



Media Release – Immediate

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Schoolchildren have fun learning sign language at Top Lodge, Fineshade Woods

A group of children from Glaphorn School will be taking part in a 'Sign with Olli' session at Top Lodge, Fineshade Wood on Tuesday 23rd March. This innovative way of teaching sign language was devised by Stamford-based Garry Slack, author of the award-winning children's sign language book series, 'Learn to sign with Olli'.

Garry, a qualified sign language trainer, created the 'Learn to sign with Olli' books with the aim of teaching sign language to children, parents and professionals working with young children in an easy and fun way. The books feature the character of 'Olli', a little monkey who loves to sign.

Garry said:

"The Sign with Olli sessions I have been doing with Glaphorn School combine sign language, music, fun and laughter to teach the children some simple sign language together with signed songs and nursery rhymes. I lead the sessions with the help of another signer dressed as Olli the monkey and the signs featured are all from British Sign Language (BSL)."

Mark Ratchford, Headteacher at Glaphorn School, said:

"Our students are really enjoying learning sign language in this way. Not only is it great fun, they are also discovering a whole new way to communicate; building on their own natural gestures, body language and non-verbal communication skills. Attending a session at Top Lodge – outside the normal school environment – is also extremely valuable; it enhances the learning experience tremendously."

Schoolchildren have fun learning sign language at Top Lodge, Fineshade Woods (cont.)

Sarah Walker, Visitor and Communities Services Manager at Top Lodge, Fineshade Wood, said:

“We are delighted that Top Lodge offers the right environment for children to learn sign language in this way – it’s great to be involved in such positive project. We are really looking forward to the launch of the latest book in the series, ‘Learn to sign about nature with Olli’, at Top Lodge, Fineshade Woods later this year.”

For more information about Garry’s work, please visit the website www.signwitholli.com

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NOTES TO EDITOR

About the Forestry Commission

1. The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible in England for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woods and forests, and increasing their value to society and the environment. Forestry makes a real contribution to sustainable development, providing social and environmental benefits arising from planting and managing attractive, as well as productive woodlands. Further information about the Commission can be found at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/>
2. Northants Forest District runs from Grantham in Lincolnshire right down to Ampthill in Bedfordshire, taking in many beautiful and varied woodlands.
3. Top Lodge, Fineshade Wood, north Northamptonshire

Top Lodge, Fineshade Wood is part of Rockingham Forest. Corby and Stamford are the nearest towns. Fineshade is signposted from the A43, 9 miles northeast of Corby, and 6 miles southwest of Stamford.
www.forestry.gov.uk/toplodge.

MEDIA CONTACT

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About Garry Slack and the ‘Sign with Olli’ range of books

Garry’s books have won national awards and critical recognition and been featured in many national magazines.

Learn to sign and cook with Olli was the overall gold award winner in the books for age 5 to 7 category in the Practical Pre School Awards 2009 and *Learn to sign with Olli* was highly commended in the books section of the Right Start Best toy awards for 2009.

For more information about Garry’s work, please visit the website www.signwitholli.com

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