

# First Story Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts

Year ended 30th June 2010



*'It was a pleasure to be involved in this wonderful project,  
which I think changes lives.'*

*Kate Harris, Oxford University Press*

**First Story Limited**

4 More London Riverside  
London  
SE1 2AU

Company Registered in England No: 6487410

Registered Charity No: 1122939

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F I R S T  S T O R Y

Fostering creativity, literacy and talent

# { **First Story Trustees'** }

## **Annual Report & Accounts** }

For the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, have pleasure in presenting their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

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# Legal & Administrative Information

## CONSTITUTION

First Story was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 29 January 2008 (registration number 6487410) and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The company is registered with the Charity Commission under registered number 1122939.

## PRINCIPAL & REGISTERED OFFICE

4 More London Riverside  
London SE1 2AU

## TRUSTEES

The trustees who served during the year were as follows:

William John Fiennes	
Charlotte Mary Hogg, Chair	
Beatrice Larregle	(resigned 7th February 2010)
Antonia MacKay	(resigned 30th June 2010)
John William Rendel, Treasurer	
Alastair Hamish Ruxton, Secretary	
James Jeffrey Wood	
Alice M Wright	(resigned 9th September 2009)
Robert John Waterloo Ind	(appointed 14th October 2009)
Anne Elizabeth Pryor Colocci	(appointed 7th February 2010)
Andrea Minton Beddoes	(appointed 30th June 2010)

The day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to Katie Waldegrave, the Executive Director.

## RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS

### Accountants

Griffin Stone Moscrop & Co  
41 Welbeck Street  
London  
W1G 8

### Bankers

CAF Bank  
25 Kings Hill Avenue  
West Malling  
Kent  
ME19 4JQ

# The First Story Mission

First Story supports and inspires creativity, literacy and talent in UK schools and their communities.

We arrange and pay for acclaimed authors to run creative writing workshops for students in challenging secondary schools across the country. First Story's criteria for determining whether a school is challenging are modelled after Teach First's document 'Teach First Schools: Eligibility Review (10th February 2010)', which recommends that selection be tied to economic deprivation and educational attainment. Therefore, 'challenging' refers to schools in which more than 50% of pupils are considered deprived according to the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) or in which GCSE results fall in the lowest third of the national distribution.

For the better part of a year, each author leads weekly, after-school workshops for up to sixteen students. At the end of the workshops, First Story publishes a professionally produced anthology for each school, and the schools host book-launch events at which the students read their stories to friends, families and teachers. In addition, we encourage schools to continue their publications independently of First Story and provide resources to help students and teachers create schools that place writing and creativity at the centre of the community.

We aspire to develop First Story hubs in strategic locations across the country.



# Introduction

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, KATIE WALDEGRAVE,  
& NATIONAL DIRECTOR, MÓNICA PARLE

Since its incorporation in early 2008, First Story has grown from a pilot project in one school to fourteen residencies in London and Oxford. The 2009–10 year was highlighted by our expansion into Oxford and the blossoming of a distinguished community of writers across both cities. The extraordinary work that each paired teacher and writer have done with their students is evident in the thirteen high-quality anthologies that we have published this year. Students have had success at literary festivals, in competitions and on residential trips, and we are proud of the role First Story is playing in establishing these fruitful collaborations.

First Story Writer-in-Residence Tim Pears, writing in *The Guardian*, perhaps described the outcome of this matching of writer and school best: ‘The effect of this year on the students involved is pretty clear to see. They have enjoyed the process of creative engagement, and expression, and their achievement – embodied in the published anthology – is giving them confidence and pride. They have become members of what David Constantine, at the Readers Day I attended in Liverpool last month, called the underground republic of literature. In such groups seeds have been planted; may culture bloom in our society.’

Looking ahead, First Story continues to pursue an ambitious programme of expansion, while remaining steadfast in our approach to providing a high-quality programme of workshops to students in secondary schools. We are committed to expanding into seven new schools per year and developing new hubs in areas of multiple economic deprivation. For the 2010–11 year, we have already committed to establishing four residencies in Nottingham, and we have recruited a new team member based locally. As the launch events get under way in Nottingham, we are excited by the enthusiasm of our new community there.

As far as maintaining – or rather enhancing – the quality of the more established projects in London and Oxford, we are placing a particular emphasis on teachers and alumni for this next year.

We have always encouraged teachers to write alongside their students in the workshops, with the idea that this supports them in their own creative processes. And indeed, you will see from the Evaluation section of this report that teachers indicate that they feel inspired and motivated by their work with First Story. For 2010–11, we are organising a teachers’ writing group outside the school environment, in the hope that working and writing together with other teachers in the programme will help them feel more confident as writers in their own right.

We have long been interested in how we might support students after their First Story year. We have already had success in this arena, with some of our alumni founding creative writing societies and continuing with their writing as a group outside school. However, for 2010–11, we are focused on developing a core circle of students into First Story Ambassadors, who will support us in identifying ways to help their peers. The Ambassadors will also lead ‘virtual workshops’ for their peers on the First Story networking site, and it is our hope that these Ambassadors will prove crucial in keeping their fellow students writing.

In terms of strengthening the core programme, we continue to refine the First Story teaching book and build expertise in the delivery of workshops. We look forward to many more inspiring events in London, Nottingham and Oxford. Finally, we are committed to supporting teachers and writers in helping their students become readers, and this year we will be investigating how this might best be achieved. We have been identified as a recipient of the ‘Give a Book, Get a Book’ donation scheme, and we will be encouraging students to set up reading groups alongside their writing groups.

Exciting things are afoot at First Story, and we are all delighted to have worked with such an extraordinary group of writers, teachers and students for the past three years. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of all our friends and supporters. We would like to thank you for the opportunities you have given our young people so far... here’s to many more!



KATIE WALDEGRAVE



MÓNICA PARLE

# Why First Story?

First Story seeks to address the educational disadvantage faced by children in challenging social and economic circumstances. In helping them to access writing and creativity, we strive to raise the achievement, self-confidence and aspirations of students in challenging schools.

Many agencies have acknowledged the link between economic disadvantage and educational disadvantage. OFSTED's *English at the Crossroads* analysis reported: 'Little progress has been made in closing the gap between [the literacy] of pupils who live in the most deprived areas of the country and those who live in the most affluent areas.' The same study also elaborates a need to support the teaching of writing: 'There was a clear need to reinvigorate the teaching of writing' and says students are offered 'too few opportunities for independent work.'

Where money is no object, schools value the impact of creative instruction, as demonstrated by the prevalence of writer-in-residence schemes. Schools like the American School in London and Eton College pay a high premium for these programmes.

In September 2010, Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Education, told the Today programme that the gap between private and state schools in this country is bigger than in any other country. The dearth of literary and extracurricular activities at challenging schools can be seen as a critical distinction between private and state schools.

Through our after-school workshop programme, First Story is tackling this divide by providing creative instruction to students who would not otherwise have access. First Story is helping students to find their voice, and to know that their voice has value.



# Objectives

The objects for which the Charity is established are:

- 1** to advance the education of young students in challenging UK secondary schools by providing and assisting in the provision of facilities not required to be provided by the Local Education Authority (LEA) for education in creative writing;
- 2** to advance in life and help young students in challenging UK secondary schools through the provision of support, opportunities and activities which foster their creativity, literacy and talent to build self-confidence, skills and aspiration so they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society; and
- 3** to promote the arts and, in particular, literature, poetry and creative writing by: inviting, commissioning and maintaining the services of British writers whether such services require the payment of fees by the Charity or otherwise; and encouraging and assisting in promoting, advancing and publishing the works of British writers.



FIRST STORY WRITER LOUISA YOUNG



# Our Story

In March 2010, nearly 200 people gathered in the Grand Marquee at the Oxford Literary Festival (OLF), where Ian McEwan had read just hours before. Six students sat on stage, faces pale. Fifteen-year-old Aaron threatened to flee before his turn. But when the moderator, Philip Pullman, called his name, Aaron squared his shoulders, stepped up to the mike and read his piece about the first time he got drunk, the first time he was arrested. The crowd was rapt with attention.

Aaron is one of hundreds of students in weekly First Story creative writing workshops. These workshops were conceived of in 2007. At the time, Katie Waldegrave was working at a ‘challenging’ school on the outskirts of London, near to Heathrow airport. She met the writer William Fiennes in the autumn of that year. They soon fell into a conversation about Fiennes’s work as Writer-in-Residence at the fee-paying American School in London. Fiennes has said about his experiences at ASL:

*You don’t expect to turn out best-selling authors every week. You hope to help your students express themselves in their own authentic voices, to value their experiences and memories, to be alive to the world around them, to notice more, to treasure the variousness of people and things. You hope to instil the most constructive sort of self-belief. For teenagers especially, these are important gifts... The shyest students grow in confidence when the whole group falls silent to listen to them read. It’s as if they’ve at last found a space in which they can be heard.*

Of course, not every school can afford to have a writer-in-residence. Fiennes and Waldegrave started First Story in the hope of bringing such an opportunity to schools that would not otherwise have access to creative instruction.

By September 2008, eight writers were conducting weekly workshops in eight different schools across London, from Hounslow to Finchley, White City to Bermondsey. In 2009–10, First Story nearly doubled the number of schools, with fourteen schools joining the First Story network. Eleven schools were based in London, and we founded a new hub in Oxford with three local schools.

Since our founding, more than 3,584 stories and poems have been written by students participating in First Story. Without the intervention of one of our writers, these stories might never have found an audience, or worse, might never have been told.

# Achievements & Performance

## SCHOOLS

In each of our fourteen school communities, First Story helped to bring together a vibrant group of young writers. This year, we offered workshops to approximately 225 students every week, bringing the total served by First Story since 2008 to approximately 400 students. Through our events and our work supporting teachers, First Story has also had an indirect impact on thousands of other students and community members.

First Story emphasises the importance of tailoring the programme to suit the needs of each community. Therefore, schools recruit up to sixteen students according to needs that the participating teachers and school leadership identify as critical. Students generally fall into three populations: those at risk of exclusion, gifted and talented, or those lacking confidence.

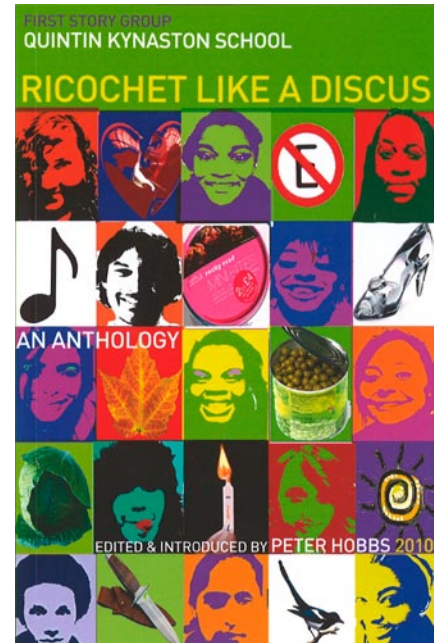
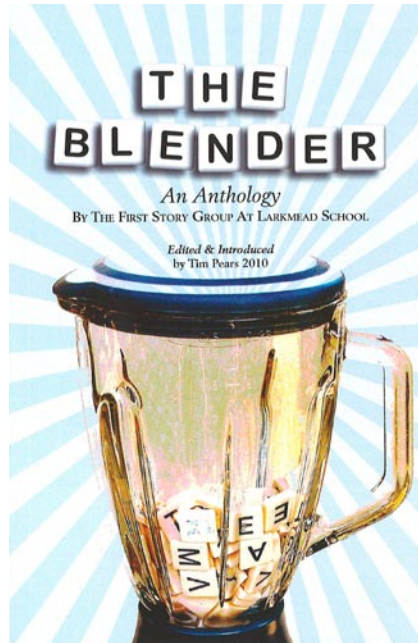
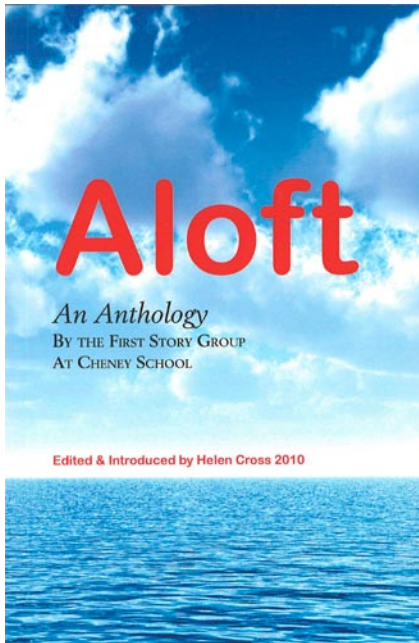
## WRITERS

This year, we placed twelve writers in schools. Since our founding, more than thirty writers have served as writers-in-residence, visited sessions or hosted readings and events with our students.

The writers for 2009–10 were:

- Raffaella Barker – Burlington Danes Academy
- Kate Clanchy – Oxford Community School
- Helen Cross – Cheney School (Oxford)
- William Fiennes – Cranford Community College
- Salena Godden – Charles Edward Brook School
- Romesh Gunsekera – Highgate Wood School
- Peter Hobbs – Quintin Kynaston School
- Courtia Newland – Highbury Grove School and Walworth Academy
- Tim Pears – Larkmead School (Oxford)
- Marie Phillips – Harris Academy, Bermondsey
- Betsy Tobin – Islington Arts & Media School
- Louisa Young – Holland Park School and Queens Park Community School

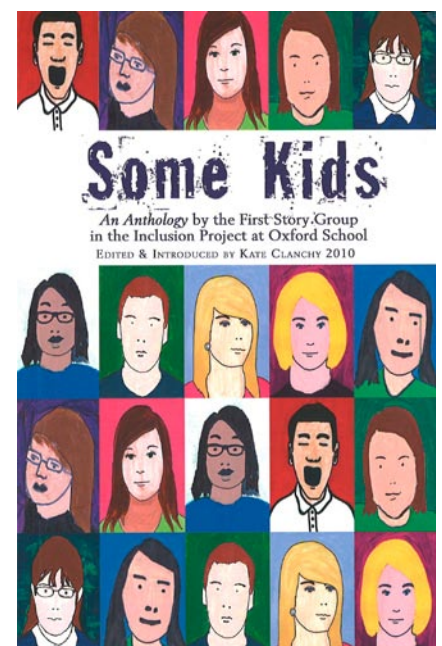
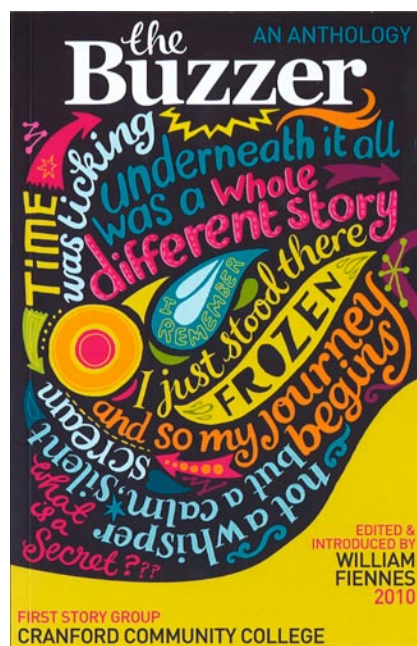
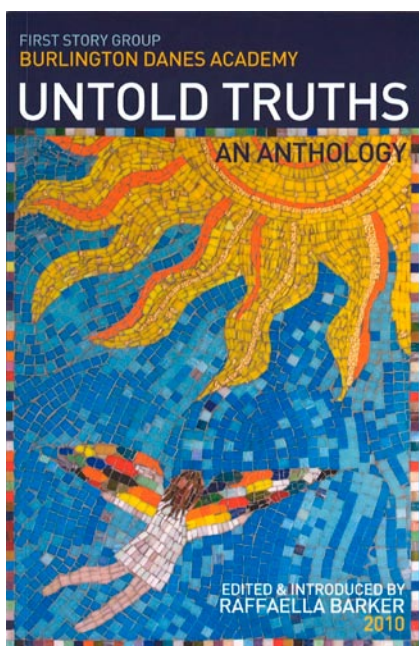
The writers we have placed in schools are all acclaimed, published authors. Between them, they've been on the Booker Prize short-list and won the BBC National Short Story Award, the Forward Poetry Prize, the Somerset Maugham Award, the Hawthornden Prize and the Ruth Hadden Memorial Award. In addition to their work for First Story, our writers have been named writers-in-residence at Somerset House, the Poetry Cafe, Cheltenham Festival of Literature, the University of Mumbai and the American School in London. All our writers are experienced teachers and workshop leaders, and most have taught for Arvon Foundation.



## PUBLICATIONS

In 2009–10, we published thirteen anthologies. This brings the total over three years to twenty-three. The students' work has spanned a variety of genres, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. This year, we received support from several leading designers, typesetters and illustrators in mainstream publishing. Foremost among these were Oxford University Press, which designed and printed all the Oxford school anthologies, and Avon Dataset, a typesetter based in Warwickshire, which typeset the text of ten of the London anthologies at no cost to First Story. We are grateful for their support and enthusiasm for our project.

This year we also purchased International Standard Book Numbers (ISBNs), which will allow for the distribution of the anthology to bookshops and online retailers like Amazon. This will enable First Story to bring First Story students' work to a much larger audience.





## EVENTS

First Story also strives to give participants other opportunities to engage with writing and creativity outside school. First Story began the 2009–10 academic year with a celebration held at Holland Park School in November 2009. Two hundred people attended the event, and two students read from their work.

March brought two events our way. First Story participated in the Oxford Literary Festival panel described above. In all, three teachers, three writers, six students, and co-founders Katie Waldegrave and William Fiennes shared the stage with Philip Pullman. After the event, the students mingled with the audience, answering questions about their writing and getting Pullman to sign their books.

The following day students from five schools also attended a day of workshops at Somerset House in London led by Romesh Gunsekera, First Story writer and Writer-in-Residence at Somerset House. Approximately sixty students participated, and five writers worked with students. Each writer selected a painting housed in the Courtauld Gallery, and students produced pieces inspired by their workshop leaders' selections. The session was followed by a reading of the work produced that day with another thirty friends, parents and First Story supporters in attendance. For many students, this was the first time they had ever visited a museum.

First Story also hosted its annual fundraising dinner at Café Anglais in early May. The evening featured a keynote address by Alain de Botton and readings by six students from our London schools. The dinner was attended by 200 and raised over £67,000. Our thanks to Rowley Leigh of Café Anglais for his invaluable advice and generous support.



ISLINGTON ARTS & MEDIA SCHOOL FIRST STORY GROUP  
AT THEIR BOOK LAUNCH EVENT

First Story schools hosted twelve very successful launch parties to celebrate the publication of the students' work in May, June and July. Altogether, more than 1,000 guests turned up to hear the students. Participants read from a treasure trove of stories and poems that spanned continents, time, and even dimensions. At one event, the young authors came onstage to the strains of 'Paperback Writer'; another school hosted an afternoon garden party on one of the hottest days of the year; and another hosted an intimate cabaret-style evening. One school turned their launch into an all-day, school-wide literary festival.

### **SUMMER RESIDENTIAL**

First Story awarded scholarships to twenty-six of our students to participate in a summer residential writing course in the Peak District. Over five days, they worked with three First Story writers: Laura Dockrill, Salena Godden and Nii Parkes. The group was also visited by writers Berlie Doherty and William Fiennes. Two students from each school were selected on the basis of their promise in the field of creative writing and their commitment to the First Story programme.

Feedback on the course was overwhelmingly positive. One student said, 'It's just been an amazing experience. It's made my whole summer. I'm so glad I was a part of this.' Others said, 'It gives you ideas and encourages you to keep on writing. Being a writer doesn't seem to be such a crazy thing after all,' and 'It is a brilliant opportunity and can let writers perceive their true potential and work towards it.'



**FIRST STORY STUDENTS AT THE SUMMER RESIDENTIAL**

## EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

Several First Story students had external publications this year, including Jack Appleton, whose poem 'Some Kids' was published in the *Royal Society of Literature Review*. Two First Story students' work was featured on Granta.com between the 28th and 30th of June 2010. Islam Mohammed's 'My Name' and Jenny Narramore's 'The Whale' were accompanied by an introduction by First Story co-founder William Fiennes.

## COMPETITIONS

First Story students also had a successful year in national competitions. Islam Mohammed (Cheney School) was named the winner of the Microsoft Womanity competition. Sophie Dahl, William Fiennes, Helen Simpson and Jennie Rooney – judges of the national Money Writing Competition – selected the anonymously submitted work of several First Story students for prizes. Lizzie Mundell Perkins (Cheney School) and Mayowa Sofekun (Harris Academy Bermondsey) were the overall winners for their year groups, and Imogen Charvill Ryall (Cheney School) and Kareem Wilson (Highgate Wood School) were finalists.

First Story ran a 100-Word Short Story Contest in autumn 2009 and printed one winning selection from each school on a postcard. In spring 2010, First Story hosted a Six-Word Short Story Contest. Quintin Kynaston School student Jordan Joseph Wildman's winning entry ('Went to shop. Won lottery. Sorted.') is being printed on a pencil.

Hands glide like a pianist's across the keyboard.

**The writer, in the midst of writing a story.**

The story seems to come to life beneath her fingertips,  
each character almost living, breathing, feeling;  
each object there to be seen, touched, and used.

**But then again, it's only almost.**

Each character only almost alive, wishing they could walk among the living, or perhaps the other way around. The author wanting to be amongst her creations, caring for them like a mother would her children. Maybe, one day, that could happen. An author can only live in hope.

## **WORK-EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS**

Each year we organise work-experience placements for students in media, arts organisations and charities, giving them a look in to sectors that are often difficult to access. This year, we placed students with such high-profile organisations as *The Independent*; *The Week*; Macmillan; Portobello; Faber & Faber; agents Rogers, Coleridge and White; and Which?.

One student said of her placement at *The Independent*, 'It was a fantastic experience learning the ins-and-outs of journalism. My highlight of the week was my name being credited in *The Independent on Sunday* for research I did on an article.'

## **TEACHERS**

In 2009–10, First Story paired our writers with eighteen liaison teachers who help to co-ordinate sessions each week. More than thirty teachers have had the opportunity to work with a writer since our founding. Liaison teachers write alongside the students, giving teachers valuable support and inspiration in their own creative practices. They have written of their experiences in the workshops: 'It allowed me to be creative and gave time for writing for fun, a rare opportunity in the workday,' and 'It made me remember why I went into teaching!'

Other teachers not directly affiliated with the programme also saw the merit of the sessions: as writer Courttia Newland noted, 'We even picked up a stray English teacher,' who attended each weekly session to work on her own writing. More than 100 teachers and members of the senior leadership teams at our First Story schools participated in sessions, met with other teachers and writers at three annual meetings and attended events that showcased our students' work.

First Story also partnered with the National Association of Writers in Education, the National Association for the Teaching of English and the Prince's Teaching Institute to deliver several professional development sessions for teachers, with approximately 100 participating across the sessions.

In this respect, the project has a considerable impact on individual teachers' approach to their own creative practices. Beyond that, as each of these teachers becomes familiar with our methods, they take these tools back into their classrooms to support other students not participating in the First Story programme.

## **FIRST STORY ONLINE**

First Story designed and launched a new website this summer with voluntary assistance from Psyche Interactive, a web design agency based in Shropshire. The website provides a more dynamic platform for information about our work. It includes improved design and functionality; a livelier and more visible page for our latest news and events; a section specifically for members of the First Story community; a section dedicated to work produced by groups in all our schools and a book shop with our writers' publications. Alongside this new interactive space, we have also increased our use of social networking tools such as Facebook and Twitter.



First Story continues to hone the NING site – our secure, closed-access online portal, encouraging students to share work and comment on pieces by students at other schools. Students have uploaded their work, as well as photos and videos relating to First Story events and writing, creating a lively community. We have recently added an alumni group as a way to keep programme leavers engaged with writing beyond their First Story year.

### **FIRST STORY ‘EXTRA-CURRICULAR’: GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

This year we have seen First Story students, teachers and writers starting projects outside the specific programme activities to great success.

First Story writer Tim Pears and Vicky Rolls and Natalie Cave, teachers at Larkmead School, devised a full-day Literary Festival, with all year groups, teachers and administrators participating in writing activities. Highlights included students providing commentary to a football match under the guidance of a leading sports writer and working with acclaimed writers Julie Hearn, Katherine Langrish, Courttia Newland, Sally Nicholls, and cookery writer Caroline Waldegrave. The day culminated in First Story students reading onstage alongside Philip Pullman and Tim Pears.

Participants also shared the workshop experience with other students in their communities. Cheney School First Story student Ben Heron has been assisting writer Kate Clanchy in creative writing workshops at a local primary school. Led by First Story students Aniq Imran, Simran Kahlon and Amarpal Khuttan, Cranford First Story Group has started a writing workshop for Year 7 students.

Not to be outdone, writers also contributed above and beyond our expectations. Peter Hobbs took his students on a tour of his publisher, Faber and Faber. Writer-in-Residence Marie Phillips invited other writers to work with her students, including Stephen Brown and Kerry Glencorse. Writer, actor and director Robert Hudson gave her students intensive coaching on reading aloud and presentation in advance of their book launch event. Tim Pears published an article in *The Guardian* promoting the programme, and he donated the proceeds to support the project in his school for 2010–11. Upon discovering that lunch-time sessions kept her students from eating, Betsy Tobin made sandwiches each week for her students. Louisa Young organised an after-hours writing evening for her students at the Grant Museum and donated two made-to-order stories for the First Story annual fundraising dinner.

It’s exciting for us to see how the project has evolved at each school.

## **GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT**

- First Story raised £169,757 via grant activity, fundraising activities and individual donors.
- First Story approved a revised business plan, detailing expansion and the core elements of the project.
- First Story refined its staffing structure, upgrading the co-ordinator position to Programme Manager and has created a new position of Programme Officer. We have also recruited a part-time Programme Manager for the East Midlands.
- First Story approved and implemented a revised Child Protection Policy and has developed a Policy for Establishing New Regional Hubs.
- First Story's website ([www.firststory.org.uk](http://www.firststory.org.uk)) has undergone a substantial redesign.

## **FUNDRAISING**

First Story has had a very successful year in fundraising terms despite the current economic challenges. We have received income in the year totalling £169,757 towards supporting our project in schools. Our funding sources are as follows: 32% from fundraising events, 34% from grants from trusts and foundations, 9% from LEA or participating school support, 7% from corporate sponsorship, 5% from other sources, and 13% from personal donations. We are incredibly grateful to our donors and supporters.

## **EVALUATION**

As a new charity, we are still in the early stages of data analysis. Nonetheless, it is clear that there is a positive correlation between attainment in English and participation in the programme. To assess the impact of First Story, we distributed online surveys to students, teachers and writers both at the beginning of the academic year and at the end.

Of the fifteen teachers responding, 86% of participating teachers indicated in response to an online survey that students' writing has improved beyond expected levels. Almost all the teachers (93%) felt their students were writing for pleasure with a greater frequency as a result of participating in the programme. All teachers felt that students participating in the programme have gained in confidence and self-esteem, their imaginative faculties, and their aspirations. Some teachers also pointed out how their students' social and communication skills have improved. All teachers viewed the publication of an anthology and the opportunity to work with a writer as a valuable experience for their students. Half (50%) of teachers thought there was an improvement in school attendance levels as a result, and 87% reported that students' career prospects have improved.

The eighty-one students who responded confirmed the teachers' perceptions about the positive impact First Story has had. The majority (91%) said they have become much more confident in their writing, and 95% reported they would continue to write for pleasure. When asked about their views on the programme, 68% felt it was 'inspirational and exciting', 51% felt it increased their love of writing, and 49% said it helped them achieve things they could not have done before.

Furthermore, teachers reported that First Story supports their own professional practices. All teachers found First Story to be a source of creative and practical ideas, with almost all finding it to be a source of inspiration (93%) and motivation (80%). The majority of teachers used writers' activities in their own classroom. Of course, this has a considerable impact on other students in the school. Our efforts to support teachers compound the number of young people served indirectly by the programme.

One of the most encouraging outcomes of the project is the ripple effect into the rest of the school. Several students have volunteered to run creative writing sessions for younger year groups, and one of our schools hosted a day-long literary festival in which the curriculum was collapsed and everyone in the school – students, teachers and staff – spent time writing creatively.

There are also several external assessments currently under way, which we hope will give a clearer picture of First Story's impact. In October 2009, Dr Andrew Green of Brunel University started a three-year rolling evaluation into the effectiveness of the programme. We would also like to offer our thanks to Andy Holt and Sara Cronlund at Experian who are helping us to refine our plan for evaluating the impact that First Story has on employability.

## Structure, Governance & Management

### **THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The directors of the company are also trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Board of Trustees. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, additional members of the Board of Trustees are elected at Board Meetings, based on a proposal discussed and approved by the Board of Trustees. Please refer to p. 2 for a list of trustees for 2009–10.

Trustees are recruited on the basis of their possessing the wide range of skills necessary to support the work of the charity.

### **TRUSTEE INDUCTION**

Before becoming a member of the Board, potential new trustees are encouraged to attend a Board Meeting as well as First Story events to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context in which it operates.

Before becoming a trustee they are given an overview of: the obligations of the Board of Trustees; the main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity including the Memorandum and Articles and the key policies; the current financial plan; and future plans and objectives.

## **ADVISORY BOARD**

First Story has set up an Advisory Board that supports the charity in making connections and providing advice on relevant fields.

The current Advisory Board includes:

Andrew Adonis, Former Parliamentary Under Secretary for Schools

Julian Barnes, Writer

Jamie Byng, Publisher, Canongate

Alex Clark, former Editor, Granta

Julia Cleverdon, CEO, Business in the Community

Andrew Cowan, Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing, UEA

Jonathan Dimbleby, Writer and Broadcaster

Mark Haddon, Writer

Josephine Hart, Writer and Presenter

Simon Jenkins, Writer

Andrew Kidd, Literary Agent, Aitken Alexander Associates

Rona Kiley, CEO, Academy Sponsors Trust

Chris Patten, Chancellor, the University of Oxford

Kevin Prunty, Headteacher

Deborah Rogers, Literary Agent

Zadie Smith, Writer

Alicia Stubbersfield, Writer and Teacher

William Waldegrave, Chairman, Science Museum

Brett Wigdortz, CEO, Teach First

## **FIRST STORY STAFF**

The First Story programme is delivered by the Chief Executive, Katie Waldegrave, and two full-time members of staff, Programme Manager Mónica Parle and Programme Officer Sarah Marsh. In 2010–11, Sarah Stubbings, a new part-time staff member, will be joining the team to support the First Story residencies in Nottingham. First Story is also supported by numerous volunteers, who provide assistance with research, copy-editing, the production of anthologies, the website and general office administration.

## **COLLABORATIONS**

### **Absolute Return for Kids (ARK)**

First Story and ARK partnered to offer continuing professional development for teachers. The sessions featured First Story writers Raffaella Barker and Louisa Young.

### **The Art Room, Oxford**

The Art Room, Oxford, worked with the students in the Inclusion Project at Oxford School to produce the cover for their anthology, *Some Kids*. In addition, the Art Room provided a cover from their collection for another First Story anthology, *Untold Truths*.

### **Granta**

In addition to providing voluntary copy-editing support and valuable advice for First Story, Granta featured the work of two First Story students and an introduction by William Fiennes on its website.

### **Higher Education Access Programme for Schools (HEAPS)**

First Story partnered with HEAPS to pilot its first-ever drop-in centre, inspired by Dave Eggers's 826 National model, to great success.

### **The Prince's Teaching Institute (PTI)**

The PTI collaborated with First Story to deliver a continuing professional development day featuring First Story author Peter Hobbs.

### **The Royal Society of Literature (RSL)**

First Story co-hosted a panel at the Oxford Literary Festival with the RSL. In addition, the RSL provided a valuable endorsement of the First Story project on their website.

### **Teach First and Citigroup**

First Story partnered with Teach First and Citigroup to host the Money Writing Competition for students in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. The collaboration resulted in the First-Story-produced anthology, *Money*.

## **Financial Review**

### **RESERVES POLICY**

The trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission. At the year end, £144,926 (2009-£119,462) of unrestricted reserves were held, and the trustees believe that First Story ultimately aims to hold sufficient reserves to cover six months of forecast expenditure plus core running and contracted costs.

The reserves policy takes into account the fact that First Story has no endowment funding, is currently heavily dependent for income upon donor funding from year to year, and requires protection against and the ability to continue operating despite catastrophic or damaging events.

### **FUNDING**

First Story holds no funds in a net deficit position.

## **Funds Held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others**

The charity does not hold any funds as a custodian trustee.

# Public Benefit Statement

The trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

## Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of First Story Limited for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Company law requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income and expenditure, of the company for that year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- 1) select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- 2) observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- 3) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- 4) state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- 5) prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that any statements of account comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### **INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS**

The independent examiners Messrs Griffin Stone Moscrop & Co have expressed willingness to continue in office.

### **SMALL COMPANY PROVISIONS**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on .....2010  
and signed on its behalf by:

Charlotte Hogg  
Chair