



Pearson

# Helping reluctant readers to read for pleasure



School name:  Bangor Central Integrated Primary School

Region:  County Down

Area type:  City

Number of pupils:  577

School type:  Community Integrated Primary (4–11 years)

Ofsted rating:  Very good (May 2011)

Pupil premium %:  23.2%

EAL %:  n/a

## Key points to take away

- Diversity of characters and genres **helps engage even the most reluctant readers.**
- Books are pitched at the right level to **challenge children without frustrating them.**
- eBooks **help motivate children** who can be reluctant to read printed books.
- Bug Club gives parents **additional resources to help support their children's reading at home.**

## Creating a buzz about reading

Wendy has become one of Bug Club's most enthusiastic advocates. "The children have loved trialling the books," she says. "They loved the diversity of characters they came across in Bug Club. Instead of seeing the same characters in every book, they read about lots of different characters. This led them to use much richer language when they were talking about the books."

*“ Bug Club had children laughing, engaged and begging for more. ”*

## Why Bug Club?

Wendy Jenkins, the Literacy Coordinator and Deputy Head Teacher recognised that getting children who are used to TV and DVDs hooked on reading was a real challenge so she took part in trialling Bug Club as it was being developed.

## Background

Wendy Jenkins, the Literacy Coordinator and Deputy Head Teacher at Bangor Central Integrated Primary School, Northern Ireland, took part in the trialling of Bug Club books and software as they were being developed. She involved all of the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 teachers and children in the trialling, and the team at Pearson have really enjoyed working with them all. The feedback the children gave has been invaluable in helping to create exciting, engaging books that are pitched at just the right level.

Wendy's focus is on promoting reading throughout the school. The Foundation Stage teachers assess all the children for reading readiness when they start school. Quite a few of the children are not used to handling books, so Wendy found the Lilac level wordless books in Bug Club really useful for them. "A particular favourite was the *Trucktown* series – the boys loved the trucks and the girls loved the fact that there was a girl truck just for them!" The teachers at Bangor usually find that getting children hooked on books is a real challenge. "They are so used to TV, DVDs and everything else that getting them interested in reading is really hard. But Bug Club had children laughing, engaged and begging for more!"

When Sharon Heasley, a teacher at the school, read *Chase in New York* with her pupils, she was impressed. "The children really enjoyed the book and I was so impressed, it was great! The illustrations were exciting and informative. They stimulated a lot of discussion about an aeroplane journey, the city of



New York, landmarks of New York and visits to the zoo. It was a really interesting and very clever story told in just a few pages. Completely suitable for this level. I would thoroughly enjoy using this book as a story book with my children."

### Turning boys into book worms

Like many Literacy Coordinators, Wendy is faced with the tricky issue of how to turn boys into enthusiastic readers, but she feels she has found the answer with Bug Club. She told us about a little boy who read one of Bug Club's *Jay and Sniffer* books, *The Missing Masks*.

The boy began the trialling process by saying that he was bored. But once he started to read, he really connected with the story, wanted to read it and laughed at the pictures. Later, Wendy overheard him animatedly retelling the story and describing the pictures to some other children who had not been involved in the trialling process. His final comment was "It's really funny!"

### Helping parents join the Club

Like many schools, Bangor found that when children start school their parents are very keen to read with them, but the older the children get, the less they read with their parents and the more the school has to work with them. The school runs workshops with parents and sends parent activity sheets with the

books that go home. Wendy felt that the help parents are offered on the inside covers of Bug Club books would be really useful. She was pleased to hear that Bug Club software offers parents extra support and ensures teachers can monitor how much children are really reading at home.

*“ The boys loved the trucks and the girls loved the fact that there was a girl truck just for them! ”*

### The outcome – reluctant readers become enthusiastic readers

When asked what teachers most liked about Bug Club, Wendy said that she loves the diversity of books with the great variety of genres in fiction, non-fiction and comics. Wendy feels that there is a good balance of context words, high frequency words and phonically decodable words in all the books. She is also really looking forward to using the eBooks on her interactive whiteboard to model reading and during shared reading. Wendy believes Bug Club is the answer to the tricky issue of turning her reluctant boys into enthusiastic readers.

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