

The Priory CEVA Primary School

Junior Librarian Case Study

We are a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School based in Christchurch, Dorset. We have 221 students on role from Reception to Year 6 and are a very community based school.

When I first came to the Priory School in 2000 the library was in an uninviting, cold, dark room at the end of the school. It was run by two efficient parent helpers who after research persuaded the Parent Staff Society to purchase the Junior Librarian library management system. A small army of parent helpers catalogued the initial stock and in a very short space of time the system was up and running. In those early days the library was only open to the children on one afternoon a week but the computerised system proved to be a very efficient tool enabling, with careful timetabling, the whole school access to the library during that afternoon.

In 2002 we built a spacious Library and ICT suite using funds raised by the pupils, staff, parents and generous contributions from the local community. This is now used widely by the children during lunchtimes, weekly class library sessions and daily after school who all appear to share a love for reading and an enthusiasm to learn in the new venue. Our library contains several reading boxes, a comfortable sofa for quiet reading and a table for group work. We regularly update our displays and focus on an 'author of the month' or recommended books by children.

We now have a Librarian / ICT Technician. She is invaluable in maintaining our library and is the main reason behind its success. She not only helps the children to develop their ICT skills but also runs workshops for teachers. We continue to use the Junior Librarian System as it is an affordable complete option that allows us to keep a track of the library stock and monitor children's borrowing habits. We ensure that they read a wide range of genres and are progressive in their choice of books.

In 2004 The Parent Staff Society donated funds to enable each child to visit the local bookshop and purchase a fiction book for the library. We spent a whole day helping every child from Reception Class to Year 6 to select a range of books. These books are now dedicated to the children who chose them.

We now have over four and a half thousand resources including music and story CDs, fiction and non fiction books, all of which are widely used and enjoyed. We add to these annually with the proceeds we make from book fairs.

We have recently trained Junior librarians who operate the library during lunchtimes. They issue books and returns on Junior Librarian and keep the library in good order. The librarians work in teams and have their photographs displayed in the library. They each proudly wear their Junior Librarian badge!

A Book review reward system is in operation whereby children write reviews for fiction books and these are displayed with the books. For every 5 reviews that are written the children receive a certificate from the literacy co-ordinator, and these are presented in assembly.

We are still keen to develop the area and we have we have plans to create a mural in our annual arts week and display it on the library wall. We are also looking to commence a reading club for children in Key Stage 1 to link with our creative writing club for Key Stage 2.

Helen Bradshaw - Literacy Co-ordinator

