



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All

Agenda Item 5 (revised)

**FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
Schools Forum November 15th 2018**

Bookstart – funding support 2018/19

Report of the Area Development Manager Neighbourhood Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To outline the case for the continued funding support to Bookstart project in 2019/20. At a previous meeting of Schools Forum 21/11/17 funding of £65,000 was agreed to offset the impact of the ending of the project's core funding resulting from the Early Help Review.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To note that funding of approximately £70k will be required to continue the Bookstart service in its current form for one further year.
- 2.2. To consider whether schools would be willing to make a collective contribution to funding the service.
- 2.3. To note that alternative funding contributions are being sought by the Council.

3. Summary

- 3.1. It is well recognised the importance and impact of Bookstart in family development. Bookstart aims to promote and encourage the sharing of books in the home. The scheme provides high quality resources, including activities and guidance for parents/carers on the benefits of sharing books from an early age. Bookstart staff in partnership with Children', Young People and Family Centres (CYPFC) have developed targeted programmes for disadvantaged families - identified through Priority Children List - to offer intervention and support. Research is positive indicating that those attending the Book Corner programmes are more likely to be engaged with books, stories and rhymes and engaged in their child's learning. The funding will enable effective delivery of Bookstart across the 6 cluster network of CYPFC's., Bookstart has been recognised as an effective programme in the Under Fives Strategy.
- 3.2.

4. Report

- 4.1. Bookstart is an evidence-based, primary preventative, early intervention programme that improves outcomes for early child development through the shared experience of using books for pleasure together with a parent/carer or other family member e.g. grandparents. Families having fun sharing books together, the importance of the home learning environment, and recognizing parents/carers as their children's first and most enduring teacher are the key elements of Bookstart.
- 4.2. Disadvantaged parents/carers can be unaware of the benefits of sharing books with their child or lack confidence to do so. Many will not have experienced this as a child. Bookstart provides them with books and guidance and support from specifically trained staff to help them engage with their child's emotional, communication and language development by regularly sharing books/stories/rhymes. Simply providing families with access to books without support does not necessarily change attitudes to reading.
- 4.3. Evidence has shown that parent/carer attachment is supported by positive sharing of books/stories. It can be a significant key in encouraging and supporting active engagement by fathers. The Fatherhood Institute's research found that for 64% of babies aged 6 months the Bookstart pack was the first book to enter the family's home and the first encouragement for the parent/carer to share books with their child. The Executive Summary of Findings for a report on Family reading habits and the impact of Bookstart highlight key recommendations that recognise the importance of active promotion and intervention has on the effectiveness of the resources.
- 4.4. Bookstart contributes to the key priorities the Under Fives Strategy and Children's Services Early Help strategy – health and wellbeing, achievement and aspiration (narrowing the gap), and school readiness. Leicester City receives free Bookstart resources worth £220,000 from the Book Trust for 2018/19. The Bookstart Partnership Agreement is attached to this report which includes a commitment to: Appoint or retain a dedicated Bookstart partnership coordinator or designate staff time to this programme. Sufficient hours are needed for coordination, partnership working, development and reporting to Book Trust.
- 4.5. Bookstart delivery –from April (2017) to July (2018) – 5505 Bookstart Baby packs (0-12 months) , 4990 Bookstart Treasure Gift (36-48 months) and have been gifted to Leicester families. National Bookstart annual audit (2017/18) assessed Leicester's reach for distribution of packs as 93% Baby Pack and 94% Treasure Gift The effective impact of these resources depends on the active promotion by the Bookstart staff team which gives parents/carers the essential awareness and confidence to support their child's development through regular sharing of books, stories and rhymes.
- 4.6. Bookstart interventions. Bookstart Book Corner-from April 2017 to June 2018- 66 programmes have run in CYPFC's/Early Years Settings/Individual homes. Totalling 198 individual sessions attended by 586 families. . Family evaluation focuses on 4 key areas – 66.5% of parents/carers reported their confidence in sharing books/stories had increased..56% knowledge of the importance of books/stories in child's development. 68.5% now read more often with their children.65,5% reported that their children joined in when shared with books . As well as the targeted Book Corner intervention 12 training sessions on storytelling and the promotion of early years book use have been provided for staff/parents/carers. Bookstart staff has supported 50 book focussed events.
- 4.7. The Time To Read programme to encourage the sharing of stories in families was delivered in 62 Leicester Coty Foundation Stages in 2017/18. Foundation staff rated the

storytelling/gifting/advice sessions as 83% very good and 16% good. 100% reported a positive response to what their children and families gained from the sessions with particular emphasis on the impact on listening and language skills, storytelling experience with different adults, excitement and enjoyment of stories. 89% reported that they would be carrying out follow up activities to enhance and extend the impact of the programme. 95% of parents/carers attending said the events would help them use stories/books with their children. The Time To Read programme for 2018 began in October and already 56 Foundation Stages have signed up to participate in promotional events. The Time To Read report for 2017 is attached.

- 4.8. Bookstart staffing structure: one co-ordinator 22.5 hours, one admin support 9 hours, 3 Bookstart development workers 18.5 hours. The Bookstart staff team is now complete with an experienced and balanced profile covering teaching, early years and parenting. Funding till 2020 would allow targeted consistent delivery of the project.
- 4.9. Summary of impact of funding reduction. Reduction in ability to delivery awareness to families of using books. Reduced capacity to maximise the delivery/promotion of Bookstart resources. Reduced support/co-ordination of the programme leading to a reduction in positive impact. Fewer disadvantaged children will be school-ready and will be developmentally behind peers. If funding is not continued for the Bookstart Project this would put at risk the continued participation of Leicester City in the Bookstart Partnership and the loss of £220,000 resources for the support of children's language and early literacy development and school readiness.

5. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Financial Implications

- 5.11 In previous years Early Years' Block Centralised expenditure has been approved by Schools Forum.
As was reported at the previous Forum meeting, changes to the Early Years' funding formula and the need to use the Early Years' block for early years' SEN support (rather than the High Needs Block) means that there is *no* funding available for *any* centralised expenditure.
- 5.12 As a result alternative funding is being sought for Bookstart. This paper is asking whether or not schools may be willing to contribute collectively. In addition, alternative funding contributions are being sought from within the local authority.

Martin Judson, Head of Finance

5.2. Legal Implications

[Click here to type legal implications]

5.3. Climate Change Implications

[Click here to type legal implications]

6. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/ NO	Paragraph/References Within Supporting information
Equal Opportunities		
Policy		
Sustainable and Environmental		
Crime and Disorder		
Human Rights Act		
Elderly/People on Low Income		
Corporate Parenting		
Health Inequalities Impact		

7. Risk Assessment Matrix

Risk	Likelihood L/M/H	Severity Impact L/M/H	Control Actions (if necessary/appropriate)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6 etc			

8. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

8.1. [Click here to type background papers]

9. Consultations

9.1. [Click here to type consultations]

10. Report Author

10.1. Paul Gobey