience, in how to safely, effectively and confidently tell multi-sensory stories; and
 - b) *devising a take-home leaflet for children's families*, outlining how multi-sensory storytelling works in the context of local libraries;
3. To **encourage** these libraries to continue providing multi-sensory storytelling as a service to their local community, by providing story-packs for each host library by
 - a) *giving two story-packs for each library's use*, from those told on the day (so, producing an additional 40 story-packs over the course of the Pilot Project);
 - b) *offering the incentive of another story-pack*, if multi-sensory storytelling is still continuing two months after the initial session; and
 - c) *providing telephone/e-mail support* or additional training if necessary.
4. To **continuously test methods** to achieve this, and apply them in continuing to develop the project, helping children all over the UK, by
 - a) *reporting on the Pilot Project* by the end of April 2007, identifying which elements of the work succeeded and ways to eliminate or minimise those which did not;
 - b) *determining the best methodology* for implementing, managing and reporting on a programme of multi-sensory storytelling and training in libraries;
 - c) *devising a suitable project* which carries on these methods nationally, including identifying the number of children likely to benefit;
 - d) *organising future Storytelling Tours* on the basis of this new project in the following year, aiming to reach ambitious but achievable numbers of children;
 - e) *continuing the work*, for as long as it brings joy and learning into the lives of children with profound disabilities.

ACHIEVEMENT

The achievement of the stated Aims and Objectives are assessed individually below.

Aim 1 – To **exemplify** multi-sensory storytelling by providing a session of fun and learning for children with special needs in their local community libraries/

Even though we had initially hoped that all central library services would be able to arrange the sessions, for some this was not practical in reality: they were too busy with existing work to engage deeply with the Pilot Project. Notably, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk were exceptionally proactive in delivering the Project.

Conclusion: Bag Books will need to offer a “full service” Project, providing all the booking and organising for the Tours, whilst still encouraging full involvement at all levels.

1.a) *producing a brief leaflet*, outlining the people and process involved

As the process of promoting the work developed, it was decided that production of a leaflet was not the best use of very limited resources. Instead, we sent a letter to prospective hosts and remained in touch with them by phone. Details of what they would need to do and what they could expect were included.

1.b) *contacting libraries* in Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, offering the Tour to come to their library, without charge

On Thursday 17 August 2006, an e-mail was sent to five identified individuals; each a senior office-holder within the county library service of one of the five target counties. The e-mail read as follows:

Dear [named Head of Library Services],

Bag Books, the learning disability literacy charity, is offering a free programme to equip and enable libraries to work more closely with children with severe or profound learning difficulties. During January 2007, we will run our Story-Go-Round Tour, comprising a session or sessions with a professional storyteller, training for library staff, and a choice of multi-sensory story-packs.

Our aim is to expand inclusion of these children.

Bag Books has been working with special schools and families for over twelve years, and is now reaching more children through their local libraries. We are consulting with the Persula Foundation who have run storytelling sessions for mainstream children and others. We are contacting some libraries directly – predominantly those known to Persula – but we would like to reach as many children as possible.

Do you think that your branch network might like to host some sessions with local children? **THERE IS NO CHARGE** as we have secured funding (although we would not decline a small donation if one was offered!).

Please let me know if this is of interest and whether your branches would be open to hearing about it. I would be happy to put you in touch with other library services which have used our services.

Thank you.

No recipients requested contact with other library services using MSSPs. No library or library service offered a donation towards offsetting BB's costs.

Within a week, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Norfolk County Library Services had responded positively. Suffolk and Essex County Library Services were prompted after a few weeks; Suffolk responded positively.

Essex ultimately declined the offer of training, whilst accepting storytelling sessions.

Conclusion: In future it must be clear to library authorities that this is not an offer of a storytelling service; it is an offer of a training service, with a storytelling demonstration.

Some counties were highly supporting, contacting their local branches to ensure suitable venues and encouraging their colleagues to attend. Others were less proactive, offering their passive support; allowing Bag Books to contact branches. In the end, with space still available in the schedule, we were able to extend the work to selected libraries in other geographical areas (including Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Surrey).

1.c) recruiting a professional storyteller, and background checking him/her (including CRB), in line with our Child Protection procedures

Fiona Brown, Director of the Persula Foundation, provided us with the names of the storytellers used by the Foundation in their own storytelling. Barnard Tagliavini was selected on the advice given by Fiona. Bernard was contacted. He met Chris Fuller, who invited him to attend a storytelling session at a special school in London.

Since the Persula Foundation had already conducted background checks on Bernard, Bag Books was saved this work. For someone not previously screened, this would add a small amount of cost and time to the project budget.

1.d) training the storyteller in how to deliver multi-sensory stories, how to handle children with additional needs safely, and how to give the children the most stimulating and rewarding experience possible

Bernard observed Chris Fuller multi-sensory storytelling at Stephen Hawking School, Chris also provided him with extensive explanation and feedback on the session, which was videoed, allowing for detailed review.

Because Bernard already had extensive experience of working with those with special needs, he did not require in-depth explanations of their challenges and requirements.

1.e) *providing ongoing support and monitoring to the storyteller, during the Tour, including site-visits and daily telephone support*

Bag Books' Director, Chris Fuller, attended and observed the opening series of sessions performed by Bernard. Chris also occasionally attended Bernard's events to continue evaluation. In addition, Chris and Bernard were regularly in contact, via phone and e-mail, maintaining a strong flow of information and support. (see Bernard's feedback.)

1.f) *gathering and collating feedback from the storyteller and participants*

Participants were asked to provide feedback on their experience, via a set of questionnaires. As well as County Co-ordinators, Host Librarians and participating schools, the Storyteller was also asked to provide feedback. Responses were limited, but all such feedback is presented in Appendix II.

Conclusion: It would be useful to ongoing improvement, as well as assessment of any changes made to methodology, to continue seeking this feedback.

1.g) *working closely with the Persula Foundation, who have experience of delivering successful storytelling to other beneficiary groups*

Fiona Brown, Director of the Persula Foundation, visited Bag Books to discuss the Pilot Project and provided ongoing help, including contact details with libraries which have previously participated in their storytelling tours for mainstream and other audiences.

The Persula Foundation may be approached in respect of an offer to provide some print work without charge.

1.h) *demonstrating accessible storytelling to those parents, carers, special school staff and librarians attending the storytelling sessions with the children*

Around 200 adults with a professional or personal interest in the needs of children with complex learning difficulties attended SGR Tour sessions. These included 58 library staff, 40 special school teachers, and 140 special school classroom assistants, as well as family services providers, colleagues of the aforementioned professionals and journalists (covering some of the events).

Aim 2 – To enable local library staff to continue providing regular multi-sensory storytelling to these local children and their families, by training them to use story-packs

There were examples of libraries misinterpreting Story-Go-Round as a storytelling service. For instance, at one library, the storyteller was shown into the room to be used, the children were brought in by their school, and the librarian left!

Conclusion: It cannot be reiterated too often that this is a training programme.

2.a) *providing training for librarians*, on the day or at their earliest convenience, in how to safely, effectively and confidently tell multi-sensory stories

The library services which **fully** accepted the service – what was the vast majority – were given a presentation for staff (sometimes in groups; sometimes at individual libraries). This was a version of the standard Bag Books academic training package, delivered to special school teachers and other relevant professionals for several years.

This proved to be a somewhat inefficient way to deliver the Pilot Project, as it involved two trips to each centre – one by the Trainer and one by the Storyteller.

Conclusion: Amalgamating the two functions into the single role of Trainer/Storyteller makes a great deal of sense, as long as the individual involved can deliver both with appropriate styles: fun storytelling and serious training.

2.b) *devising a take-home leaflet for children's families*, outlining how multi-sensory storytelling works in the context of local libraries

Ultimately, since families were not directly involved in the SGR Tour Pilot Project, this aspect of the work was not given a high priority and was not achieved.

Conclusion: It may be helpful for Bag Books to provide a stock of simple leaflets for libraries to offer parents on their “new” multi-sensory storytelling service within the library, as well as the stock of story-packs.

Aim 3 – To **encourage** these libraries to continue providing multi-sensory storytelling as a service to their local community, by providing story-packs for each host library

In effect, Aim 3 is the same as the overall Project Goal: to have more community libraries offering multi-sensory storytelling to local children. In respect of this, we can collate responses from the Feedback section to report as follows:

58 library staff participated in 42 sessions in 19 host venues.

3.a) *giving two story-packs for each library's use*, from those told on the day (so, producing an additional 40 story-packs over the course of the Pilot Project)

It was decided that rather than simply leave two story-packs (which would require the storyteller to have a small stock of story-packs on the road with him to replace those given), participating libraries would be sent two story-packs of their choice, after the tour.

3.b) *offering the incentive of another story-pack*, if multi-sensory storytelling is still continuing two months after the initial session

It does not now seem realistic that libraries would be able to offer strict commitments to continue a brand new service within two months. As can be seen from the feedback from host libraries, it seems likely that the service will continue to be offered – albeit at a rate somewhat less than hoped for by the schools!

Thus, we determined that we would offer two free multi-sensory titles to any host library which accepted training. Informal discussion with participating county library services and host libraries suggests that this part of the offer was not a major determinant in their decision to take part.

Conclusion: It is probably not necessary to offer free story-packs to all participants. In light of this, it may be better to use them to incentivise libraries on an *ad hoc* basis, perhaps to “tip the balance” in favour of inclusion, or perhaps to “reward” those making outstanding efforts to develop services.

3.c) *providing telephone/e-mail support* or additional training if necessary

To date, no participant has requested additional support by telephone or e-mail. It may be prudent to follow up participants, proactively, to ensure that their lack of contact reflects confidence and not indifference, embarrassment or lack of interest.

It may be appropriate to maintain contact with all such participants on an ongoing basis, perhaps via regular e-mails, perhaps via a section on the Bag Books website which is available solely to them; perhaps via other means. This would allow us to stimulate interest; bring new titles to their attention; offer updates on best practice; and to develop the relationships we have begun to build with them.

Conclusion: By increasing the period of each Story-Go-Round Tour, from one month to three, it may be possible to revisit earlier participants and make sure that their new skills, knowledge and services are really “bedding in”. At the very least, it will give us greater flexibility in what we are able to offer to participants.

Aim 4 – To **continuously test methods** to achieve this, and apply them in continuing to develop the project, helping children all over the UK

In devising and evaluating this Pilot Project, we have been keen to maintain an open mind as to future work. We hope that the information gathered and analysed in this document gives a relatively clear view of the SGR Tour Pilot.

We anticipate moving forward with the planning and delivery of a London-wide Tour in the Summer and Autumn. This will likely go ahead under the auspices of the East End Book Fund, funded by UBS, and will bring us some new challenges – not least applying the principles learned in the rural setting of this Pilot Project to a suburban or city setting.

4.a) *reporting on the Pilot Project* by the end of April 2007, identifying which elements of the work succeeded and ways to eliminate or minimise those which did not

This document aims to fulfil this objective. It is completed in May 2007, largely because of the slow rate of feedback from participants.

4.b) *determining the best methodology* for implementing, managing and reporting on a programme of multi-sensory storytelling and training in libraries

Conclusions in this document will be implemented for the SGR: London Tour.

In addition, we expect to split the admin role away from the Trainer/Storyteller role. This will allow a single person (probably a temp or part-time administrator) to co-ordinate the London Tour and possibly remain in post for subsequent Tours.

It would seem that between existing reporting methods and those implemented during the Pilot Project, we have an excellent system for receiving feedback. This will, of course, remain under review.

4.c) *devising a suitable project* which carries on these methods nationally, including identifying the number of children likely to benefit

The full Story-Go-Round Project is now devised. It aims to split the remainder of England and Wales into eight regions. These will be targeted in a sequence of Phases, probably three per year. We initially expect the next two Phases to be London and Wales.

4.d) *organising future Storytelling Tours* on the basis of this new project in the following year, aiming to reach ambitious but achievable numbers of children
and

4.e) *continuing the work*, for as long as it brings joy and learning into the lives of children with profound disabilities

This work is now set to happen over the coming three years, extending the work of the Pilot Project into new regions of England and Wales.

APPENDIX I – SESSIONS

| Library | Sessions | Schools | Librarians | Teachers | Others |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Ely | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Milton Road, Cambridge | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| Cambourne | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 13 |
| St Ives | 3 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 20 |
| Borehamwood | 2 | 2 | 12 | 1 | 3 |
| Stevenage | 2 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 5 |
| Grove Park | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Southend | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Guildford | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Borehamwood | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 10 |
| Ipswich | 3 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 7 |
| Lowestoft | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 9 |
| Bury St Edmunds | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 12 |
| Norwich & Norfolk Millennium | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 8 |
| Caister | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Gorleston | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Belhus | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 8 |
| Newbury | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 13 |
| Aylesbury | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 10 |
| Woodley | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 11 |
| | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 42 | 28 | 58 | 40 | 148 |
| | | | | | |

APPENDIX II – PHOTOS: IPSWICH LIBRARY, MONDAY 22/01/07







APPENDIX III – FEEDBACK

“PLEASE RATE YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE STORY-GO-ROUND TOUR.”

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Norfolk County Library Service | <p>Lots of very positive feedback from staff involved. We really appreciated being able to offer something to special schools and the resulting impression on the children's faces was a total pleasure.</p> <p>A wonderful storyteller but, more important, fantastic interaction with the children. I now see how often I (and other staff) could use Bag Books.</p> |
| Bucks County Library Service | <p>My colleagues and I enjoyed the experience of the SGR Tour very much. It was fascinating to see the children's reactions to the different sounds and objects used for the story boards. We all enjoyed “CJ the Library Cat” and “The Uninvited Guests”, with the water pistol.</p> |
| Herts County Library Service | <p>We were very pleased to be offered the training opportunity. We do not currently have much to offer children with severe learning or physical disabilities and this Tour gave us a good insight as to what Bag Books have to offer. Staff were very positive after seeing Bernard deliver the stories and the response from the children. Their laughs and giggles were very infectious and he was excellent in involving everyone.</p> <p>I was worried that staff may be put off because he was so professional, but our further training with Chris gave us the opportunity to practise. It was good to explore more of the titles with Chris and see the videos. More opportunities to try out the stories with time to practise would have been good - but when our packs arrive we will have another session.</p> |
| Flackwell Heath Library | <p>We had one session at Flackwell Heath Library. The children who attended (one multiyear set of special needs children: 8 pairs & teacher) thoroughly enjoyed the session. The library staff who attended really enjoyed what Chris did and learnt a lot.</p> |
| Belhus Library | <p>It was nice to offer these sessions to the local special school. The storyteller organised the area and ran the session. We only had to clear a space and welcome the children. It was lovely to see the children responding and enjoying the stories.</p> |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Guildford Library | Excellent. The children were thrilled and staff present learned a lot about the peace of storytelling and involving every child. Bernard made it look easy, but we do our best to meet his standard. |
| Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library | I thought it was a brilliant session as did colleagues who watched. I picked up lots of tips & ideas, and the children who attended loved it. Thank you for arranging it for us. |
| Caister Library | I was impressed by how well the session went. In spite of some disruption caused by the school's need to bring the children in a double delivery by minibus (two journeys) the storyteller coped well with starting the session before the whole group had arrived. The children enjoyed the session particularly the sensory involvement - they responded well. |
| Stevenage Library | Excellent - great to see the reaction of the children - the excitement & anticipation. |
| Ipswich Library | Owing to work and staffing on the day I was unable to attend the tour, but staff & colleagues who attended thought the whole experience was brilliant, well thought out and something that they would like to try themselves. It gave them great ideas to promote and encourage reading together. |
| Ely Library | Excellent - I was awestruck by the way the interactive elements of the stories enabled every child/young person to experience the story. |
| Lancaster School | Positive. |
| Samuel Pepys School | Excellent. |
| The Castle School | Good. 10/10. |
| Priors Court School | Extremely high. Not enough of these opportunities around. |
| Beacon Hill School | Very good – enjoyable. |

COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES

| County Library Service | How much work was involved for you? Was this appropriate or too much? Why? How could it have been reduced by Bag Books? | How keen would you be for your local library staff to offer multi-sensory storytelling (similar to a regular “story time” for mainstream children)? |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Norfolk | <p>It wasn't a lot really, it was just fiddly because it involved asking three members of staff to sort it out in their libraries. I don't think there was anything you could have done.</p> <p>Any effort was worth the results.</p> | It would be great. |
| Buckinghamshire | Quite a few phone calls were made, transport to the library for many schools was the main problem. Flackwell Heath was the perfect venue in the end with the school on site. | I think this would be a very good idea, it shows stories are not just about reading from a book. |
| Hertfordshire | <p>There was a lot more admin involved. It was hard because we were starting from scratch, so learning about Bag Books and children with special needs.</p> <p>We were restricted to which libraries we could use - with disabled access and closeness to special schools. It was a lot of time but time well spent.</p> <p>I thought that it worked well with staff having Bernard in the morning & then have training in the afternoon.</p> | <p>We will certainly start by doing school visits to tell stories - either out to schools - or preferably having the children into the library.</p> <p>I think that this is the best start as there are teachers to support the children. Once staff are more confident we will then be able to start a regular event (like they have in Bexley).</p> |

Cambridgeshire responded independently, not using the feedback form questions. Their comments are noted on the following page.

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <p>Cambridgeshire – 11/01/07</p> | <p>Just to let you know, the last two days have been wonderful.</p> <p>The sessions at Cambourne with children from Samuel Pepys were delightful and today's visits to St Ives from Spring Common were very popular. Eight members of staff and Sharon Camiletti, the Manager of the county's Parent Partnership witnessed the sessions. Sharon was very impressed by Bernard and wants to explore the possibility of using him more.</p> <p>Thank you so much for making this happen. This has been a wonderful week. The children have all benefited hugely and my staff and I have learned so much. A total of 56 children participated in the sessions</p> |
| <p>Cambridgeshire – 12/01/07</p> | <p>The session at Milton Road was the only disappointment during what has been a wonderful week. There were some truly memorable moments on Wednesday and Thursday and I can think of few library events in recent times that have meant more to me than Bernard's sessions. I am very grateful.</p> <p>I wasn't sure whether to intervene on Tuesday or not. Not knowing the children or having any idea how they might react to any intervention from me was a concern. I was also worried about offending Bernard if I asked the teacher to calm things down. I was deeply disappointed in the poor leadership of the teacher and her teaching assistants and feel that the use of some rather disinterested volunteers [the army cadets] rather than parents, carers or trained assistants was disrespectful. All schools received the same information and guidance pack and how one school could get it so wrong when everyone else got it right is a mystery. All the other schools were delighted. Please tell me if the fault was with us. This has been a really valuable learning experience and we need to know where we have gone wrong.</p> <p>It would be wonderful to host another session at Milton Road Library if you are available.</p> |
| <p>Cambridgeshire – 25/05/07</p> | <p>For information, we have liaised with Family Learning and the Cambridge Storytellers to do further sessions with the schools [Bag Books] worked with in January. The leader of the Cambridge Storytellers has met and seen Bernard in action and is really keen to be involved. The sessions will form part of our Family Learning Week activities in October.</p> |

HOST LIBRARIES – ORGANISING THE TOUR (1 OF 3)

| | What did you understand to be the purpose of your involvement with the SGR Tour session(s)? | How could it have been better organised (in terms of preparation, and set up for the day)? |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Flackwell Heath Library | To prepare the space in the library as set out by the info which was sent and to support Chris. | |
| Belhus Library | To gain better awareness of the resources available for the children. Ideas on how to run a storytelling session for the children with special needs. | It worked very well. |
| Guildford Library | | |
| Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library | To host the sessions as part of the pilot and to organise an audience. Also to observe the storyteller's technique. | The only quibble was that I would have liked to have been able to tell the school the exact times of the session a little sooner. |
| Caister Library | To demonstrate the use of props and packs in a multi-sensory storytelling session and to encourage us as a library authority to invest in them. | It was well organised. |
| Stevenage Library | To see sessions delivered in order that we will deliver sessions ourselves. | |
| Ipswich Library | To demonstrate multi-sensory storytelling for the fun and learning of children with special needs. | I would have loved to attend and also be able to send even more staff on the S.G.R. tour. Apart from that, it was very well organised. |
| Ely Library | Ensure the storyteller had all the facilities he needed - appropriate layout of rooms etc. and refreshments. | I would have preferred to have liaised with the storyteller about parking, etc.. |

HOST LIBRARIES – ORGANISING THE TOUR (2 OF 3)

| | Was the information you received about the SGR Tour clear? What could have been better? What other information would have been helpful? | Was your experience of the Tour as is was described? If not, how did it differ? |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Flackwell Heath Library | The information was very clear about setting up the space required. The only thing that may have been useful would be actual pictures of the boards in their packs, but pictures of the boards are in the Bag Books brochure. | Yes, we all thoroughly enjoyed the session and are feeling very enthusiastic about doing sessions ourselves: so it inspired staff too; we learnt a lot & the children loved it. It encouraged us to be bolder. |
| Belhus Library | The information we received was clear and adequate, maybe more leaflets would have been useful to pass to teachers. | Yes, as described. |
| Guildford Library | | |
| Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library | Yes, it was very clear. | Yes, as described. I would have liked a little more time with the storyteller to learn techniques for using Bag Books. |
| Caister Library | Pre-event information was clear - we knew what to expect prior to the session. | Yes. |
| Stevenage Library | Yes. Fine. | Yes. |
| Ipswich Library | Information received was clear. | As described. |
| Ely Library | Yes, the info. Richard Young (Cambs. Library Service) passed on was fine. Nothing could have described how good it was going to be, though! | No, SO much better. |

HOST LIBRARIES – ORGANISING THE TOUR (3 OF 3)

| | Was the event at your library well managed and conducted on the day? If not, what was not as you would have liked? |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Flackwell Heath Library | Everything was fine, but thought we could have provided some help to Chris to unload the crates etc, as she had to battle with doors. |
| Belhus Library | Very well conducted. Couldn't have been improved. |
| Guildford Library | We rate Bernard Tagliavini very highly & enjoy his services regularly in Surrey for storytime events. He never lets us down. |
| Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library | It was very well managed - the storyteller had everything he needed and conducted everything very well. He didn't really need any input from me! |
| Caister Library | The event was well managed and conducted. The only drawback concerned the staggered arrival of the class invited. Due to physical constraints and special needs, the arrived in two batches which was slightly disruptive, but was well handle by the narrator. |
| Stevenage Library | Yes . |
| Ipswich Library | Well managed throughout the day. |
| Ely Library | Yes, very. |

HOST LIBRARIES – THE TOUR AND LEGACY (1 OF 2)

| | Would you or a colleague be likely to tell multi-sensory stories to local children (like those at the session(s)) in your library? | Whether run by you or a colleague, would you like to offer multi-sensory storytelling in your library? Do you plan to do so? If so, how frequently would be best for you? |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Flackwell Heath Library | Yes. | We intend to make good use of the Bag Books boards you have kindly given us, and we look forward to doing sessions with the pre-school, infant school & middle school - all who are very close. May extend to regular storytimes: probably termly; not sure yet. |
| Belhus Library | It would be more likely that someone from the children's team at the Central Library would come to take a session. | Unfortunately due to staffing limits, we are unable to run story time for any children. We shall continue to support the informal visits by local schools, including Beacon Hill School. |
| Guildford Library | Yes. | We would do it on request from special schools. I have asked our resources team to order some Bag Books. |
| Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library | Possibly not in the library, but myself & colleagues visit Harford Manor School etc. regularly for storytimes. (We probably don't make the best use of multi-sensory materials though). | I would love to offer multi-sensory storytelling, as we have regular visits from Harford Manor School, plus contact with the Hamlet Centre. We don't have any plans, but 2 or 3 times a term could be good. |
| Caister Library | Given the availability of the special props/bags we would endeavour to tell multi-sensory stories to local children. | Yes - nothing planned or in place at present. |

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Stevenage Library | Yes. | Yes. Once/twice a year possibly. |
| Ipswich Library | Yes. | We would like to offer multi-sensory storytelling in our library alongside our regular "storytime". We plan to do so, but have no set dates until we have our Bookstart meeting in March 2007 when this will be discussed. |
| Ely Library | IF I had a lot of practice. The pacing was very important plus an ability to keep each repetition of the storyline fresh for each child. I'm a storyreader not teller. | No plans, unless Richard Young (Cambs. Library Service) has. We don't have the staff presently let alone the staff with the necessary skills. |

HOST LIBRARIES – THE TOUR AND LEGACY (2 OF 2)

| | <p>If you are not likely to tell multi-sensory stories, might additional input from Bag Books help? What areas are of particular concern?</p> | <p>Do you feel that future sessions would be better held when your library is open or closed to the public? Why?</p> |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Flackwell Heath Library</p> | <p>The area of most concern may be working with children with special needs; both the local infant and middle school have departments for them. Will contact staff locally first for advice etc., but additional input from Bag Books may be good there.</p> | <p>The story sessions with school children will be held when the library is closed as we already have their visits when the library is closed to the public. This is small building and public sessions when the library is open should not be a problem if well timed.</p> |
| <p>Belhus Library</p> | | <p>The session worked as effectively with the library open as there was enough space to accommodate both the school and the general public. Some people stood and watched the session.</p> |
| <p>Guildford Library</p> | | <p>Open, but in term time when the Children's Library is less busy. I don't want these children to feel different.</p> |
| <p>Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library</p> | | <p>I think it is good to hold them when the library is open - other children like to watch too, and it is good for all the children's integration.</p> |
| <p>Caister Library</p> | <p>Funding may be an issue - we have limited resources for outside performances/partners. It would be useful and beneficial to run these events in other areas of Norfolk, where there is a significant concentration of children with special needs and a number of special schools.</p> | |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Stevenage Library | Areas of concern- physical contact with the children - not something we are currently able to do under our guidelines, so awaiting further information from senior staff. | Open. |
| Ipswich Library | Any extra help with the delivery of any storytime would be great. | Our library is open seven days per week, but we have a lecture hall available if it were to have a large session. Normally storytelling takes place in our children's area and it always noisy with audience participation. |
| Ely Library | A workshop or tour to deliver Bag Books storytime plus a previous workshop on working with children with special/additional needs. | We have a separate meetings room at Ely. If in another library, closed might be better to ensure the children had the right environment in which to concentrate. |

SCHOOLS (1 OF 5)

| | Had you experienced multi-sensory stories before the SGR Tour? If so, how? | How many children and staff attended the session(s)? | Do you think that the children enjoyed the session? |
|---------------------|---|---|--|
| Lancaster School | In school. | 12 students. Approx 6 staff. | All the students gained from the experiences in the session. |
| Samuel Pepys School | Yes, in school. | 3 sessions. 6 children + 4 staff in each | Yes. Very successful. |
| The Castle School | Yes - we have some in school. | 8 pupils. 10 adults. | Yes. |
| Priors Court School | No. | 6 students. 5 staff. | Very much enjoyed. |
| Beacon Hill School | Yes - we are a special school and use multi-sensory storytelling with our pupils. | Approx. 15 children. 10 staff. | Yes. |

SCHOOLS (2 OF 5)

| | <p>Do you think that the children benefited from the session? If so, what benefit did they derive? Should the session have been longer? Should it have been shorter?</p> | <p>Do you think that a library an appropriate place for multi-sensory storytelling? If so, should the library be open or closed to the public during the sessions? Why?</p> |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Lancaster School | Good length session. All students had the opportunity to experience different sensations - touch, site, sound and were all involved. | Library was a good place. One only difficulty is access with wheelchairs, etc.. |
| Samuel Pepys School | An activity in the community that exactly matched their level of need. | Includes them in community, but a pity library was shut. |
| The Castle School | Sensory stories in a new environment. Having access to a resource that meets their needs. | Yes, but it could be distracting with people wandering around. |
| Priors Court School | “The Haircut” was an extremely good story as the students find haircuts very difficult (a PSHE element to it). Best ways to get a story across for SLD with different interactive styles. | Yes, although coming in to schools would be great as well. |
| Beacon Hill School | Yes. Opportunity to visit the library, meeting another "storyteller". Session lengths were fine. | Yes it is for our students, but because it was quite noisy at times (storyteller) we had "unhappy" looks from other library users - perhaps lack of understanding of our pupils + what they need. |

SCHOOLS (3 OF 5)

| | <p>If your community library offered an ongoing service of multi-sensory storytelling (similar to a regular “story time” for mainstream children) would you want your children/school to take part? If so, regularly? If regularly, how frequently?</p> | <p>Would it add to or detract from your aims or workload in school to have the children attend regular (e.g. monthly) multi-sensory storytelling sessions in your library? Why?</p> |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Lancaster School | School would want to take part - perhaps every half term? | Difficulties with minibus availability. It would take a number of staff out of classroom to accompany students. |
| Samuel Pepys School | Every half term. | Would be good. |
| The Castle School | Yes, monthly? | Wouldn't make much difference. |
| Priors Court School | Yes, as often as possible. | Possible, but could be worked around. |
| Beacon Hill School | Yes - at least once a half term. | Would add to the aims of what we are trying to do. At present library is in walking distance, so fine to get to. |

SCHOOLS (4 AND 5 OF 5)

| | Please rate your own experience of the SGR Tour. | Please rate the children's experience of the SGR Tour. |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Lancaster School | Positive. | Positive. |
| Samuel Pepys School | Excellent. | Excellent. |
| The Castle School | Good. 10/10. | Good. 10/10. |
| Priors Court School | Extremely high. Not enough of these opportunities. | Very high all. All engaged. |
| Beacon Hill School | Very good – enjoyable. | Very good - enjoyed it, good reactions. |

| | What were positive aspects of the session? | How could the session have been better? |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Lancaster School | Good selection of stories - something for everyone. | |
| Samuel Pepys School | Activity that exactly met their needs. | Pace slightly slow. |
| The Castle School | Access to a resource not always available in school. | |
| Priors Court School | PSHE elements. Interactive. | Chose story relevant to their topic of the term. |
| Beacon Hill School | Seeing multi-sensory resources being used. Access to local community resources. Access to another "storyteller" other than school staff. | Enjoyed all of it. We were told that we would have a workshop for school staff on using resources and it was cancelled twice + we have not heard anything since, which was disappointing for us, as we were looking forward to it. |

STORYTELLER – BERNARD TAGLIAVINI

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Describe and rate your experience of the SGR Tour.</p> | <p>In general, I felt the tour was a great success in terms of (i) my personal enjoyment, (ii) largely fulfilling its overall aims, (iii) the enjoyment and stimulation of the children attending the sessions, (iv) proving this model for expanding knowledge and awareness of the Bag Books resource as a worthwhile vehicle, which should work time and time again. Rating: 9/10</p> |
| <p>Describe and rate the training/advice/support you received before the SGR Tour began. What was more helpful/less helpful?</p> | <p>Observing Chris working with the books at a previous session was crucial. Also, working through the various stories with her at the Bag Books office also helped immensely. Receiving the books and text sheets well before the tour began also allowed me to feel reasonably confident by the time the tour began. Rating: 8/10</p> |
| <p>Describe and rate the training/advice/support you received after the SGR Tour began. What was more helpful/less helpful?</p> | <p>Having Chris observe my first few sessions and offering advice and feedback after each, was very useful. I sensed however, that she was a little concerned that I was not absolutely following her advice, and in danger of veering from the tried and tested methods she has painstakingly evolved over many years. I found it a little difficult following one or two of her instructions and suggestions to the letter, and as I pointed out, some things one just has to learn for one's self...through trial and error! It then makes more sense! But all her comments throughout were greatly appreciated. Rating: 8/10</p> |
| <p>How do you think that the training/advice/support could be improved? Content? Delivery? Practice?</p> | <p>For myself, I felt reasonably confident and comfortable at the start of the tour. This it has to be said, was largely because of my experience already of working with PMLD and autistic children and adults in a variety of settings. The only suggestion I would make for any new storyteller about to embark upon this type of tour, is to arrange for him/her to also attend one of Chris's training sessions. This would then ensure a clearer picture of the background and development of Bag Books, as well as providing the teller with an opportunity to try out the stories on other people in a non-threatening and un-pressured environment. It would also go some way towards allowing the teller working on the tour to field the variety of questions about Bag Books, coming from librarians, teachers, carers, members of the press, and members of the general public, more accurately and competently.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Describe your thoughts/feelings when you first encountered children with profound special needs. Did these change over time?</p> | <p>The first time I encountered such children was many years ago whilst caring for them as part of my psychiatric nurse training, and not when I embarked upon this tour. This question is therefore perhaps not wholly relevant for me to answer here. However, I find generally that those who are initially apprehensive about working with severely disabled and PMLD audiences through lack of experience, very quickly find it not so hard to engage them at some useful level, once the work begins. One also learns very quickly that just the smallest physical or verbal reaction represents a considerable achievement for the children concerned. The same is true of those working for the first time with autistic audiences, though it can be a little more unnerving to begin with, and take a little longer to develop a “technique”, depending on the severity of the autism.</p> |
| <p>In your experience (as opposed to what you have been told or read), how did you see children acting/reacting whilst receiving a multi-sensory story? Examples?</p> | <p>One of the most fascinating things I found working with the bag books was just how versatile they could be when using them with audiences containing very mixed cognitive, physical and visual abilities. One session included two children under the age of 3 together with adults with severe learning difficulties and blindness in their mid 50s....yet the stories appealed to them all in different ways, and all enjoyed and participated happily! On two or three other occasions, it was noticeable how a particular child who was proving difficult to engage in the session, suddenly became involved at the introduction of a particular sound, smell or interesting looking sensory object. One of the most specific and delightful reactions that build up in the stories is the anticipation of a sensory object or experience. Even for the most cognitively challenged audience members, they quickly learn that there are various sensory surprises coming their way during each story! For many, this manifests itself by the child giggling and laughing, or wriggling and jumping excitedly in their seat as they wait for the teller to suddenly produce another sensory experience for them to explore. This anticipation then becomes a tremendous tool for the teller to build up his relationship with the individual audience members.</p> |
| <p>How could community library staff be encouraged to continue multi-sensory storytelling for themselves?</p> | <p>Actually, I’m afraid not all librarians are natural storytellers, though many are, including probably most children’s librarians. Outreach work or storytelling to groups at libraries is increasingly within their remit. However, for some it does not come with complete ease. If they are then also asked to use multi-sensory stories which involves not only working with special needs clients, but a good deal of physical touch as well...then naturally this is a big step for some. The Bag Books training sessions go some way to addressing this by allowing them to gently try out the multi-sensory stories on one another. But perhaps a more definite period should be set aside at the end of the session for librarians to vocalize more fully what</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>obstacles and fears they perceive in using multi-sensory stories, and allow them a little more time to ask questions and voice their feelings. One way which might also help build confidence is to work toward having the librarian telling a story with the Bag Books storyteller during one of the arranged sessions with the children. This might be done by each taking alternate pages within the story. I would suggest that the librarian and BB storyteller discuss whichever story they have decided to jointly tell beforehand, and then the librarian watch one or two stories presented by the BB storyteller, before their joint effort. I suspect many librarians would not wish to undertake this exercise, but I feel there could be a significant number who would be interested in trying it.</p> |
| <p>Thinking about other people in the role of the BB storyteller, what else do they need to know?</p> | <p>As previously mentioned, being suitably armed with the background information on the development of Bag Books and how and why they work.</p> |
| <p>Considering the Goal of this Pilot Project, do you believe that library staff understood the purpose of the sessions (i.e. the start of a process for them, <u>not</u> a one-off storytelling session by BB)?</p> | <p>Not entirely. I think the purpose of the project was not clearly laid out in the initial mail-out letter. Even the libraries which enthusiastically took up the offer of free session and training for staff, did not fully embrace the purpose of the tour until Chris and I spoke to them face to face about it when we met them. I found myself time and again explaining to librarians that the idea of our visiting their library with the tour was an awareness campaign that allowed staff the chance to see how useful and versatile a resource Bag Books could be for them. This would be my main criticism of an otherwise excellent tour.</p> |
| <p>With hindsight, do you think that the Goal and Aims were achievable? Do you think they were actually achieved? What was not? How might we move towards achieving it next time?</p> | <p>Definitely achievable. Even if the initial letter did not quite manage to fully impart the purpose of the tour, the sessions themselves demonstrated to all how versatile bag books are, and the training sessions really boosted their potential for librarians. Awareness was certainly increased everywhere we went, particularly with the interest shown by local media. It was obviously less successful at the odd library where no librarians were available to observe the sessions, or they kept their distance.</p> |
| <p>What were the positive aspects of the Tour?</p> | <p>Enthusiasm and interest was displayed by librarians at most libraries. Having the tour a month long meant it had its own momentum, and I felt totally at ease and confident with using the stories on a daily basis. Odd day bookings at libraries here and there would not have achieved the same impetus.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| What were the negative aspects of the Tour? | Very few. Running out of Bag Books brochures on one or two occasions was a little frustrating, as so many people came asking for more information. Librarians and schools being confused between Bag Books and story sacks was also very common. |
| What would you like Bag Books to do differently next time? | Ensure the next mail-out is concise and clear about the tour's objectives. If there is to be a name change, then it really should be before the next tour. Having the Tour timetable with all session times, addresses, contact names and numbers, and audience details on one set of papers would keep the relevant information together and be most helpful. |
| What would you yourself do differently next time? | Perhaps try harder to engage librarians who are either lukewarm about the visit to their library (these are very few indeed) or who are more hesitant or concerned about working with those with special needs. |
| What would you like the host libraries to do differently next time? | All were welcoming and helpful, and provided me with whatever I had asked for in advance of my visit. Simply ensuring that the librarians themselves have the opportunity to observe the sessions. |
| What would you like the participating schools to do differently next time? | Try to be more accurate in providing pupil numbers and the age/ability range. |
| Any final comments about the Tour generally? | Only to thank everyone at Bag Books for doing such a great job of organising everything and allowing me to have such fun on the tour! |