

3 - 11 May 2008

EVALUATION REPORT

1 Introduction

The **Linton Children's Book Festival** took place from Saturday 3rd to Sunday 11th May 2008 at Linton Library, Linton Infants School and Linton Village College.

It was the second Linton Children's Bookfestival, the first took place in May 2006.

The Festival featured a unique programme of **free events** and activities in the Cambridgeshire village of Linton. The events were aimed at children up to the age of twelve and their families. The Festival was co-ordinated by Josephine Paterson, Andrew Clark and Kirsten Newble and run entirely by volunteers.

A website www.lintonbookfest.org was created and posters and flyers produced.

The event was made possible thanks to the National Lottery Awards for All who donated £7,500 in grant to put on the weekend events, the Linton Parish Council who donated £1,000, and the Anderson Benefaction Trust who donated £300 toward activities in schools. Funding of £750 was also received from the Making Music outreach programme for a musical / story event that took place in conjunction with the Cambridge Summer Music Festival.

2 Press Release May 2008

The 2008 Linton Children's Book Festival came to a suitably energetic and entertaining finale on the afternoon of Sunday 11th May when author **Joe Craig** dazzled the audience with improvised new endings to his popular novels. Children from Linton and the surrounding area had enjoyed over forty separate events at various venues around the village in the previous eight days – aided and abetted by some glorious weather.

Local historian **Garth Collard** kicked off the Festival on Saturday 3rd May, leading a children's history walk that recreated the Battle of Linton that took place in 1648 during the English Civil War.

More than 70 people came to hear Garth describe the battle with the help of a Cavalier and a Roundhead. The group followed the route of the Roundhead soldiers into the village and imagined the fighting that took place on the very same streets 350 years ago.

During the following week, Linton children entered into the spirit of things by devising a 'Design a Bookmark' competition and writing short stories. They enjoyed performances from the **Linton Theatre Workshop**, **Chalemina** music group and author **Julia Jarman**. A particular highlight was the visit by **Spill the Beans** performance poets whose boisterous humour went down a storm at the Granta special school.

Linton playgroups have been treated to music sessions and stories by the talented **Marion Leeper**, who on this occasion was accompanied by a Gruffalo! Local people also generously hosted garden storytimes in the afternoons that were hugely popular – no doubt assisted by the warm weather.

The final weekend began on the morning of Saturday 10th May at Linton Library. Local mum and palaeontologist **Liz Hide** told the story of Stone Girl Bone Girl and showed the children some real fossils. Also visiting was **Sophie Smiley**, a local author of books for younger children about a football-crazy family.

On Saturday afternoon at Linton Infants School, a large crowd was buzzing with excitement and the cafe did a roaring trade in ice-pops.

In the school hall, **Obelon Puppets** presented 'The Singing Storycloth' on a beautiful stage with stories that the children found captivating. Then **Tony Mitton**, one of Cambridge's favourite children's poets, read from his work and coped admirably with those children that decided to join in.

Outside, the **Fairyland Trust** ran a popular wand-making workshop in a beautiful circular canvas tent. The sessions started with a magical story; then children had to choose the wood for their wands and learnt about its magical properties. The sessions ended with a sprinkling of magic fairy dust.

Away from the main stage, **Cathy Myer** enchanted children with her poetry coat, **Curwen Press** taught children the art of printmaking and **Emma Mason** entertained the very young with songs and rhymes. **Jeanette Hurworth** of Biddles Ltd. told stories about her two dogs Alphie and Archie – who came along for the day as well.

One of the many highlights of the day was the closing talk by **Axel Scheffler**, world-famous illustrator of 'The Gruffalo'. After his presentation, Axel stayed for nearly two hours to sign and personally illustrate every single child's book. He also presented the winners of the bookmark competition with prizes generously donated by Linton Zoo. Biddles Ltd. will print up the winning designs to be sold in aid of animal conservation projects at the zoo.

The winners were:

Reception: **Natalia Allen** for "Dibble Dobble"
Year 1: **Bethany Layton** for "Jumping Croc-a-Duck"
Year 2: **Elisha Keep** for "Snapper Crocker Ellie"
Year 3: **Holly Bowie** for "Chip-a-Lion"
Year 4: **Rhiannon Glasssmith** for "The Dreder"
Year 5: **Scott Catley** for "Pere - P9"
Year 6: **Joe Richardson** for "The Oo-Ballo"

On Sunday 11th May, the scene changed to Linton Village College where award-winning poet and broadcaster **Valerie Bloom** enchanted her audience with songs and stories inspired by her childhood in Jamaica and south London.

Author **Stuart Hill** entertained us with anecdotes from his long and varied career and charmed sceptical audience members with his most convincing ghost stories. He talked about his popular trilogy 'The Icemark Chronicles' and described how he became an "overnight success", after 31 years of trying to get published....

For those who preferred a more hands-on experience, there were two writing workshops run by new author **Alan Shea**, and experienced non-fiction writer **Deborah Chancellor**.

Everyone enjoyed the **Spymasters Challenge**, a fun event devised especially for the Festival by Bob Richardson of Spymasters, Bar Hill. The mission for our amateur spies was to recover a top-secret computer chip before it fell into the wrong hands.

Participants had to dodge cameras, step over laser beams and avoid setting off alarms as well as cracking codes and solving puzzles.

The winning team was the Watts Family who won a free mission for 5 to Spymasters. Runners up received a discount voucher to Spymasters and Joe Craig's latest book.

The afternoon was brought to an upbeat end with **Joe Craig**, one of Britain's top writers of spy fiction for children. Joe dazzled us with his quick-witted, interactive and very entertaining session on the key ingredients necessary for telling a story. Thanks to suggestions from the Linton audience, we now expect Joe's next book to feature smelly socks, pet cows and a girl called 'Apple'!

The Linton Children's Book Festival was funded by the National Lottery's Awards for All programme, Linton Parish Council, the Anderson Benefaction Fund and the Making Music Outreach programme.

The event is entirely run by volunteers from Linton. If you are interested in providing sponsorship for this event in 2010, please get in touch with the organisers via our website www.lintonbookfest.org.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	2
2	Press Release May 2008	3
3	Executive Summary/Recommendations Error! Bookmark not defined.	
4	Planning	6
5	Attendance	7
6	Evaluating	10
7	Evaluation Form Analysis	12
7.1	Publicity	12
7.2	Website	12
7.3	Favourite Bits	13
7.4	Reasons for favourites	14
7.5	Improvements	15
7.6	Awful or Brilliant?	15
7.7	Other Comments	16
8	APPENDIX 1	17

3 Planning

Much of the planning was based on the 2006 festival as the then co-ordinator Anna McMahon had made copious notes (before leaving to live in the States!) Much experience of artists /schedules/potential audiences and particularly contacts was gained in the 2006 pilot project which proved invaluable in trying to repeat the exercise.

A Committee was set up in October 2007. Representatives and interested parties from the village were invited including: Schools, Library, College, Business Owners, parents, bookshops and other interested parties.

Meetings were held approximately every 6-8 weeks, more frequently as the weekend got closer.

4 Attendance

More than 1,000 tickets were distributed to people over the course of the weekend alone.

Some 670 children enjoyed at least two or three Book Festival events over the course of week commencing 3rd May within their schools/playgroups/tots group.

Around 350 attended garden story times and the Linton Theatre Workshop events after school during the week.

On the Saturday, some of the ticketed activities were full and there was disappointment when people tried to book up for events that were already at capacity.

The number of people at each event was estimated as follows:

Event	Time	Capacity	Attendance on the day
SATURDAY 3rd May			
Garth's History walk. The Grip.	3 May. 2.00 - 3.00	-	66
TUESDAY 6TH MAY			
Dance a Story Chestnut Playgroup	6 May. 9.45-10.30	25	25
Dance a Story Granta Playgroup	6 May. 11.00-11.45	25	25
Spill the Beans, Linton Infants	6 May. 9.00-10.15		180
Spill the Beans, Linton Heights	6 May. 10.45 - 11.30		180
Spill the Beans, Granta Special School + some pupils from LVC	6 May, 1.40 - 2.30		110
Chalemina, Linton Infants	6 May, 2.15 - 3.15		180
Garden story time	6 May 3.30	-	44 plus approx. 28 adults
WEDNESDAY 7th MAY			
Chalemina, Linton Village Hall	7 May 10.30 - 11.30	100	100
Garden Story time	7 May 3.30	-	43 plus approx 25 adults
Revolting Rhymes, Linton Theatre Workshop to Rainbows and Brownies	7 May 7.00 - 7.45	-	60 (including adults)
THURSDAY 8th MAY			
Garden Storytime	8 May 3.30	-	46 plus approx 30 adults
Sharing books at the Library	8 May 1.15 - 2.00 Class 1 with Yellow Class	-	60
Sharing books at the Library	8 May 2.00 - 2.45 Class 2 with Blue Class	-	60
Revolting Rhymes, Linton Theatre Workshop to Beavers and Cubs	8 May 7.00 - 7.45	-	50 (including adults)

FRIDAY 9th MAY			
Julia Jarman, Infant School	9 May 9.00 - 9.30 Foundation and Yr 1	-	120
Julia Jarman, Infant School	9 May 9.40 - 10.15 Yr2	-	60
Julia Jarman, Junior School, workshop	9 May 10.30 - 11.30 Yr 3	-	60
Julia Jarman, Junior School, workshop	9 May 11.30 - 12.00 & 1.30 - 2.00 Yr 5	-	60
Julia Jarman, Junior School, giving out prizes for short story competition	9 May 1.00 - 1.30	-	240
Julia Jarman, Junior School, workshop	9 May 2.00 - 2.55 Yr4	-	60
Cambridge Storytellers, Marion Leeper - Linton Granta playgroup Plus appearance by Gruffalo	9 May 10.00 - 10.40	-	25
Cambridge Storytellers, Marion Leeper - Linton Granta playgroup Plus appearance by Gruffalo	9 May 11.00 - 11.40	-	25
SATURDAY 10th MAY			
Cathy Myer	10 May 1.30 - 2.15	15 plus adults	12 plus 12 adults
Cathy Myer	10 May 3.15 - 4.00	15 plus adults	11 plus 11 adults
Music Matters	10 May 2.00 - 2.45	Drop-in session	15 children plus 10 adults
Music Matters	10 May 3.00 - 3.45	Drop-in session	14 children plus 10 adults
Obelon Puppets, The Singing Storycloth	10 May 1.00 - 1.50	150	108
Tony Mitton	10 May 2.15 - 3.00	150	88
Axel Scheffler	10 May 3.30 - 4.15	150	150
Curwen Print Workshop	10 May 1.00 - 1.50	10 plus adults	8 children plus 8 adults
Curwen Print Workshop	10 May 2.30 - 3.15	10 plus adults	10 children plus 10 adults
Wand making : Fairyland Trust	10 May 1.15pm	30	27
Wand making : Fairyland Trust	10 May 2.15pm	30	26
Wand making : Fairyland Trust	10 May 3.15pm	30	30
Jeanette Hurworth. Drop in stories	10 May from 1.00		20
Sophie Smiley, Linton Library	10 May 11.15 - 12.00	40	37
Liz Hide, Linton Library	10 May 10.00 - 10.45	40	39

SUNDAY 11th MAY			
Curwen Print Workshop 1pm	11 May 1.00 - 1.50	20	18
Curwen Print Workshop 2.30pm	11 May 2.30 - 3.15	20	13
Alan Shea	11 May 1.15 0 2.00	25	25
Deborah Chancellor	11 May 2.45 0 3.30	15	9
Val Bloom	11 May 1.00 - 1.45	250	61
Stuart Hill	11 May 2.30 - 3.15	250	45
Joe Craig	11 May 3.45 - 4.30	250	90
Spymasters	11 May 12.00 - 3.15	39 teams of up to people	26 teams, 115 people

5 Evaluating

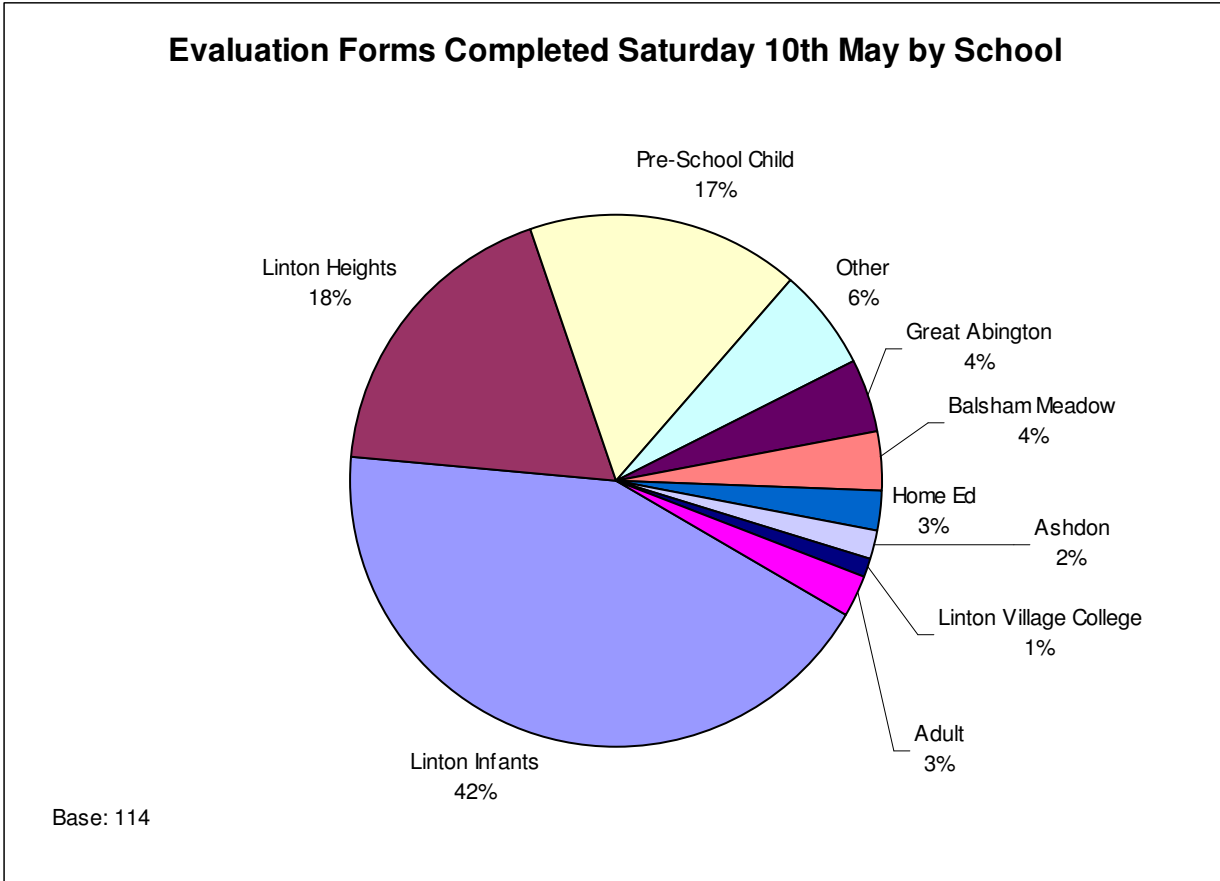
Self completion evaluation forms were available on Saturday and Sunday and children were encouraged to complete them, by giving out goody bags for completed questionnaires.

Information was input into specialist software package SNAP and analysed.

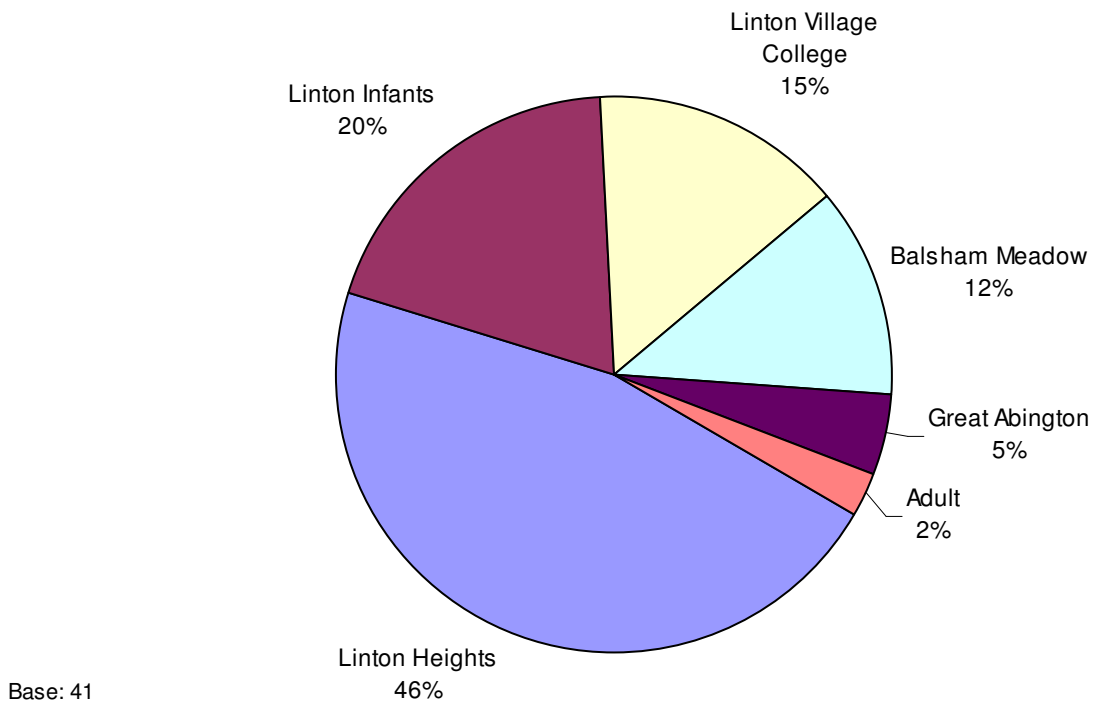
154 voluntary evaluation forms were completed. (114 forms on Saturday and 41 on Sunday).

Of the people that completed questionnaires nearly 70% lived in Linton and nearly 60% were girls (as opposed to boys).

		Gender			
		Boy	Girl	Total	%
Home	Linton	44	61	105	68%
	Elsewhere	22	28	50	32%
Total		66	89	155	100%
		43%	57%	100%	



Evaluation forms Completed Sunday 11th May by School

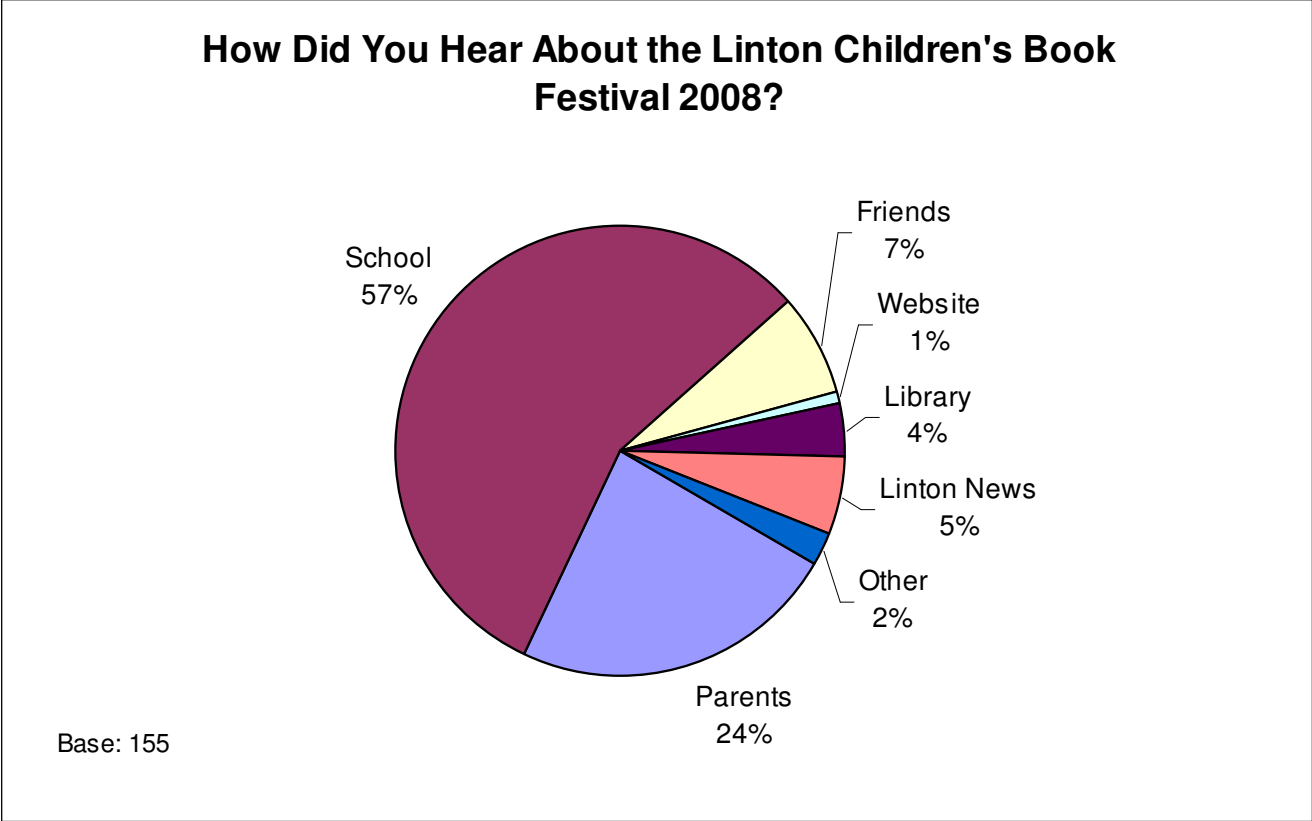


NB: Of the 7 completed evaluation forms from LVC, 6 were helpers with Spymaster.

6 Evaluation Form Analysis

6.1 Publicity

The main source of information about the Book Festival was School.

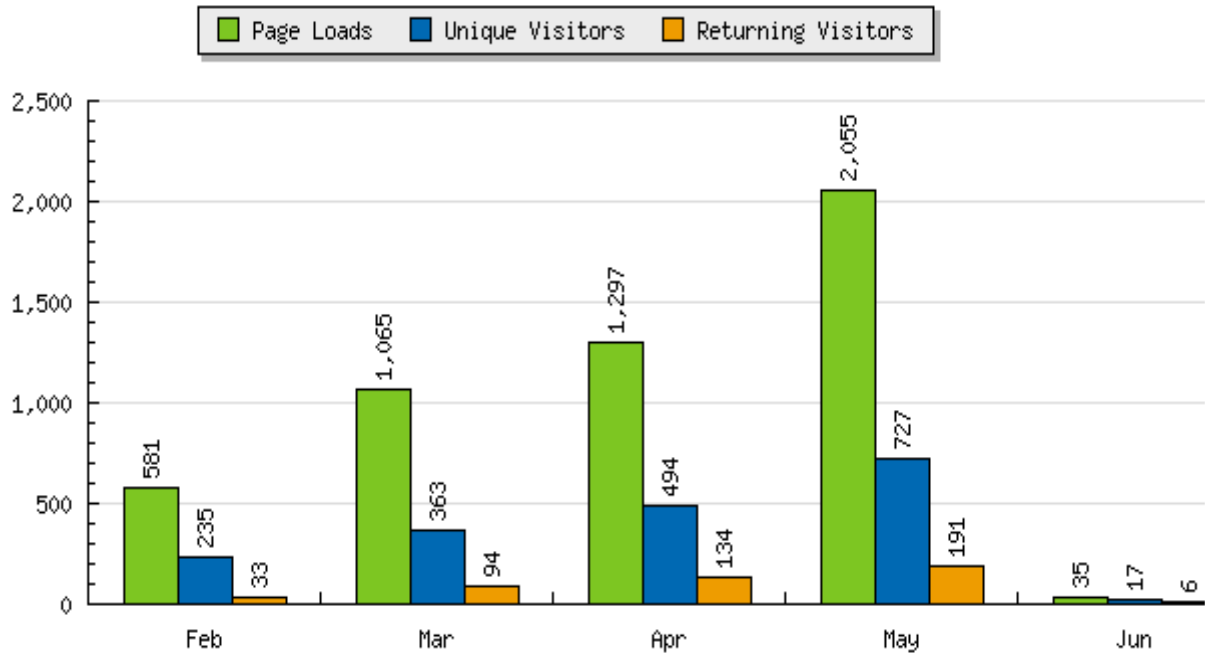


6.2 Website

30% of the children completing evaluation forms had visited the website and 32% said that their parents had. This was an increase on last time when just 25% of children and 23% of children said their parents had visited the website.

A "Blog" was created and the website was kept up to date with the latest news.

Altogether there have been over 5,000 hits on the website. A summary of recent activity is as follows:



Source: Statcounter

The website will remain and photographs and comments about the weekend will be added. The blog is still being updated with photographs from the events.

6.3 Favourite Bits

The top 5 writers/performers/activities according to unprompted feedback were:

- Wand Making, enjoyed most by 4-5 year olds
- Axel Scheffler, broad appeal 4-10 year olds
- The Gruffalo, enjoyed most by 4 year olds
- Spymasters, enjoyed most by 9 year olds
- Tony Mitton, enjoyed most by 4 – 7 year olds

A full list of responses is given in Appendix 1.

Also mentioned unprompted were:

Curwen Print Workshop
Cathy Myer
Book signing
Dressing up at school
Spill the Beans
Chalemina
Mini posters
Music Matters
Revolting Rhymes
Joe Craig
Buying books

Obelon Puppets
All (nothing specific)
Garden Storys
Liz Hide
Stuart Hill
Julia Jarman
Sophie Smiley
Alfie and Archie
Val Bloom
Alan Shea
Cafe

In short every activity that was put on for children was someone's favourite!

Sawston Books reported very good sales at the Book Festival Weekend.

6.4 Reasons for favourites

Children were asked why they liked their favourite part. Although most people put down a favourite on the evaluation form not as many gave a reason why. Responses for the top 5 are listed below.

Wand making

"it was very legendary"
"I love making nice things to take home"
"Because you got to know about trees"
"Because it was magic"
"I liked using sticks and leaves"

Axel Scheffler

"Kids loved telling him what to draw"
"The talk about the Gruffalo and finding out who won the competition"
"Watching the illustrator do drawings"
"Because he drew the witch from room on the broom"
"When he drew pictures they were grea"t
"Really good stories"

The Gruffalo

"I liked the gruffalo eating my hat"
"Cos I could bend his prickles (Gruffalo)"
"I liked the Gruffalo at school on Friday"
"Gruffalo was funny"

Spymasters

"Exciting and challenging"
"It was fun"
"I liked finding the right 2p piece in the safe"
"The cameras, the tree and grass"
"It was brilliant"
"It was fun looking for clues"
"Because of the laser garden"
"It was just like one I did before and I was looking forward to doing it again"
"Avoiding the spy cameras"
"Ducking under the camera"

Tony Mitton

"I like him reading his poems"

"I was really interested to hear him speak and perform"

"Loved the raps"

"A good performer"

6.5 Improvements

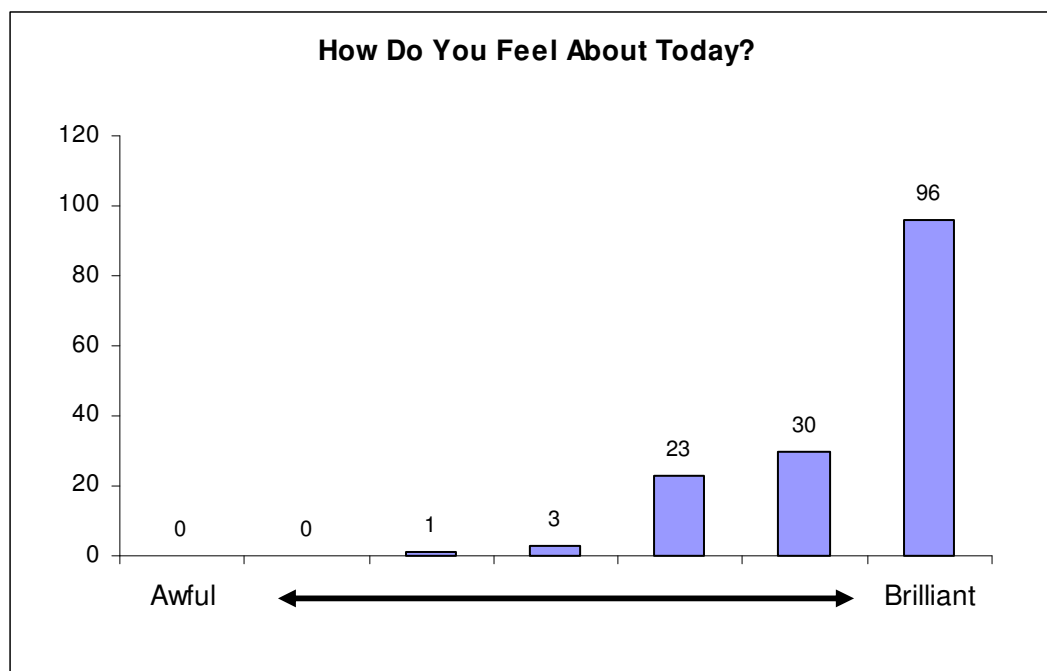
When asked about what improvements they would like to see, 30% left the space blank and 38% actually wrote "nothing". Other suggested improvements are listed below. Most comments were related to the very hot weather.

- More ice creams / lollies 6%
- Air conditioning in the hall 3%
- More out-doors
- Provision of burgers / hot dogs
- Paddling pool
- Gruffalo too frightening
- More of the Gruffalo
- Axel Scheffler to colour in the pictures
- More books in the bookshop
- More games

6.6 Awful or Brilliant?

Children were asked to rate the Book Festival on a scale of 1 (awful) to 7 (brilliant). Of the 153 responses the average was 6.4, just short of brilliant!

Indeed, nearly two thirds of respondents (63%) rated it 7/7 "brilliant".



6.7 Other Comments

Children were invited to make any other comments on the evaluation form, a fifth made comments of which 88% were very positive and some are listed below.

I had a lot of fun

It was brilliant, can you do it again next year?

Excellent - thank you

I think you should do it every year

Thank you all in the committee for a really great event

Best linton book festival ever

Please have another one

Looking forward to the next one

Congratulations

Thank you for a fun day

I had fun

It has all been really good, it's great when authors come into school

Very well organised

I enjoyed writing a story (at school)

Daddy worked very hard (committee members daughter!)

I really enjoyed it all thank you for organising

It was tricky getting tickets, (and I was put on a waiting list), but I had 2 calls (from a committee member) to say we had them for Axel Scheffler, very grateful thanks

A few suggestions were made:

Can you invite Cressida Cowell please

Advertise in other local schools like Ashdon (we did)

Some events marked as 5+ would be OK for younger kids

Storytelling throughout the day - stories acted out that you could drop into rather than ticketed (this happened on Saturday but not on Sunday)

7 APPENDIX 1

Favourite part of the Book Festival, unprompted, by age.

	Base	How old are you?													
		<1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13+	Adult
	155	1	2	9	18	21	16	27	18	19	11	6	1	3	3
Wand Making	31	-	1	2	9	7	4	4	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
Axel Scheffler	29	-	-	1	3	7	3	5	3	2	3	1	-	-	1
The Gruffalo	25	-	1	4	9	3	1	3	2	-	1	-	-	-	1
Spymasters	24	1	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	8	3	3	1	2	-
Tony Mitton	17	-	-	-	4	-	4	4	2	1	2	-	-	-	-
Curwen Print Workshop	13	-	-	-	-	2	2	4	2	3	-	-	-	-	-
Obelon Puppets	11	-	-	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
Cathy Myer	10	-	-	1	3	-	-	3	1	1	-	-	-	1	-
All (nothing specific)	8	-	1	-	-	2	-	2	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
Book signing	8	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	1	1	-	-	1	-	1
Garden Storys	7	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dressing up at school	6	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Liz Hide	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Spill the Beans	5	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stuart Hill	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-
Chalemina	4	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Julia Jarman	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mini posters	3	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sophie Smiley	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Music Matters	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Alfie and Archie	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revolting Rhymes	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Val Bloom	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Joe Craig	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Alan Shea	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Buying books	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Cafe	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

