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**Annual Report 2015 – 2016**

A busy year has seen ASCEL developing new projects and consolidating existing work. And a few celebrations along the way

**1: Children’s Promise**

**Children’s Library Journeys**

Pre-birth offer In the early part of 2016 ASCEL ran a workshop with colleagues from Booktrust, ICAN, Bump Buddies and Youth Libraries Group to explore the Pre-birth element of Children’s Library Journeys. The workshop included fantastic presentations from Margaret Street from Hertfordshire Libraries and Annabel Gittins, from Shropshire Libraries. ASCEL is now commissioning a pre-birth toolkit.

Transition App ASCEL commissioned SOLUS to develop a library APP that can be used in secondary schools. The APP has been slightly delayed but will be launched this year with secondary school librarians and we will liaise with the School Library Association to ensure it is used in partnership with local libraries.

Family Friendly Libraries During this year we were able to commission Laura Crossley to conduct some research into family friendly accreditation and opportunities, the report recommended that ASCEL should produce its own Family Friendly Manifesto and we’ll be doing some work on this over the next year.

 **2: Workforce development**

Online learning course In 2014 colleagues at the ASCEL conference highlighted the need for workforce development. ASCEL working with The Reading Agency, and Youth Libraries Group were delighted to develop a four module e: learning package which we launched in May. We were very grateful for all the contributions from ASCEL colleagues and partners.

Conference and welcoming sponsored places we are pleased to offer two sponsored places again this year.

**3: Schools Library Services UK**

<https://schoolslibraryservicesuk.org/> ASCEL have been delighted to support the development of this initiative this year and we’ve been very proud of the leaflets and posters developed by the SLS team including Nina and Gill available in the publications section of the website. Schools Library Services UK exhibited at the Education School in March and Peters Literacy Event in April 2016.

**4: New partnerships**

We’ve been pleased to work with two new partners during 2016

We met Dimension UK at the ASCEL Conference last year and as a result were able to seek funding from ACE to create the Autism Friendly Libraries film. We were proud to launch the film at the Society of Chief Librarians Seminar in June 2016. There is now an Autism tab on the ASCEL website where we are putting all the information we are gathering around good practice, most recently gathering together titles for an ASCEL Autism booklist.

We’ve also been working with Inclusive Minds since the ASCEL conference last year. They will be launching a new Charter for libraries, booksellers and publishers very soon and we’ll be inviting library services to sign up.

ASCEL have joined SCL in continuing to build a strong relationship with the BBC this year, supporting the #LovetoRead campaign as well as Weather Watchers and the proposed fines amnesty in the spring 2017.

**5: Existing partnerships**

ASCEL have enjoyed working very closely with The Society of Chief Librarians this year and have also been pleased to continue a firm partnership with The Reading Agency and Booktrust including contribution to Bookstart book selection.

**6: Universal Offers**

ASCEL contributed to the Universal Offer Roadshows in spring 2016. Thanks to Sue Ball, Russell Allen, Christine Myhill and Frances Mason for presenting the Children’s Promise at the nine Roadshows

* **Reading and Literacy**

ASCEL were proud to work on the Grants for the Art funded programme to celebrate Shakespeare’s 400th Anniversary in 2016, supporting the Shakespeare selfie campaign and the arts workshops during the autumn.

ASCEL also sit on the Summer Reading Challenge Strategy Group and the Reading Hack group. Two ASCEL committee members joined The Reading Agency delivering Reading Hack training in 2016.

We’ve contributed to The Reading Agency–led Reading Outcomes Framework and we were delighted to see it launched in October this year.

We are also working with SCL, Booktrust, The Reading Agency and The Publishers Association on the Reading For Pleasure group of the Read On Get On Coalition and we’ve contribution to the new National Reading Strategy which will be launched on 15th November

* **Health**

ASCEL is represented by Sue Ball on the Health Offer Group and have been working with Debbie Hicks of the Reading Agency to develop and launch Shelf Help: Reading Well for young people in March 2016. We are very proud of this new initiative which 141 authorities so far have signed up to.

**7: Policy**

ASCEL contributed a response to the Leadership for Libraries Taskforce Ambition Consultation and an official ASCEL response to the launch of Cultural Education Partnerships.

**8: ASCEL Information and thanks**

We’ve continued to benefit from the Information Consultant’s work this year. Thank you to Sarah Gregory whose work continues to enable ASCEL members to have speedy access to information and who has also been a fantastic support for marketing ASCEL and supporting workshops this year

Also grateful thanks to Annie Everall for all the work she does tirelessly every year to ensure the ASCEL conference is run with efficiency

A new ASCEL Information sheet will be launched at the ASCEL conference

Thank you to the whole ASCEL committee and membership for all their contributions, information and hard work, support and commitment.

**9: ASCEL is represented on the following groups**

Work Streams

• Society of Chief Librarians National Executive

• The Reading Agency

• Summer Reading Challenge

• Youth Libraries Board

• Children’s Reading Partners

• Booktrust liaison

• School Library Services

• Share the Vision

• Universal Health Offer Group

• Books and Reading Group

• Reading Outcomes Framework

• BBC partnership

• Read On, Get On coalition

• Reading Hack Steering Group

• CILIP

• Youth Libraries Group

• School Libraries Group

• School Library Association

• IFLA

• Learning offer

• Cultural Offer

• Digital offer

**Committee Changes**

In 2015 we said farewell and grateful thanks to Michele Murphy from the ASCEL committee as the Eastern region Chair–welcoming in her place Kirsten Francis. We also welcomed Stella Thebridge on to the committee representing the West Midlands. This year we will be saying farewell to Gill Harris who has been Chair of ASCEL and most recently Past Chair and SLS Representative. Gill has been the most amazing support and inspiration to ASCEL and I’m sure will continue to be so, but I did want to thank Gill for all her contributions to ASCEL. She has made (and will continue to make) a huge difference.

The Committee for the coming year will be as follows:

Sue Ball Chair

Sarah Mears Past Chair

Hilary Marshall Treasurer

Stella Thebridge Vice Chair

Russell Allen

Valerie Christie

Christine Everett

Kirsten Francis

Christine Hall

Kate McKenzie

Frances Mason

Christine Myhill

Nina Simon SLS rep

We have a vacancy for a Welsh representative

Annie Everall – Conference Organiser

Sarah Gregory – Information Consultant

ASCEL also want to pay tribute to our friend and colleague Sue Jones who very sadly passed away last Christmas. Sue worked for Hertfordshire Libraries and was latterly at The Reading Agency but was also a great ASCEL Chair and contributed a great deal to ASCEL’s development. She is much missed.

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**The Coming Year 2016-2017**

**1: Health Offer**

ASCEL have some funding to research the impact of libraries on children’s health and wellbeing. Debbie Hicks from The Reading Agency will be supporting this work. which will enable libraries to articulate the health and wellbeing impact but also identify gaps in provision and areas for future development

The Health Offer group are also working on developing a library toolkit to support the drive to reduce childhood obesity

**Autism Friendly Libraries**

We will be monitoring and evaluating the impact of the Autism Friendly Libraries film over the coming year, please do continue to send news and good practice to sarah.mears@essex.gov.uk

**2: Learning Offer**

SCL are continuing work on the learning offer in 2016/2017 and this will include a new family learning strand. ASCEL will be represented on the planning group.

**3: Children’s Promise**

In 2017 ASCEL will:

Work with the School Library Association to promote the transition APP

Produce/ launch and promote the Pre birth toolkit and we are launching an opportunity for library services to bid for funding to test ideas for developing their ideas for supporting parents to be.

Develop a Family-Friendly manifesto for public libraries –a public facing version of Children’s Promise and we would welcome ASCEL members to join the team to work on this. Please contact Sarah Gregory sarahm.gregory@yahoo.co.uk

**4: Cultural Offer**

The Society of Chief Librarians will be developing a 6th universal offer in 2017 to celebrate libraries contribution to culture. ASCEL has funding to

A: run a seminar with the Bridge Organisations on libraries involvement in the Cultural Education Partnerships in March 2017

B: Develop a framework to assess library rhyme times against the Seven Quality Principles. Thanks to all ASCEL members who have volunteered to be involved in this.

**5: Schools Library Services UK**

ASCEL will continue to support the development of SLS UK including attendance at the National Association of Head teachers Education Conference later in November and the Education Show in March 2017

**6: Embedding Reading Hack**

ASCEL will continue to work with The Reading Agency to support the development of Reading Hack

**7: Strong partnerships**

ASCEL will continue to support and work with its partnerships including SCL as it goes through its structural review.