

## Children can get lost in a good book

A former headteacher has been helping inspire children this summer with an imaginative new venture.

Sarah Gallagher, who was behind the helm at Rendlesham Primary School for seven years, has opened up a "storyshack".

The aim is to inspire children to use their imagination, pick up a book and have fun.

They are also encouraged to write their own stories, discover new authors and get creative.

It has been open around three times a week during the summer holidays and Ms Gallagher said it continues to go from strength to strength.

"It is something I had been thinking about for quite a long time," she said. "I wanted to see if I could create a space where children could come and just be children. There is a lot of pressure on them to grow up too quickly - adverts and TV programmes almost miss out the ages after seven and jump straight to teenagers.

"But they still need to play. There's nothing wrong with computers or television but sometimes it's nice to get absorbed in a good book. For some that can be quite important."

The storyshack, which is open tomorrow, Sunday, Tuesday, August 20 and Thursday, August 22, has been

created in a barn close to the Crown pub in Snape.

"Just come along and choose something to do," Ms Gallagher continued. "There's no need to book first. We have had lots of people making holiday journals, others have been potion making and dressing up as fairies or pirates and having tea parties. Others have just been reading and finding authors that they have never heard of. We also talk to children and parents about their book choices, offer advice and suggest titles that they might enjoy."

Ms Gallagher, who also writes a blog offering reading recommendations, said after a short break the storyshack would be back from September, but to check dates on her website first.

"The response so far has been great," she said. "We had one family down from Sheffield who visited after seeing it on the internet. I've also had a lot of children from Rendlesham."

She said a number of authors, including Michael Rosen, Philip Reeve and Julia Jones had been very supportive, while publishers including Random House and Bloomsbury were providing proof copies for her to review.

She also thanked Miranda Barclay for use of the barn.

Visit [www.storyshack.org](http://www.storyshack.org) for more details.



■ Sarah Gallagher, former headteacher at Rendlesham Primary School, is looking to inspire youngsters by opening up a "storyshack".

# University scores well for satisfaction

**Matt Bunn**

[mattbunn@archant.co.uk](mailto:mattbunn@archant.co.uk)

More than four out of every five students at University Campus Suffolk (UCS) are satisfied with their course at the institution, according to new research.

Results from the national student survey (NSS) have revealed a third successive rise in student satisfaction at the university - with 82% saying they were satisfied with their course - a 2% increase on last year.

The survey, which gathers opinions from final year undergraduates, also revealed UCS is above the UK national average for student satisfaction in assessment and feedback and personal development.

UCS provost and chief executive, Professor Mike Saks, said: "As an institution we are delighted that the vast majority of our students have voiced positive opinions about their experiences at UCS.

"We have listened to what students have said and worked in partnership



■ Above, Professor Mike Saks, provost and chief executive of University Campus Suffolk, right. Photos: CP

with the Students' Union. The continuing improvements of the past years in these survey results indicate that we have taken their comments on



board and made positive steps forward."

The results show that some courses at UCS achieved 100% student satisfaction.

Those subjects include English, film, history, interior architecture and design and midwifery.

Steven Phillips, head of Learning Resources at UCS, was delighted with the results but insisted it was important the university continued to build on the success.

He added: "We are continuing to develop support and services for our students across the entire UCS network.

"Our additional investment of over £150,000 provides access to resources that compares well with the leading universities in the UK."

Despite revelations earlier this year that 14.6% of full-time degree students had dropped out of their course, the latest research has topped off a good year for the university, which came 98th in the Guardian newspaper University League Table in June - its highest ever position.

Mr Saks added: "Along with the recent rises in graduate employment and university league tables, the NSS highlights that we are on the right track at UCS. We shall continue to strive to improve the overall student experience at UCS."