



MEDIA RELEASE

Event Date: Fri 13th March 2009, 2pm-3.30pm, Green Ark Children's Centre, Devonport.

The city's Lord Mayor will be encouraging toddlers to tell tales about him as part of the launch event of a unique music and arts resource that sets out to celebrate Plymouth's identity...

The "ArtSprouts" book has been two years in the making and includes creative music and arts activities interlinked with a story featuring the Eddystone lighthouse, a mermaid and the Lord Mayor himself. The resource is a result of repeated requests from people working with young children who felt unsure about how to use music and the arts with toddlers under 6. *ArtSprouts* has been the subject of extensive consultation and trialling across Children's Centres in the city and has an ever widening seal of approval. Even the composer of the hit song "Bob the Builder", Paul K Joyce, thinks it's set to become another children's favourite: **"This book stands out an absolute mile from all the other ones I've come across that contain music...I defy any teacher or parent who thinks they can't get even the most distracted toddler toe tapping within seconds!"**

The original ArtSprouts project was funded by Plymouth City Council Children's Services and Plymouth Music Zone and managed by Barefoot (Plymouth Arts Education Agency). Plymouth Music Zone and Barefoot developed the ArtSprouts resource book working closely with staff from Keystone Children's Centre and Morice Town Primary School. A grant from the 'Sing Up' national singing campaign has now funded both the publication of ArtSprouts and a programme of 'ArtSprouts' training sessions for early years teachers. Richard Marsh from the Barefoot Project says: **"It's such an achievement to get this far. It took so long to create because it's been truly tried and tested and actually works. So many people have fed into this wonderful little resource and we hope it's not only fun to use but also puts Plymouth on the map. It's for sale nationwide so who knows."**

Plymouth Music Zone's Project Director, Ben Ballard, created the music activities for the book and says there's another good reason for buying ArtSprouts: **"We'll be reaching hundreds of children by giving free copies and training to every Children's Centre in Plymouth. But we really hope that other people who want to use music and the arts with young children will buy this book or the training so we can plough any proceeds back into paying for free music activities for other children in need throughout Plymouth. Wouldn't it be great if people could support that."**

The launch of the resource will include the Lord Mayor playing himself when he reads from the first chapter of ArtSprouts during a "Tiny Tunes" music session being delivered by Plymouth Music Zone to a group of toddlers at the Green Ark Children's Centre on Fri 13 March at 2pm-3.30pm.

For more information and to confirm filming opportunities please contact Ben Ballard or Debbie Geraghty at PMZ on 01752 213690 or 0787 579 9882 (mob).

Plymouth Music Zone Ltd

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-ENDS

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Company Number - 4653409

Registered Charity Number - 1100878



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NOTES TO EDITORS:

Copies of the ArtSprouts resource can be bought from amazon.co.uk or directly from Plymouth Music Zone at a cost of £20.

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress and a number of VIP guests will be in attendance at the launch event on Fri 13th March at 2pm-3.30pm. Please contact Plymouth Music Zone for permission for filming on 01752 213690

Other Information:

ArtSprouts back page says:

"*ArtSprouts* was a direct response to an SOS call for help. It's the result of repeated requests from Early Years practitioners and others for a trusty creative compass – to navigate and explore the exciting but often uncharted territory of combining music, art, literacy and communication with young children. In fact, *ArtSprouts* promises calm waters ahead for anyone who wishes to work creatively with children aged 2-6 but thinks they just don't know how...

Very few cross-arts resources offer so many tried and tested activities in such a fun, inspiring and easy-to-follow way. It contains music and art activities cleverly interwoven with a story that charmingly unfolds in six chunky chapters – all backed up with a Song CD that's good enough to save the day.

From "Tiny Tunes" to "Crafty Creations", *ArtSprouts* sets out to be a beacon for even the most timid of explorers. In time, we hope it gives people enough confidence to inspire their own new adventures with all those children, parents and practitioners brave enough to take part in such a wonderful journey."

BACK PAGE QUOTES

Margaret Harding, Early Years Practitioner

"It's so rare to find such a friendly and flexible resource that gets back to basics and encourages creativity at the same time. Apart from children loving it, Early Years teachers have been crying out for something like this for a very long time. In fact, ArtSprouts is a 'hands on' resource that I'm sure many parents and teachers will want to grab with both hands!"

Maria Ferguson, Parent

"At last, something simple and effective but with absolutely bags of personality. This is fun, fun and more fun and what's more it has wipe clean pages too! I know very little about music and art but this really gives me confidence and makes me feel like anything is possible."

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