



# Impact Report 2024/25

Tackling education inequality since 1995

Registered Charity No. 1107219



Questfor  
Learning

# We help children build brighter futures

In every classroom, there's a child falling behind due to inequality or deprivation like poverty, crime, health or language barriers.

We're Oxfordshire's specialist reading and maths charity. Our professional tutors help children catch up and give them a chance to thrive in school.

Specialist, small group tuition to build children's reading skill and fluency.

Fun, practical games that help children get to grips with numbers and improve maths skills.

Expert help for families to support their children's learning at home.

## Why it works

- Professional, experienced tutors build trust with each pupil
- Specialist reading and maths programmes backed by 30+ years of evidence
- Tutoring interventions in line with best practice from the Education Endowment Foundation
- Programmes that build confidence and self-esteem as well as practical reading and maths skills

## The difference we make

**98%** of children feel more confident about reading.

**97%** of children feel more confident about maths.

**13** months' progress in just 10 hours of tuition.

## What our partner schools say

Quest for Learning has been providing specialist tutoring in our school for 25 years, giving more than 300 children a vital boost to reading and maths skills during this time.

Our school is based in a wonderful, supportive community just 5 minutes' walk from the heart of Oxford. Our pupils come from a diverse range of backgrounds, with many having English as an Additional Language.

Through collective hard work, I am very proud to say that our children are above the national average attainment levels in reading and maths.

Quest for Learning's dedicated tutors have the experience to help our most struggling children, and are a key part in this fantastic result.

Being in school, I have the privilege of seeing the real impact Quest for Learning's programmes have on the children's confidence and self-belief.

# In 2024/25 we:

- Supported 288 of Oxfordshire's most disadvantaged children through small group tutoring.
- Delivered revamped, sustainable literacy and numeracy programmes in 8 Oxfordshire primary schools.
- Helped children achieve an average of 13 months' progress in reading - in just 10 hours of tuition.
- Maintained strong partnerships with schools despite increasing pressures on budgets.
- Continued to advocate for systemic change through local and national education networks.

## Rhodes Trust Hackathon

In January, we took part in the Rhodes Trust's annual Hackathon, collaborating with 20 Rhodes Scholars at Oxford University to explore our future direction to 2030 and how our work contributes to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Through a presentation from Chris, our CEO, and a series of facilitated workshops, Scholars brought fresh perspectives and challenge, generating valuable ideas for strengthening our impact. This exchange is helping us shape bold strategies that will enable us to foster social sustainability and create stronger, more equitable communities through our programmes.



## A message from our Chief Executive

Over the past year, Quest for Learning has focused on strengthening our foundation for the future during what has been a challenging and transitional time for schools, funders, and charities alike.

With the end of National Tutoring Programme funding and growing pressure on school budgets, we made the strategic decision to revamp both our team and our programmes to ensure we could continue reaching the children who need us most and ensure a financially stable organisation.

Despite these challenges, we've built new partnerships in schools and with funders, and have supported 288 disadvantaged pupils across Oxfordshire, helping them achieve significant, measurable progress in reading and maths. On average, children made 13 months progress in just 10 hours of specialist tuition.

These gains are about more than numbers: they're the difference between a child struggling in silence and a child who begins to believe in their ability to succeed. At a time when disadvantage is deepening and schools are under immense pressure, our work remains vital.

I have been proud to lead Quest for Learning during this challenging time, and we now stand a more sustainable organisation ready to support more children.

Thank you for standing with us; your continued support is crucial to our success, and together we can build a brighter future for all children in Oxfordshire.

Thank you, Chris Higgins



We're a member of the Fair Education Alliance, a coalition of 300 organisations tackling educational inequality to ensure that no child's success is limited by their socioeconomic background.



# Rupy's story

Rupy has special educational needs (SEND). His challenging and disruptive behaviour was beginning to have a severe impact on his development both socially and academically.

As a visual learner who struggled to wait his turn; he could easily become frustrated and give up. In the NumSkills small group he learned to play fun number games that did not rely on the reading and writing skills he found hard. Instead, he could be successful using mental maths - a massive confidence boost.

His class teachers saw how visual games helped him get to grips with maths processes like adding and subtracting for the first time. His improved self-esteem helped him engage better in lessons and with his peers. At the end of the course Rupy said: "I love doing maths now and I behave better because it is fun."



## How your support could change a life today

£5

could pay for a group of pupils to have book bags filled with a notebook, pencils and games

£10

could pay for family resource packs for an entire group to boost reading at home

£20

could pay for a session of expert tuition - giving a child key skills to succeed at school

£100

could give every child an achievement certificate at an awards assembly - giving an extra confidence boost

£500

could fund six hours of teaching for four children - helping children read words and understand stories

£1,000

could pay for safeguarding, assessments and quality assurance for 10 programmes - helping us meet statutory obligations

£2,000

could pay for a school's numeracy tutoring for a whole year - a gift that will last a lifetime!



## Collaboration in action

Thanks to funding from the Didcot Powerhouse Fund, 18 children at Stephen Freeman Primary School took part in our specialist BookQuest programme, making rapid progress in literacy and confidence.

We brought together the school, Didcot Library, international publisher Hachette UK Distribution, and the Didcot Powerhouse Fund to celebrate their achievements in a special assembly attended by Elizabeth Paris DL, Chair of the Powerhouse Fund, and Deputy Mayor of Didcot David Rouane. Some children read aloud in front of their peers for the first time.

Elizabeth Paris said: "We are impressed at how quickly Quest for Learning have transformed their Powerhouse grant into impact for these children." This project shows how funders, businesses, schools, and community organisations can come together to change children's lives.



# Why we need your help

## Why we need your help

One in nine children in Oxfordshire live in poverty. One in three primary school children do not reach their age-related standard of reading. It is imperative that these children don't miss out on the chance to catch up now to have the best chance of success at secondary school and beyond.

We don't believe that growing up in disadvantaged circumstances should be a barrier to future success.

Schools are facing significant budget challenges and making difficult decisions just to ensure they can deliver the very basics like staff salaries and maintaining statutory activities.

That's why we're working with our funders to support partner schools and community hubs where children desperately need our help. Together we will empower them with the skills to maximise their educational opportunities.

## In their words: a funder's view

The Barbara Ward Children's Foundation supports charities that make a real difference to the lives of disadvantaged children. In March 2025, we pledged a three-year grant worth £21,000 for three key reasons:

- **Educational outcomes for children:** Quest for Learning were able to show strong evidence of impact, with solid outcomes data, backed by case studies. This gave us confidence that our funding would have the desired results, that they could demonstrate to their stakeholders.
- **Financial oversight and organisational evolution:** Seeing the prudent financial oversight they have put in place, careful budgeting and their future plans gave us confidence that they would successfully adapt to ongoing change over the three years.
- **Leadership, team and communication:** The team were responsive and provided clear information. During our site visit we had discussions with their CEO and Head of Teaching. They demonstrated their educational knowledge and enthusiasm for tackling inequality, and a very clear drive to evolve their organisation to ensure no child gets left behind.

David Bailey, Trustee - The Barbara Ward Children's Foundation

## Join our Quest Change a life today

We're a small Oxfordshire charity making a big difference. But we can't do it alone.

More children need our support every year, and we need your help to reach them and build their skills and confidence.



### Donate

Your gift helps fund specialist tutors and programme materials



### Partner

If you're a business or trust, we'd love to work with you



### Volunteer

We're always looking for friendly, committed people to support our work



### Spread the word

Tell your school, friends or workplace about us!

**Donate today and help tackle education disadvantage for children who need us.**



Find out how you can help at [www.questforlearning.org.uk](http://www.questforlearning.org.uk) or email us at [info@questforlearning.org.uk](mailto:info@questforlearning.org.uk)



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