

# UKHO Scoops Education Award



The United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) has been rewarded by education and business leaders for supporting a reading programme for primary school pupils. The UKHO was nominated for recognition in the 2009 Somerset Education Business Awards by Halcon Community Primary School for the significant contribution made by staff to the Right to Read Scheme over the last three years.

The Right to Read Scheme is a project to promote the importance of literacy and seeks to engage volunteers from businesses to become reading partners with children aged 5-11 years old.

Since 2006 a dedicated group of UKHO volunteers has been visiting the Taunton school on a weekly basis during term time to help pupils improve their reading skills.

UKHO Right to Read scheme co-ordinator, Emma Wise, said: "As a result of the scheme children are showing an average of six months improvement in reading age in just 12 weeks.

And Halcon Community Primary School headteacher, Richard Adams, said: "The UKHO staff act as positive role models and build positive relationships with the children. The Right to Read Scheme has made an effective contribution in the raising of children's reading ages, with many pupils doubling their rate of progress."

UKHO Right to Read representatives Emma Wise, Paul Impey and Ian Killick collected the Business Award at the awards ceremony, organised by Somerset Education Business Partnership, on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March evening. The 2009 Education Business Awards event, held at the offices of Western Provident Association in Taunton, provided a showcase for successful partnerships and initiatives between schools, colleges and businesses.

Somerset EBP manager, John Crew, said: "When you consider how difficult it is for businesses in the middle of this recession it is very encouraging to see that here in Somerset there is still a great commitment to fostering strong links with the workforce in the future."

And BBC Points West television presenter, Sally Challoner, who hosted the evening said: "It is wonderful to see the creativity and enthusiasm on display. It bodes well for the future of the Somerset workforce."