

****PRESS RELEASE – under embargo until Tuesday 6th February****



Usborne Academy scheme announced at ‘A Place At The Table’

#1 specialist children’s publisher launches new inclusivity programme

Usborne Publishing launched a new drive towards inclusivity in the publishing industry on Tuesday 6th February, at an event run by consultants and campaigners Inclusive Minds.

The independent, family-run children’s publisher has put together a programme named *The Usborne Academy* which will consist of both outreach events and an opportunity for young people to experience the business from the inside.

Usborne will be opening its doors for one week each August to 8 talented young people from groups currently under-represented in the industry. This immersive experience will be more than just a work experience placement: accommodation and travel expenses will all be paid for by Usborne in an effort to ensure that this opportunity is open to young people from all over the UK, and participants will be paid the London Living Wage for the full 40 hour week; the publisher will be offering time in a range of departments but also one-to-one mentoring sessions with senior staff, lunchtime seminars on a range of relevant topics, opportunities to socialise with staff and ask questions in a less formal setting, and the chance to find out more about – and take part in – the company’s extensive charitable work. The publisher will be actively seeking applications from over 18s whether they be school or college leavers, graduates or in work.

In addition to the ‘inbound’ arm of the programme employees can choose to use their annual, paid volunteering day (offered by the company to all its staff for some years) for ‘outreach’, going into schools (primary or secondary) to give talks and run workshops on what it’s like to work in children’s publishing.

Deputy MD Nicola Usborne, who has led this project at Usborne, says:

“The children’s publishing industry is a creative and dynamic one to work in and we feel lucky to have jobs making and selling amazing books. The Usborne Academy is about sharing that passion and allowing more people, from more diverse backgrounds, an opportunity to find out more. We want young people from all walks of life to be able to discover what children’s publishing is and what roles are available in the industry.”

Alex Strick and Beth Cox of Inclusive Minds will be consulting on the project.

“We’re delighted to be working with Usborne on this project to make work experience in publishing accessible to all. A more diverse workforce will, in turn, ensure greater diversity in the books that are published. And when children can find themselves in books they will begin to understand that books, and the book world, are for them, leading to even greater diversity in the industry. This scheme will help to play an important role in that cycle.”

Interested parties can find out more about The Usborne Academy on the publisher’s website: [usborne.com/academy](https://www.usborne.com/academy). Follow the project’s progress on Twitter: [@Usborne](https://twitter.com/Usborne) #UsborneAcademy

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