



CULTURAL LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION - 2021

For the love of books by the sea!



At Seahouses Primary we get a lot from books! Books take us to new places and teach us about different ways to live and be alive. We don't have hundreds of children on our role and because our school is based in a small village so very close to the North Sea, sometimes we can miss out on big opportunities that might occur in the cities and towns. Books don't care about that sort of thing. **Books transport anyone big or small, old or young, rich or poor to anywhere they want to be.** We love to read and teachers and staff make sure that we have a wide range of books to enjoy in our amazing library kitted out with huge lighthouses and real fishing boats to sit in so when little library huts started popping up around our village this year we knew this was the type of project we could get on board with! **'Books by the sea'** inspired us to start a campaign, a campaign that would give everyone free access to books as they enjoyed **our beautiful place in the world right next to the sea.**



A seed was planted and it began to grow. The COVID pandemic and subsequent lockdowns had meant that we couldn't access many cultural initiatives, plans that our teachers had made had to be changed and adapted and many of us spent long lonely days at home. **Books by the sea** and the huts that they built sparked our imagination. If you have a book you aren't lonely. We didn't want other children to feel alone, especially when living in such quiet, rural locations. **We decided to make a difference and support this cultural initiative.** The huts were awesome and really starting to take off. Social media loved them, it's such an instagrammable idea, but we noticed that there were no children's books available in many of the huts and because the idea is based on free access to texts... many huts were becoming shockingly depleted and fast.

That's where we thought we could help!



We set about contacting the organiser of **'Books by the sea'** an inspiring man named Guy and getting to know some of the custodians and stewards who stock and maintain the huts around our local area. **They were very keen to work with us and a partnership began to form.** Guy suggested that we could help by donating books to the huts. We were already a step ahead of him. We had already with the help of our arts leader rallied teachers and convinced senior leaders, children had begun collecting books in school, we were ready to hand them over! Guy visited us at school, all outdoors and socially distanced, and our Head boy and Head girl helped him to stamp the books with their special **ex libris** stamp, this means that... **this book belongs to all. We really love that!**

Our books were a huge hit. **We felt very proud in the knowledge that our books were out there for any other child to read and enjoy.**



Now, we are very much part of the 'Books by the sea' team and we have big plans for the future. A new book has been independently published entitled 'Forecast', made up of stories and poems all about our wonderful place in the world and we were the very first to read it! **We're very proud of where we live and though there can be limitations as to what we can access culturally we don't let that hold us back.** Our next, very exciting, step is that **WE are going to create our own book of poetry.** Our cultural partners are going to publish it to the same high standard as 'Forecast' and **OUR words will be available for anyone in our community, or visiting our beautiful location, to read.**

It all started out as a small idea, to help others to have access to wonderful books and it grew into exciting new opportunities. We learnt that it's always a good idea to offer support and get involved in something you believe in and that we can make a difference and now **the readers become the authors and the cycle continues.**

