

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

Five Years on – the success of North Lincolnshire’s Imagination Library

OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

1 To inform Cabinet of the success of five years of North Lincolnshire’s Imagination Library

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1** North Lincolnshire celebrated five action packed years of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library book scheme in February 2018. All children from birth to five years in North Lincolnshire are eligible to register with this hugely popular scheme to inspire young children and highlight the importance of reading for pleasure. The roll out of the Imagination Library has made a significant impact in raising parent, carer and family awareness of the value of sharing and reading books with young children. Since the scheme was launched in February 2013, an incredible 379,882 books have been gifted to children across North Lincolnshire. 6,637 children have now graduated from the scheme, having reached their 5th birthday.
- 2.2** The total number of children registered to date with North Lincolnshire Imagination Library Scheme is 14,940. During the period 2016 to present, consistently high rates of registration have been maintained with 88% of children currently registered. 3,245 of the 8,303 children currently registered live within the 30% lowest super outputs areas.
- 2.3** An analysis of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data 2016 and 2017 provides strong evidence that the Imagination Library has contributed to the improved outcomes at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage. Of the children registered with the Imagination Library 74.3% achieved a Good Level of Development: 4% above the national score and 10% higher than their unregistered peers
- Since 2013, there has been an 21.2 percentage point) increase in the proportion of children in North Lincolnshire achieving a good level of development.

- North Lincolnshire's attainment gap between boys and girls at age 5 has narrowed in all key measures and is narrower than those seen nationally in all benchmark areas.
- 70% of boys registered with the Imagination library achieved a good level of development compared to 56% for boys not registered. Boys registered with the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire now achieve as well as their peers nationally.

2.4 The Dolly Parton trust promotes North Lincolnshire as a model of excellence. The trust describes North Lincolnshire as a 'world leader' with an exciting and innovative programme of work that engages the whole community, including health, early year's educators, parents and carers.

"It is a pleasure to work with North Lincolnshire, we have been amazed and bowled over by the council's passion to the development and delivery of the Imagination Library. This leadership and commitment has been demonstrated by the fantastic achievement of more than 88% of children enrolled in the Imagination Library: one of the highest levels of enrolment we have, not just here in the UK but internationally. North Lincolnshire provide invaluable input to the book selection process and make sure that feedback from families plays a key role in choosing our UK books for the coming year". The Regional Director for the Dollywood Foundation :

2.5 Feedback from parents about the Council's commitment to early literacy development has been overwhelmingly positive. *North Lincolnshire parents frequently comment about how lucky they feel that North Lincolnshire supports the Imagination Library programme.* Parents regularly comment on the way the book arrives addressed to the child making it feel a really positive and unique approach to valuing books and reading becoming part of the home routine. Parents have commented on the variety and quality of the books, the opportunity to explore different authors and considering nonfiction books as well as fiction. Furthermore, there is evidence that the Imagination Library and the wide range of complementary activities have increased parent and carer engagement in the wider local offer for our youngest children.

2.6 A unique aspect of the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire is the diverse range of complementary activities promoting the joy of reading including sessions at Children's Centres, libraries, parent groups, Dudley's Den, stories in the park and community events such as - Crosby One International Day, Phase Young Parents Group, Ongo festival, Cycling Extravaganza, Interserve Justice Women's group. A series of 'Celebration Events' have taken place celebrating the fifth birthday of Imagination Library culminating in March 2018 on the Isle. The engagement and enthusiasm of the Community and the support from volunteers is an essential part of the Imagination Libraries success. There are 213 Imagination Lead Champions supporting the

development of the Imagination Library, *including 20 volunteers from the Scunthorpe Rotary Club supporting Explorer Sessions at Central library and over 60 students from North Lindsey College.* In summer 2016 an online Imagination Library forum was established to keep practitioners and *volunteers up to date and share resources and ideas* – with more than 440 early year’s practitioners taking part. Local businesses, voluntary groups, Rotary and charities such as Health Tree Trust have been hands on supporters for the Imagination Library and instrumental in establishing a *North Lincolnshire Children’s Trust* supported by and chaired by a local author.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 This report is for information and invites Cabinet to notes the success of five years of North Lincolnshire’s Imagination Library.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 In acknowledging this report, cabinet recognises the success of the first five years of the Imagination Library programme in North Lincolnshire and the difference it has made in terms of positive outcomes for young children and their families.

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

6. OUTCOME OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6.1 NA

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 NA

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 To note the success of five years of North Lincolnshire’s Imagination Library and the difference it has made to young children’s early learning outcomes.

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Background Papers used in preparation of this report : Nil