

2022/23



IMPACT REPORT

Quest for Learning: an Oxfordshire charity
tackling education disadvantage since 1995



Questfor
Learning

What we did...

In 2022/23 we:

- Supported more than 750 of Oxfordshire's most disadvantaged children with our ReadingQuest, BookQuest, and NumSkills programmes, THREE TIMES more children than pre-pandemic.
- Delivered a total of 9555 hours tutoring in 20 Oxfordshire primary schools.
- Completed Year 3 of the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) as an Approved Tuition Partner.
- Raised c. £98K in order to deliver our programmes in partner schools against a backdrop of dwindling NTP subsidy.
- Employed 20 qualified and experienced tutors.
- In association with Blackwells, gave out 220 books to pupils in 8 Oxfordshire primary schools to boost reading for pleasure.

We are now a member of the Fair Education Alliance, working with other organisations to highlight ongoing education challenges faced by UK children.



Message from Siân Renwick, Executive Director

It's been another record-breaking year for Quest for Learning, with the highest ever number of children benefitting from our expert tutoring. Our continued growth has been made possible by our participation in the National Tutoring Programme, the infrastructure upgrades facilitated by the transformative grant we received from the Step Change Fund, and the vital and much-appreciated ongoing support of our funders. We're so grateful to everyone who has helped us this year - funders, tutors, partner schools, staff, trustees, and friends of the charity.

However, it's critical to acknowledge the reason for this growth - namely, that the gap between outcomes for the most disadvantaged children and their better-off peers is wider now than it has been for a decade. We know that if a child can't read well by the time they leave primary school, they simply can't access the secondary curriculum and become frustrated, demoralised, and disengaged from education. That's why early, expert support like ours is crucial in getting children back on track for educational success.

Despite more and more children needing extra support, the funding for the National Tutoring Programme is due to end in July 2024. This means partner schools who would love to continue working with Quest for Learning will be facing difficult choices about whether they can afford to do so. The generosity of our supporters will be even more important over the next year to ensure that we can continue in our quest for a future in which children from all backgrounds can succeed equally in education and in life.

July 2023



INNOVATED TO MEET NEED

With many older primary pupils struggling in maths, this year we successfully developed and trialled an exciting new maths intervention to be rolled out in 2023/24.

COLLABORATED

We co-hosted a successful Reading for Pleasure event for primary headteachers, with local reading charity ARCh, Oxford University Press, and guest speaker, Professor Teresa Cremin.

INCREASED EFFICIENCY

Thanks to the Step Change Fund, we introduced a bespoke Information Management System to track pupil progress and simplify information flow to and from our partner schools.

We also...

SHARED EXPERTISE

In March, our Executive Director presented an academic paper at the World Literacy Summit in Oxford on the vital role picture books can play in engaging older readers.

...to make a difference.

“This is the second year we’ve worked with Quest for Learning and we’ve been enormously impressed with the difference their programmes have already made. Our children have benefitted from both the NumSkills and BookQuest programmes, boosting the literacy and maths skills that hold the key to future success, and really helping us to support our lowest-achieving 20% of pupils. We are very keen to continue to work with the charity.”

Victoria Woods, Headteacher, St Mary’s Church of England Primary School, Banbury



QfL programmes are increasingly used by schools to evidence support for their lowest achieving 20% of pupils.



Jamal had English as an additional language, special educational needs and voiced a dislike of school and learning. However, after a few weeks of taking part in NumSkills, he started to enjoy sessions and showed genuine excitement when called from the classroom to attend. As Jamal’s confidence grew, so did the speed and accuracy of his multiplication. Jamal said that he really liked playing the games and did not want the sessions to end. Most importantly, the small group and game-based teaching not only enabled him to improve his maths skills, but also taught him that learning can be fun.

+17 months

average gain in reading comprehension after 10 weeks of BookQuest. Greatest individual gain was 42m.

91% pupils

said they were more confident about maths after 9 weeks of NumSkills sessions.

+16 months

average gain in reading accuracy after 10 weeks of ReadingQuest. Greatest individual gain was 36m.

“It’s lovely to be able to do something that really helps children learn and is appreciated by schools, for a supportive organisation which lets you use your judgement and teaching expertise to get the best results you can.”

QfL Tutor

“ReadingQuest has been totally transformative for my daughter. We were really puzzled when she stopped wanting to read at home. She had always loved learning and stories – but she was aware that she wasn’t progressing through the phonics levels as quickly as her friends, and had completely lost her confidence. The wonderful Quest for Learning tutor took everything back to basics and approached reading at her level and pace. Using picture books made her feel secure and helped me realise it was so important to let her choose what she wanted to read. She is super-enthusiastic and confident about reading now.”

Parent



How can you help?

The challenge ahead

Government data shows that nationally the attainment gap between disadvantaged primary school pupils and their better-off peers is now at the **widest in a decade**. Learning lost due to pandemic school closures has been an added blow to these children, and it is imperative that they 'catch up' now in order to have the best chance of success at secondary school and beyond. But...

- Schools are facing a financial crisis that sees their budget funding at the **lowest level** in over a decade
- Government support for educational recovery via the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) is reducing even further in 2023/24 - **cut by 60% compared to 2022/23 levels**, despite the journey to 'catch up' only just beginning for so many children
- Headteachers are facing difficult decisions just to ensure they can deliver the very basics – staff salaries and maintaining statutory activities



Our literacy programmes cost approx.

£450

per child



Our numeracy programme costs approx.

£250

per child

“Lifelines International is passionate that children have access to the educational opportunities to empower them to fulfil their potential – a vision we share with Quest for Learning. It was fantastic to witness first-hand their impressive results come to life and see children – both individually and as a group – developing the confidence to tackle new challenges in the classroom. Lifelines International is proud to partner with Quest for Learning for a second year to ensure this impactful, transformative teaching continues and more children have the chance to maximise their life chances.”

Sam Mitschke, Charity Administrator, Lifelines International



Current funding sources

Charitable Trusts and Foundations

Contribution from partner schools, including NTP grants

Earned income (eg training courses, selling resources)

Community

Individual donors

As part of an ongoing drive to increase our financial sustainability, we are developing new ways to increase our earned income streams. We have already successfully built multi-year funding relationships and are now seeking new trusts and foundations, major donors and local community funders.

We are enormously grateful to the following organisations who helped us tackle education disadvantage in 2022/23:

29th May 1961 Charity
Abingdon Lions
All Souls College
Angus Lawson Memorial Trust
Arnold Clark Community Fund
Christ Church College
Cottsway Housing Association
DCR Allen Charitable Trust
Didcot Powerhouse Fund
Doris Field Charitable Trust
Invesco Cares Foundation
Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust
Lifelines International
Makers of Playing Cards Charity
Masonic Charitable Trust
Mr and Mrs J.A. Pge's Charitable Settlement

Ocado Foundation for Good
P F Charitable Trust
Robert and Margaret Moss Charitable Trust
Rowse Family Trust
Sarah Nowell Education Fund
Shanly Foundation
St Michael's and All Saints' Charities
The Brian Murtagh Charitable Trust
The Christopher Laing Foundation
The Hobson Charity
The Pharsalia Charitable Trust
The Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust
The Souldern Trust
The Volant Charitable Trust
University of Oxford

Would you like to find out more about the difference we can make?

www.questforlearning.org.uk

or email us info@questforlearning.org.uk

Would you like to donate now?

<https://questforlearning.org.uk/support-us/>



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