**10th October 2018**

**Culcheth Community Primary School first in Warrington to introduce new charity reading scheme**

Culcheth Community Primary School has become the first school in Warrington to introduce a new reading programme through which trained volunteers from the local community visit the school twice a week to support children one-to-one with reading.

The programme is run by Beanstalk – a national children’s literacy charity which recruits, trains and supports volunteers to work one-to-one in schools across England to help primary school children that struggle with reading. Reading helper Gilly Liput has now started in her new volunteering role and has been allocated three children who she will support two times a week for 30 minutes, for one academic year. The one-to-one sessions enable Beanstalk reading helpers to tailor each session to the child’s specific needs and to pass on the magic of stories and books.

**Gilly said:** “I've really enjoyed my first few sessions sharing books with the children I'm supporting and am looking forward to helping them improve their reading skills and confidence over the year.”

**Mandy Dodd is Head Teacher at Culcheth Community Primary School:**

“We are really excited to be working with Beanstalk and to have the opportunity to explore another avenue for supporting our children with their reading. At Culcheth Community Primary we are very focused on reading for pleasure and already use a variety of interventions.”

Beanstalk operates its reading programmes in over 45 primary schools across other parts of Cheshire through 60 trained reading helpers. This expansion into Warrington will help the Charity reach more children who struggle with reading.

**Nicola Williams is Area Manager for Beanstalk in the North West:**

“We are thrilled that we have now begun supporting children for the first time in Warrington. Reading is such a fundamental skill but we know that many children do struggle to grasp it. We want to make sure that we can provide support to children that would fall behind without further intervention. We are currently welcoming and encouraging enquiries from more schools in the area who would like to find out how Beanstalk can support children with reading and of course we are also looking to hear from any potential volunteers who would like to inspire children in their local areas to read!”

According to statistics from the Department of Education just over 1,610 primary school leavers in Cheshire did not achieve the expected level in reading in the last academic year. This means that a significant proportion of children in the local area are being left behind without the key literacy skills they need to give them the best possible start in life.

**If you could volunteer a few hours each week to help children with their reading in a local primary school, or you are a school and would like information on partnering with Beanstalk:**

* Visit [www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk](http://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/)
* Call Beanstalk on **0845 450 0307** or
* Email [info@beanstalkcharity.org.uk](mailto:info@beanstalkcharity.org.uk)

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**Notes to the editor:**

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Further images of Beanstalk trained reading helpers reading with children are available on request.

**About Beanstalk**

* Beanstalk is a national charity that provides one-to-one literacy support to children who struggle with their reading.
* The charity recruits, trains and supports volunteers to provide one-to-one literacy support in primary schools and early years settings.
* Beanstalk’s trained reading helpers provide one-to-one support to children aged 3 to 13 in a variety of ways, turning them into confident, passionate and able readers.
* In the last school year the charity helped over 11,000 children across England, in over 1,400 schools, with the help of over 3,000 reading helpers, ensuring children have the skills and confidence to reach their true potential.
* By 2020-21 Beanstalk aims to help 30,000 children every year, with 8,000 volunteers.