

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

**DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACT OF THE IMAGINATION LIBRARY - FEBRUARY 2013
TO NOVEMBER 2015**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update of the development and impact of the Imagination Library programme between February 2013 and November 2015.
- 1.2 The report invites recognition of the contribution the Imagination Library has made to improving outcomes for our youngest children.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Literacy influences individual capability in all spheres of life. The higher the levels of literacy in the community the higher the levels of employment, better health outcomes, lower levels of crime and the higher the levels of social engagement and overall wellbeing of residents
- 2.2 North Lincolnshire has a strong legacy of promoting the importance of Early Literacy and communication to raise aspirations and life chances of children and young people and their families
- 2.3 Sharing books in the home supports much more than a love of reading. Time together enjoying books promotes secure attachments which supports the development of confidence, self-esteem health and wellbeing. Children and adults engaged in reading together builds communication, listening, understanding and talking skills. The Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire has created a real awareness of 'book sharing and the pleasure for reading' across all our communities.
- 2.4 In recognition of the importance of early language acquisition and the role of reading to young children in emotional attachment, North Lincolnshire Council introduced an Imagination Library pilot in the Isle Community in February 2013. The uptake and engagement was hugely successful and the vast majority of families with children under the age of 5 engaged with the pilot. As a result of the feedback from parents and the community the Council decided to make a commitment to a universal roll out across North Lincolnshire. By January 2014, 80% of the eligible population was registered.

A total of 10,645 children have benefitted by receiving their monthly free books. 2,832 of these children have now 'graduated'.

- 2.5 Currently 84% of eligible children are registered and a third of parents registering for the Imagination Library request Children Centre registration, increasing the reach for early help of our potentially more vulnerable children and families.
- 2.6 The Imagination Library positively encourages parental engagement in early learning and has provided a wide range of opportunities for services such as Children Centres, health visitors, libraries, preschools and schools to support parents in developing their child's learning. A range of complementary activities, resources, top tips, groups for parents, stay and play sessions, development of training linked to other service initiatives have enhanced the Imagination Library gift of books and have established a true joy and anticipation around the delivery of the 'next book' to arrive through the post.
- 2.7 Every effort has been made to reach our most vulnerable young children and families. The Imagination Library has enabled services to maximise resources, skills and expertise. It has provided a vehicle for services to develop a 'community team approach' providing a deeper understanding of communities. This has enabled parents, carers and the early year's settings to work in partnership to ensure the very best start for all our young children; this includes working with the fostering and adoption teams. All children in care are registered with the Imagination Library and members of the early year's team regularly attend Adoption and Fostering events to support and promote Imagination Library activities.
- 2.8 Specialist resources have been created to support children with additional needs and a regular Stay and Play is held at the Early Learning & Development Centre. Staff work with the neonatal ward at the hospital and have trained all frontline ONGO staff to promote the Imagination Library and signpost families to children centre and library sessions. A weekly Imagination Library session is held for vulnerable young parents to encourage them to share stories and engage in interactive play sessions to promote attachment and the importance of their role, as parents, on their child's future educational success.
- 2.9 At the end of the Foundation Stage, age five, all children are assessed using a set of national criteria, including a key focus on language and communication skills. The headline performance measure is the proportion of children achieving 'a good level of development'.
- **In 2015, North Lincolnshire was in the top quartile of all local authorities with 70% of children achieving a good level of development'. This compares to 53% in 2013 and a national outturn of 66 %.**
 - **The percentage of children eligible for free school meals achieving a good level of development' in 2015 was 56% - a 21 percentage point increase from 2013.**
 - **92% of children in the Isle pilot locality are registered for the Imagination Library – in 2015, 88.5% of these children achieved the expected level of communication and language (compared to 83% in**

the whole of North Lincolnshire) and 73% achieved a good level of development overall.

- **North Lincolnshire's achievement gap between boys and girls at age 5 was one of the narrowest when compared with statistical neighbours and within the top 25% of all local authorities**
- **The achievement gap between the lowest achieving 20% of the cohort and the rest of the cohort (the 'inequality gap') was 28.9% in North Lincolnshire, which was 3.2 percentage points narrower (i.e. better) than the national achievement gap of 32.1%**

2.10 Imagination Lead Champions have been established across all localities to share and support the development of the Imagination Library within their communities. Lead Champions have supported 'Book Chatter and Parent Partnership' training for practitioners and parent volunteers. Ofsted inspectors have commented on the positive impact of the Imagination Library on teaching and learning in their reports.

2.11 Libraries and Children Centre activity has increased and more children and families in the 30% most vulnerable categories are accessing a wider range of services promoting early learning, literacy and communication. Children Centres and schools are working with Adult Learning to develop targeted support for parents' literacy and numeracy skills to promote further training and employment opportunities.

2.12 North Lincolnshire has hosted a number of visits from different authorities and organisations. This has been at the request of Imagination Library because they view North Lincolnshire's approach as a model of exemplary practice in the way a wide range of Council services and our partner organisations have engaged with communities to maximise the impact of the Imagination Library as resource for developing and supporting community aspiration.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION,

3.1 To recognise the impact of the Imagination Library on improving outcomes for our youngest children.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Recognition of the impact reaffirms the Council's commitment to improving outcomes for all children across North Lincolnshire and especially the more vulnerable and disadvantaged.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Not applicable

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6.1 Not applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 7.1 The following stakeholders have been involved in the development and delivery of The Imagination Library – Early Years Outcome Duty partnership, parents, carers, early years practitioners, schools, library services, health services – midwives, school nurse teams, speech and language, children centres, children services – Adoption and Fostering, community groups, Rotary, Imagination Library UK, ONGO, North Lindsey College, museums, arts – 20-21, Young Parents Support, Local Business and National Literacy Trust.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To recognise the impact of the Council's investment and note the contribution that the Imagination Library has made to the increased levels of learning and development for all of our youngest children.

DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE

Ashby Road
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN16 1AB

Author: Sandra Simmons: Principal Officer Professional Standards and Early Years

Date: 18 December 2015

**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
Statistical First release Early Years Foundation Stage 2015**

Imagination Library

Appendix 1

| Imagination Library Data as of 11th January 2016 | | | | % of children achieving a Good Level of Development | | | | % of children achieving expected level in PSED | | | | % of children achieving expected level in CLL | |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| LOCALITY | REGISTRATIONS | POSSIBLE REGISTRATIONS | % Children in Locality | 2013 GLD All | 2015 GLD All | 2013 GLD FSM | 2015 GLD FSM | 2013 PSED All | 2015 PSED All | 2013 PSED FSM | 2015 PSED FSM | 2013 CLL All | 2015 CLL All |
| ISLE | 895 | 994 | 90.04 | 57.8 | 72.6 | 43.5 | 58.3 | 82.6 | 89.8 | 65.2 | 87.5 | 83.9 | 88.5 |
| BARTON & DISTRICT | 1348 | 1585 | 85.05 | 54.6 | 73.5 | 43.8 | 58.8 | 79.7 | 86.1 | 72.6 | 70.6 | 73 | 84.7 |
| SCUNTHORPE SOUTH | 3053 | 3566 | 85.61 | 49.3 | 67.4 | 29.9 | 59.2 | 79.1 | 85.9 | 69 | 79.6 | 71.3 | 84.3 |
| SCUNTHORPE NORTH | 1475 | 1899 | 77.67 | 54.1 | 69.5 | 43.4 | 57.9 | 75.7 | 84 | 67.1 | 75.4 | 63.7 | 76.9 |
| BRIGG & DISTRICT | 1037 | 1313 | 78.98 | 52.8 | 71.5 | 39.1 | 45.2 | 79.8 | 88.8 | 58.7 | 76.2 | 73 | 82.7 |
| North Lincolnshire | 7808 | 9357 | 83.52 | 52.7 | 70.1 | 37 | 57 | 79.2 | 86.5 | 67.9 | 77.6 | 72.1 | 83.3 |
| National | | | | 51.7 | 66.3 | 36 | 51 | 76.3 | 83.7 | | | 72.2 | 80.3 |

Key

GLD = Good Level of Development

PSED = Personal, Social, Emotional Development

CLL = Communication, Language and Literacy