

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

THE NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE IMAGINATION LIBRARY REPORT 2021

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To introduce the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library Report.
- 1.2 To approve and publish the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library Report.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In North Lincolnshire we are passionate about giving all our children the best possible start and we know developing a love of reading is critical to the effective development of a child's future. This report is a celebration of the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library and the many achievements that have been enabled for children and families. It also sets out our plans for the future ensuring that children's early literacy continues to be a priority within North Lincolnshire.
- 2.3 This report demonstrates the impact of the investment made by North Lincolnshire council since the programme's inception in 2013. Children who first registered with the Imagination Library when it was launched in 2013 reached the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage in 2016. Since 2016, we have collected and analysed data which clearly shows that children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their unregistered counterparts each year. The impact of the Imagination Library is not confined to the EYFS and continues to evidence itself on a child's journey throughout school. In 2017 and 2018 research was undertaken to whether children who were previously registered with the Imagination Library continued to outperform their unregistered counterparts in the end of Year 1 Phonics Screening Test. The cohort of children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their non-registered counterparts in each year. In 2019 further research was undertaken to whether children who were previously registered with the Imagination Library continued to outperform their unregistered counterparts at the end of Key Stage 1. The cohort of children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their non-registered counterparts in each subject area.

- 2.4 The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library continues to go from strength to strength and is promoted as a model of international excellence. North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library is the highest achieving UK programme since its launch in 2013. Parents frequently comment about how lucky they feel that North Lincolnshire Council supports the Imagination Library programme and the difference it makes to their children's lives, and a love of sharing reading in the home.
- 2.5 The extensive reach of the Imagination Library across North Lincolnshire makes the biggest impact on some of our most vulnerable families and young children. In North Lincolnshire the Imagination Library makes a real difference to our children who do not have the same opportunities as their peers or are at risk of underachieving - most notably for summer born children (boys in particular), children with special educational needs and children whose first home language is not English.
- 2.6 By working in partnership and taking a 'One Family Approach' we have created a pathway of expertise and resources that are easily accessible, creative, and simple which enable families to build and extend their children's home learning environment. Almost 2,000 residents access the North Lincolnshire Imagination Monthly newsletter for ideas and inspiration. Sharing books in the home supports so much more than a love of reading. Time together enjoying books promotes secure attachments that support the development of confidence, self-esteem, health, and well-being.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Adopt and publish the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library Report 2021

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 This report is a celebration of the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library and the many achievements that have been enabled for children and families. It also sets out our plans for the future, ensuring that children's early literacy continues to be a priority within North Lincolnshire.

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g., LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

- 5.1 There are no specific financial or other resource implications in relation to adopting / publishing this plan.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

- 6.1 There are no other relevant implications.

- 6.2 Equalities issues under the Equalities Act 2010 have been considered and included in this plan.
- 6.3 This plan is closely linked to the Council Plan, supporting its aspiration and ambition to be the #BestPlace for our residents and the #BestCouncil we can be.
- 6.4 No environmental implications or significant risks have been identified as arising from the recommendation to adopt this plan.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 7.1 N/A

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 8.1 No conflicts of interest have been identified.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Imagination Library Report for 2021 is approved and published.

DIRECTOR OF LEARNING, SKILLS AND CULTURE

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
Author: Sandra Simmons
Date: 02/06/2021

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report –

North Lincolnshire data and international research led by Swansea University on behalf of Dolly Wood UK.

DRAFT

The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library



**North
Lincolnshire**
Council

www.northlincs.gov.uk

Welcome to our report on The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library. North Lincolnshire Council is passionate about giving all our children the best start. A love of reading is critical to the effective development of a child's educational future. Our own research into the impact of the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library shows the significant benefit that registering with the programme has on children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and beyond.

The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library continues to go from strength to strength and is promoted as a model of international excellence. North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library is the highest achieving UK programme since its launch in 2013. Nine out of ten children under the age of 5 in North Lincolnshire are registered with the Imagination Library, which means that currently 7,367 children are receiving a free book every month. Families have told us what the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library and reading together means to them and their children.

We know sharing books in the home supports so much more than a love of reading. Time together enjoying books promotes secure attachments that support the development of confidence, self-esteem, health, and well-being. Having those special times together builds communication, listening, understanding, and talking skills, and of course helps to lay the foundations of good literacy skills.

This report is a celebration of the North Lincolnshire Imagination Library and the many achievements that have been enabled for children and families. It also sets out our plans for the future, ensuring that children's early literacy continues to be a priority within North Lincolnshire.



Councillor Julie Reed
Cabinet Member for Children and Families





The Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire continues to be **the most successful programme in the world**, including partnership working with other local authorities.



91% of our under 5's receive a quality age appropriate book delivered to their home address once a month. That is a fantastic **7367 books every month!**



Parents frequently comment about **how lucky they feel** that North Lincolnshire Council supports the Imagination Library programme.



A unique aspect of the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire is the **diverse range of complementary activities** promoting the joy of reading. Almost 2,000 residents access the monthly newsletter for ideas and inspiration.



The Imagination Library works in partnership with the Stronger Communities Team, speech and language therapists, the Health and Neo-Natal Ward, young parents, North Lincolnshire Homes, portage and the 2 year funding team **to ensure we are reaching our most vulnerable families.**



The **500,000 book** was delivered in April 2019. Research has shown how important it is for children to have books of their own and to revisit and share the stories regularly to develop **a love of reading.**



The **'Books for Life'** campaign was launched in February 2019 with events for children and their families to celebrate the books they receive with activities and storytelling.



The **Great North Lincolnshire Rhyme Challenge** - "great rhymers make great readers", in collaboration with the Book Trust, was launched in March 2018 as part of the Power of Words Festival.



Imagination Library Champions have been created in all localities - in children's centres, schools, early years providers, child-minders, mother and toddler groups, health visitors, midwives, library service and Rotary Club Members.... even the lady in the corner shop.

91%

of children under the age of 5 in North Lincolnshire are currently registered with the Imagination Library

674,198

books have been gifted since the launch in 2013

19,544

children registered since the launch of the Imagination library in 2013

7,367

children are currently registered with the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire

12,294

children have graduated from the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire since 2013



Dollywood UK regularly ask us to share our Imagination Library journey. We are held as an exemplar of best practice, and in 2017 our Imagination Library was recognised as **the most successful of its kind in the world.**



The Imagination Library was launched as a pilot in North Lincolnshire in 2013, and has since been extended to 2021.



North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library is the highest achieving UK programme since its launch in 2013 and is fully funded by the council.

Our own research into the impact of the Imagination Library shows the benefit that registering with the programme has on children's achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and beyond.

We are passionate about this scheme. It has provided a fantastic platform for literacy across our locality. The leaders of our council see this as an invaluable tool to promote a love of reading and learning.



Parents frequently comment about how lucky they feel that North Lincolnshire supports the Imagination Library programme. Comments include how much they value the way the book arrives addressed to the child making it feel a really positive and unique approach to valuing the joy of sharing books. They comment on the quality and variety of the books and how it motivates them to make reading part of the home routine.

In feedback parents tell us that they read more regularly with their children because they receive the books every month. They tell us that their children are excited to receive and share their books with them every month. Families tell us that the books bring their family together for quality time with many older siblings enjoying sharing the books with younger siblings.

Parents are very aware of the value and importance of sharing books with their children from a young age, in terms of future attainment, wellbeing and skills for life, this message continues to be reinforced by the work of the **North Lincolnshire Children's Literacy Trust and the Words Count Campaign.**

"The only thing more important than what we do for our children today is what we will do for them tomorrow. We are so fortunate to have the forward thinking folks at North Lincolnshire paving the way to teach us all how to best sustain our efforts for decades to come. I bet the Children's Literacy Trust will be going strong 100 years from now so I am making my plans to celebrate that milestone!"

- Dolly Parton



Children who first registered with the Imagination Library when it was launched in 2013 reached the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in 2016. Since 2016, we have collected and analysed data which clearly shows that **children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their unregistered counterparts each year.**



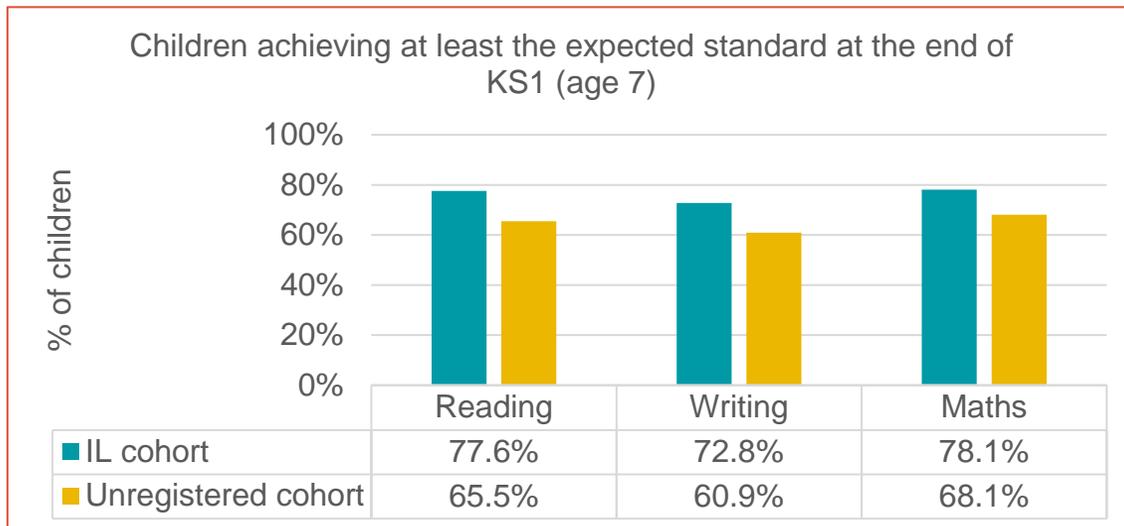
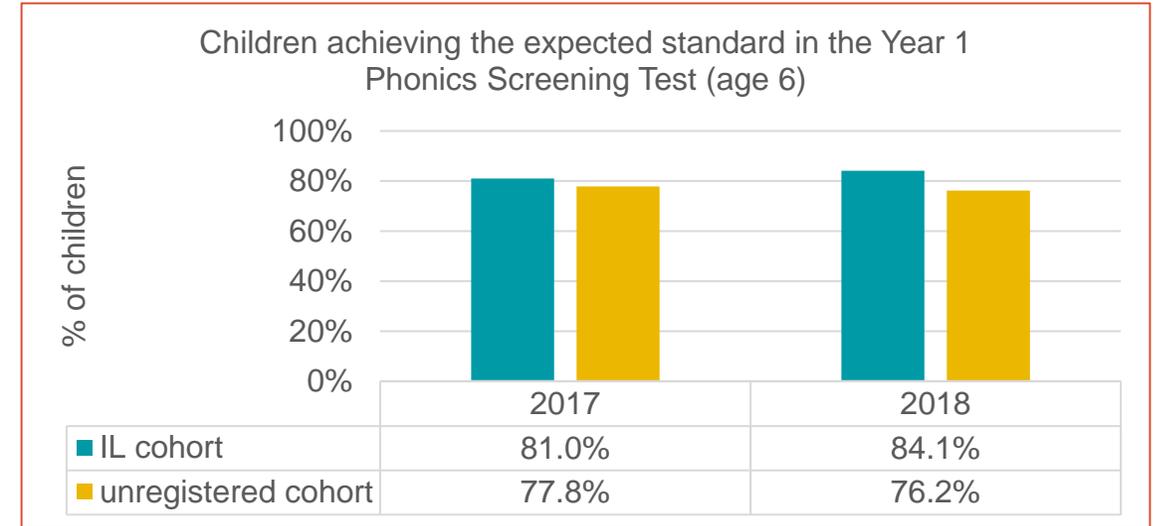
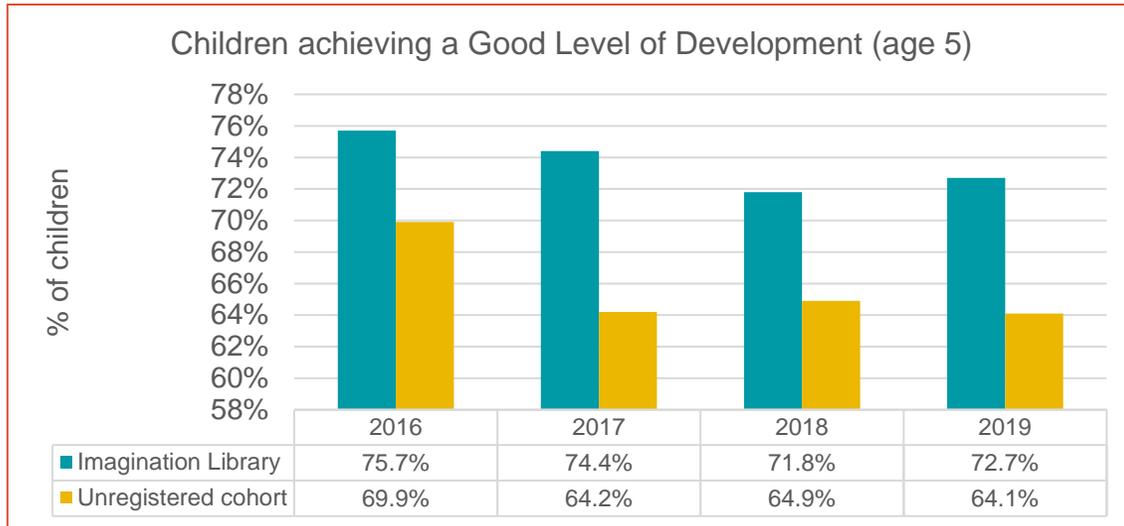
In North Lincolnshire the Imagination Library makes a real difference to our children who don't have the same opportunities as their peers, or are at risk of underachieving - most notably for summer born children (boys in particular), children with special educational needs and children who are not British.



The impact of the Imagination Library is not confined to the EYFS and continues to evidence itself on a child's journey throughout school. In 2017 and 2018 research was undertaken to whether children who were previously registered with the Imagination Library continued to outperform their unregistered counterparts in the end of Year 1 Phonics Screening Test. **The cohort of children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their non-registered counterparts in each year.**



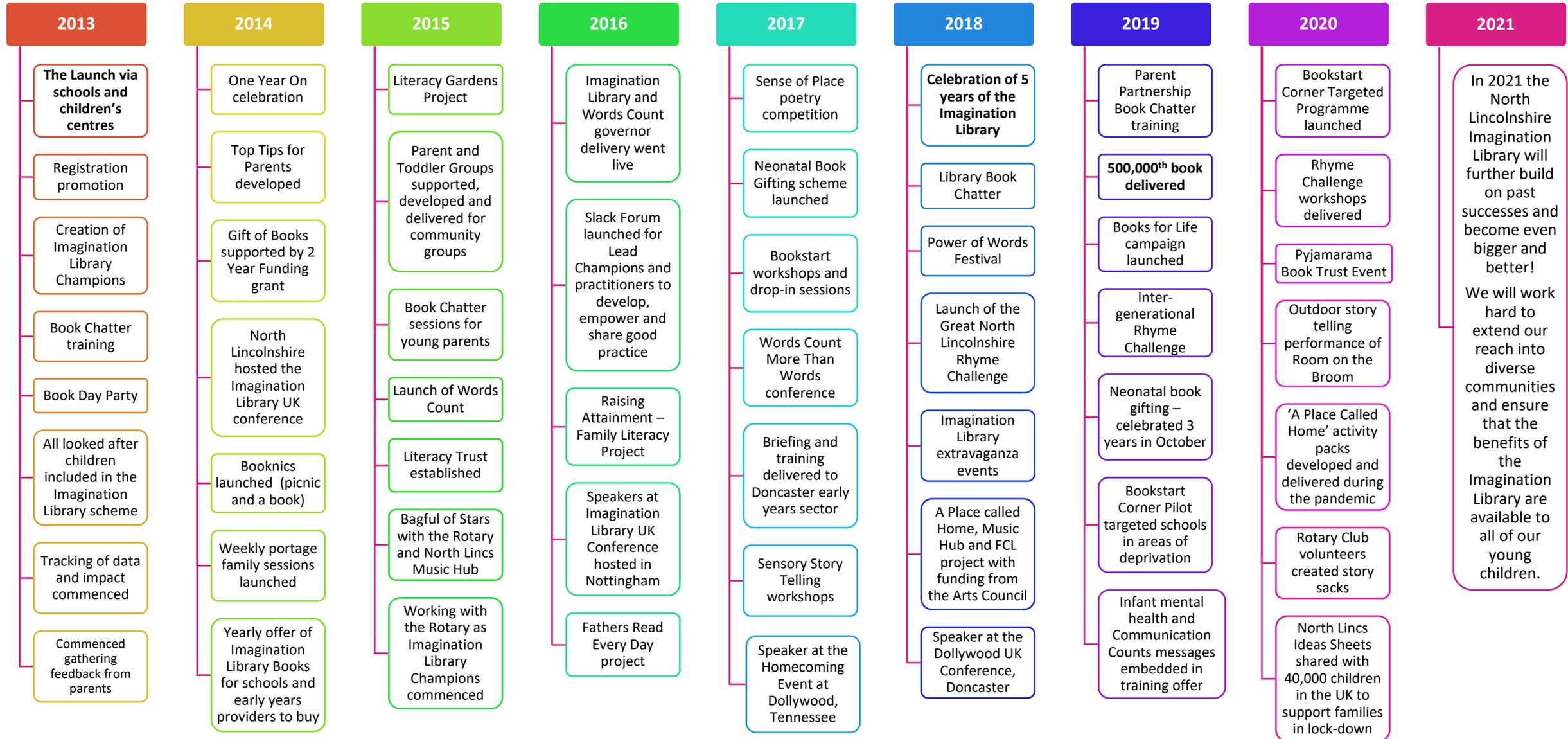
In 2019 further research was undertaken to whether children who were previously registered with the Imagination Library continued to outperform their unregistered counterparts at the end of Key Stage 1. **The cohort of children registered with the Imagination Library outperformed their non-registered counterparts in each subject area.**



Our research shows that **children registered with the Imagination Library achieve better outcomes than those children who are not registered** – at age 5, age 6 and at age 7.

The journey so far in North Lincolnshire

The North Lincolnshire Imagination Library





2013: Launch of the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire



2013: Book Day Party



2014: Booknics



2014: Top Tips for Parents



2015: Dolly and her parents



2015: Literacy Gardens Project



2016: Fathers Read Every Day (FRED) Project



2016: Raising Attainment Family Literacy Project



2017: Performance of Bagful of Stars



2018: Imagination Library UK Conference



2018: A Place Called Home



2018: the Great North Lincolnshire Rhyme Challenge



2019: Books gifted to Scunthorpe Hospital



2019: Teddy appears with Dolly Parton on the One Show



2019: Normanby workshops for the Early Years Sector



2019: Neo-natal Book Gifting



2019: Intergenerational Rhyme Challenge



2020: Story Sacks created by Rotary Club volunteers



2021: Launch of new Ideas Sheets

Why North Lincolnshire parents love the Imagination Library

North Lincolnshire's Imagination Library has been selected to help conduct research on parents'/carers' feelings about Imagination Library books and how they are used in their home. Research has been carried out by Caroline Zwierzchowska-Dod PhD researcher and supervised by Dr Janet Goodall from the School of Education, Swansea University.

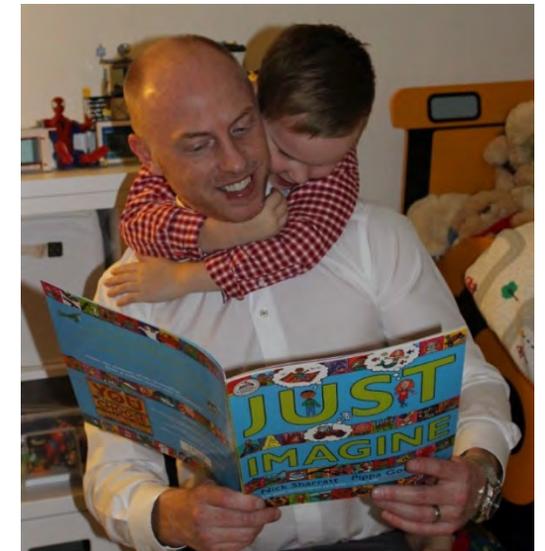
“North Lincolnshire Council staff have been more than generous in giving their time to support this research project. We worked collaboratively to design a survey that met both my research needs and their interest in the impact of the Imagination Library program on families, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The project was supported by staff both in ensuring it complied with the Council's own policies and procedures and more widely in promoting the survey and finding families who were happy to take part and to be interviewed. I have been really pleased with the support received, most especially from colleagues in the Community & Family Engagement Participation & Achievement team.”
- Caroline Zwierzchowska-Dod

What is the purpose of the research?

Caroline is undertaking a PhD to examine parental engagement and the impact of the Imagination Library. The project aims to understand both the impact of shared reading experiences on children who receive books from Dolly Paton's Imagination Library and the impact on parental practices and beliefs around shared reading.

Why was North Lincolnshire chosen?

North Lincolnshire has a universal programme with over 91% of children under 5 signed up to receive the books, with more than 7,500 children receiving the books every month, so it was a great place for Caroline to undertake further in depth research following a huge early years survey earlier in 2020.



Parents praise 'fantastic' Imagination Library

Friday, 11th December 2020

The North Lincolnshire scheme is so successful it was selected to help carry out international research on Imagination Library books and how families use them. Parents were sent a comprehensive survey about the scheme, with a prize draw for taking part. There were more than 700 replies, with a massive percentage saying they looked forward to receiving the books, especially during lockdown, and that they helped them share special moments with their child.

Parents responded in their hundreds to praise North Lincolnshire Council's Imagination Library, which sends a book every month to every child under five across North Lincolnshire.



Abi and two-year-old AJ won a signed photograph of Dolly Parton. Abi said: "The books are fantastic! My little boy's nursery has commented on how imaginative he is and the way he is able to express himself. I am sure this is due to sharing so many great books with him. His favourite Imagination Library book is The Hungry Caterpillar."

Jen, with daughter Ava and son Toby, won a signed copy of Dolly Parton's book A Coat Of Many Colours.

Jen said: "I feel privileged to receive the books. My little boy talks about one book in particular he calls the Monster book and which he takes everywhere with him. He is only two, but I'm convinced his advanced development is partly down to his interest in the books, his attempt to copy the words I read out and act out the characters. It would be amazing if every child could experience such joy before they start school. Thank you so much to everyone who makes this scheme possible."

Cllr Rob Waltham, Leader of North Lincolnshire Council, said:

"This proves what we knew all along – the Imagination Library is a fantastic way of giving children a love of reading. I would encourage every parent of young children to sign up."

Feedback from the survey



“The book is addressed to my child, which is exciting and will become exciting for her as she grows up. The fact the book is free is amazing as it will promote a joy of reading - it's like a prize”



“It is amazing. Imagination library has helped us so much. We would struggle to afford the number of books we have received”



“These books are absolute gems! Many of the books I would not have personally bought myself, but my child has treasured and LOVED every single one. It has reminded me of books I have grown up with, the classics as well as new books”



“We really enjoy receiving the books and can see it will be something my child will look forward to each month as she grows and becomes more aware. Receiving the books has given us a wider variety of different books, including books which promote diversity/culture which is highly beneficial and something which I will promote with my child as she grows”

“My twin girls absolutely adore receiving their books. They have one each so it means they can look at their own whilst we all read together. We read our imagination library books at least 5 times a day and we always look forward to the next one arriving. Huge thank you for putting on such a fabulous scheme and making it possible for us to have such a huge variety of books to choose from”

“My son (4) loves us reading him books and looks forward to his new book arriving each month. Our daughter (18 months) would have us reading to her all day long especially if it has 'ammmm' (animals) in it. The books have been a great way to bond as a family and we often go on to buy more of a particular author after reading on from the imagination library”

Receiving Imagination Library books during the Covid pandemic

Parents' Comments

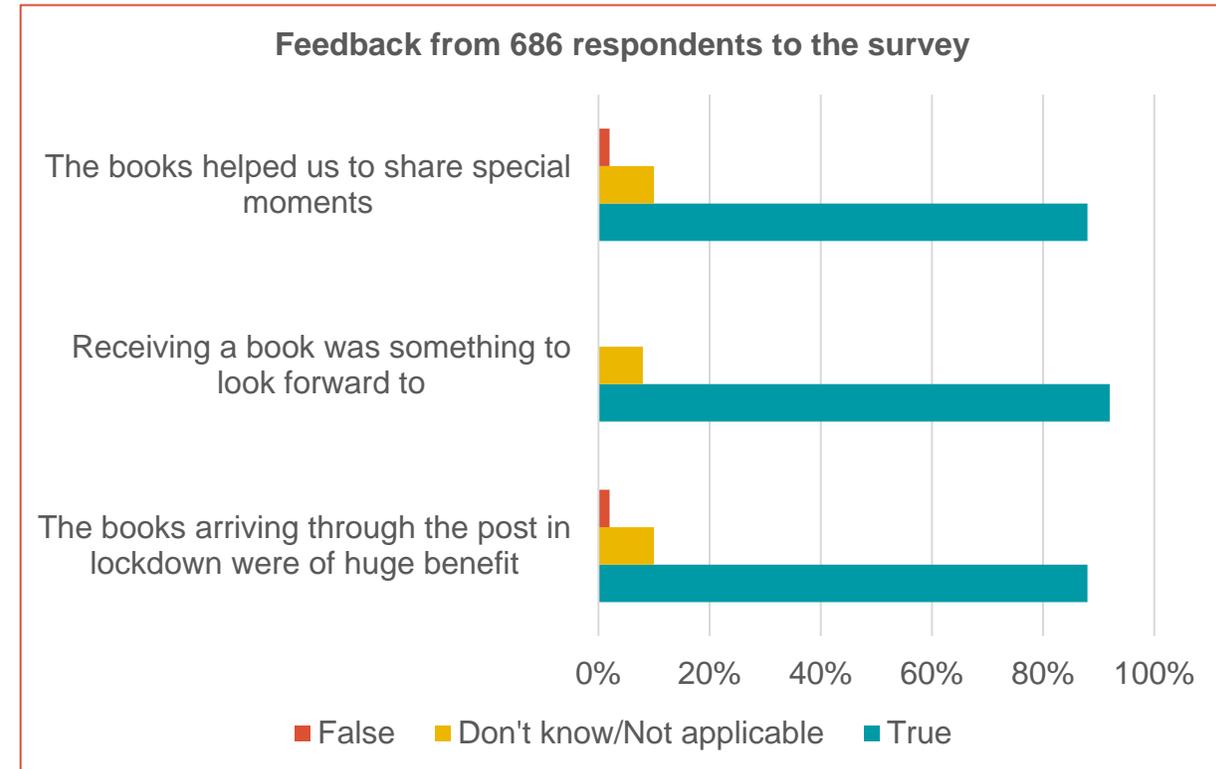
“It has been a huge help receiving these books through the post. Due to the Covid isolation I always worried I don't be able to provide rich learning opportunities in terms of language development but the books have been a huge a help”

“Thank you so much. Especially in the current world, where going out has become difficult, having a new book each month means a lot”

“I am high risk of Covid so I haven't been out much for leisure time so, receiving Dolly's Imagination Library books is something me and my daughter do together. I really do enjoy the cuddle and the 5 minutes of concentration the book gets out of my daughter, it's been a tremendous help to my young family so thank you so much 😊”

“I am extremely grateful for the book the scheme is amazing and has helped bring back an enjoyment to reading which otherwise wouldn't be there due to most things being electronic I find reading very therapeutic for myself and calming for my children”

We explored the experience of receiving Imagination Library books during the Covid-19 pandemic



Three families were interviewed from the North Lincolnshire cohort of respondents.

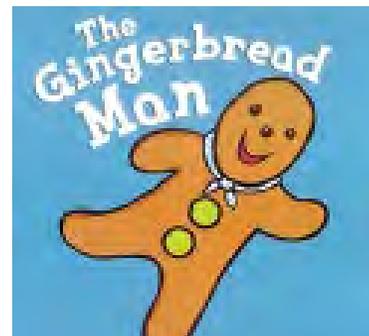
- **Michelle** is an independent parent in her early twenties and is white British. She is a mother of two children, a ten month old girl, and a boy of two years seven months.
- **Marie and Kim** are the mothers of one child who is 20 months old.
- **Joanna** is a Polish mother of three. Joanna's interview was conducted via an interpreter.

When thinking about her reasons for reading with her children, Michelle described the importance of family relationships, "I think it helps to create the bond between the child and the parents and also the siblings who are sharing the book."

She described how she found that reading 'relaxes them' and that they read through the day but particularly as 'down time' before bed. Michelle said that both of her children enjoyed books and stories, and throughout the interview her son was bringing books to show, including his favourite 'The Gingerbread Man'.

Michelle shared how he brings stories to her to read and will choose this instead of playing with his toys. Michelle specifically shares books with her daughter too, giving her a book alongside toys to choose from. "She sits in a chair and reads, it looks like she's reading it properly."

When asked about the role reading together plays in their family, Kim referred to their journey as a gay couple to have their son, "Because it's a bit of a different situation, [our son] isn't a child that you just have...it was very much 'arranged', so for me it's a very content feeling and makes us feel like a real family unit, and it's these little things like reading together and having meals together that make us feel more engaged and it feels like 'the norm' and acceptance."

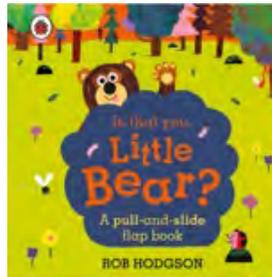


Joanna thought that the process of shared reading brings them together and that her daughter feels more loved because of it. Because of the closeness of the process her daughter feels more confident to gain new vocabulary and can translate what happens in the books into her real-life experiences.

When describing what happens when an Imagination Library book arrives, Marie described her own excitement as well as her son's. "I get very excited [laughs] 'IT'S NEW BOOK DAY!' [our son] runs on the spot like happy feet". When it is opened, "he sits down with me and we'll read it and then that book seems to be like his favourite until the next one comes."

Thinking about receiving the Imagination Library books, Michelle described how her son says 'book' most days when he hears the postman coming as he knows that he gets a book in the post each month. Her little girl doesn't yet understand about the postman but Michelle always opens them with the children and they read them straight away.

Michelle had noticed that her little boy is particularly drawn to colourful books and her little girl likes black and white pictures at the moment. She was very clear on her children's favourites and her son in particular was very enthusiastic about the books she held up to show, talking animatedly when Michelle showed the "When I Grow up...Builder' book.



When she chooses books for her children, Joanna looks for books that teach something, particularly those that teach positive social interactions and life skills. She likes books that, for example, teach children about animals and encourage them to make noises. Joanna is also influenced by colourful illustrations, particularly those that encourage children to retell their own stories.



When an Imagination Library book arrives, Joanne's children ask which one of them it is for and ask questions about what it is about. They always want to read it straight away.

When asked if the Imagination Library had made a difference to her family, Michelle said that "Books can be expensive at times," and noted that with two children receiving books "It helps to grow their book collection up a lot faster than what we would have been able to do." She felt that it "helped the family a lot" as well as being a "present for the children."

"It's really good to get free books... we're able to go out and buy things but some families can't afford to buy children new books each month." Marie said "It's like there's no excuse not to read."

During the spring lockdown North Lincolnshire Imagination Library gave Dollywood UK access to our online support sheets for parents. The materials were highly praised, and several authorities are now working with us to create a full range of support materials each month.

Imagination Library Ideas Sheets - North Lincolnshire Reaches Out

Dollywood Foundation UK shared the Ideas Sheets with 206 affiliate partners, covering nearly 40,000 children.

Of the affiliates, 62 send books to children in care, around 5500 children. Many of the Virtual Schools have emailed the Ideas Sheets out directly to foster carers to support the children, and who are especially grateful when resources are so stretched. One education officer said, "These are marvellous and I have emailed them out immediately, great timing as a foster carer was asking for resources only this morning! Delighted I had these to send out."

Of the large local authority programmes, West Berkshire Early Years team thought the resources were fabulous and a really great way of engaging with families. Small Steps Big Changes, delivering the Imagination Library in Nottingham, were delighted we had shared these and are making sure families can access them and are encouraged to use them with their children during this difficult time.



IMAGINATION LIBRARY
North Lincolnshire is working in partnership
with the Dollywood Foundation

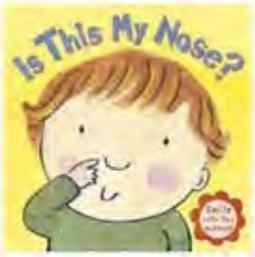
Group 1
Children Born in 2020



Is This My Nose?
Fun things to do!

How eye contact is key to your baby's language learning
Babies' vision is a bit different to adults' - they can't see things unless they're nice and close. But eye contact does play a key role in their learning.
By making eye contact with your baby and looking at the things they're interested in, you can help them make connections between your words and the world around them. For more information visit www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/lets-talk-baby-talk-eye-contact-yb5m39





Can you find your eyes, nose, mouth, ears and chin? This book encourages little ones to associate words and pictures with their own bodies. Look in a mirror to help them discover their own faces as you read aloud together.

Having a wiggle
Wiggles and wriggles are your baby's way of testing out their muscles and gaining coordination.
By naming the wiggly bits, you'll help them learn the words for different body parts too.



Look in the Mirror Rhyme
Look in the mirror who do you see?
I see looking back at me.
Laughing, smiling and happy as can be.
Look in the mirror who do you see?
I see looking back at me.



Action Songs are great for wiggle times.
Join in and sing along at the CBeebies Baby Club to the 'The Action Song'.
www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/the-baby-club-the-action-song



Hold the mirror up to your child's face and ask, "Who's that baby?" Then say their name. Pull the mirror away and watch them. Do they smile? Wave their hands and feet? Do they reach out for the mirror? Comment on what they're telling you with their actions.
For more brain building tips visit NSPCC Look Say Sing Play www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/look-say-sing-play/



Making ten minutes a day to share books with your child will make a huge difference to their development

North Lincolnshire Council
www.northlincs.gov.uk

www.northlincs.gov.uk/imagination-library

GROUP 3 Born 2019
Book: March 2021

SSBC COMMUNITY FUND North Lincolnshire Council West Berkshire Council

THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR
by Eric Carle



This story is great for learning early counting skills.
Point to the food as you read the words and count along with the pictures.



Children love role play!
Get out some bowls, saucepans and spoons and let them be a chef. Can they make you a meal? Talk to them and join in with what they say.



www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/lets-play-chefs/2762mfr

Finger painting is great for having fun and getting messy.
You can also introduce new words like 'slippery' and 'sticky' and discuss the colours your child is using. Can they make a hand print butterfly?



1,2,3,4,5 Once I Caught a Fish Alive

1,2,3,4,5,
Once I caught a fish alive,
6,7,8,9,10
Then I let it go again,
Why did you let it go?
Because it bit my finger so.
Which finger did it bite?
This little finger on my right



www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/something-special-once-i-caught-a-fish-alive

Small Steps Big Changes - giving every child the best start in life

Latest Development:

North Lincolnshire Council, West Berkshire and SSBC Nottingham are working in partnership to share their expertise and resources to develop the ideas sheets. The launch of the new ideas sheets took place in March 2021.

The ideas sheets continue to be mailed to all virtual schools by the Dollywood Foundation.

Marion Gillooly, Executive Director of The Dollywood Foundation UK said

'We are very grateful to our partners in North Lincolnshire Council for their generosity in sharing their ideas sheets. These informative, uplifting resources are packed full of hints, tips and suggestions for parents, which are much appreciated, particularly during this difficult time. We've had some fantastic feedback from families that demonstrates that the sheets have enriched the experience of sharing the Imagination Library books their children have received.'

"North Lincolnshire is delighted to work in partnership with SSBC Nottingham and West Berkshire Councils. The pulling together of resources and expertise is a fantastic way to support families and the home learning environment.

The ideas sheets contain simple activities, information, songs and rhymes to help parents and carers develop communication and language skills for their children birth to 5 yrs. These skills are vital for future learning, health and wellbeing."

- Councillor Rob Waltham, Leader of North Lincolnshire Council

“I think the books are a great service we read them all it also means when a child moves on from me home/adoption etc. they usually have a lovely set of books to go with them of stories they are familiar with which can help them settle especially at bed time.

Reading is something we start with the children from the day they are placed with us as most have speech delay and are unhappy, a cuddle with a book it is easier to accept then a cuddle from a stranger at first (we usually have under 3 year olds).

Some of the children have never been read to so soon they like the idea of their own books especially when I am using my budget to get essentials like clothes shoes etc. In short I think it is a fab and important service. A new book is a great way to remind me to read too”

- Foster Carer



“It has been amazing to receive books from Imagination Library every month through the post. All my children look forward to receiving books whether it's for them or not (two older girls don't get the books anymore). [My 3 and 4 year olds] love being read to and enjoy looking at the pictures. My only criticism is that children don't receive books after the age of five which is such a shame because we LOVE the books”.

- Anwara

“I took the books to our resource base yesterday and they will soon be ready to be distributed to the rest of the children (I delivered a selection of books to one family yesterday which brought a great smile face when the boy opened the door and found the bag on the door handle whilst I stood behind the gate). Some of our staff have already started sharing books virtually too. Can't thank you enough for your donations!”

- Ilona Szolc - Lead Teacher, Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service

Katie's Imagination Library Story

"We joined Imagination Library for Katie when she was born and very thankful we did.

It was very helpful, and gratefully received in the beginning - starting out as new parents you are never sure what to look out for or what is out there for your children. We loved sharing the books with Katie. When she was a baby we would sit together and look through the pictures and let her explore them herself. We would sit and read them to her and as she got older, she started to recognise the pages and remember the words relating to that page, she would flip through the pages and tell us the story before she could read!

We feel this really helped with her speech and language. At age 4 she was diagnosed as being on the Autism Spectrum and sometimes struggled with communicating certain things to us. We believe reading with her played a big role in her development. Katie is now 6 years old and still loves the Imagination Library books she has received; she has her favourites which she now reads to us brilliantly and very often she reads them to her Grandparents on video calls. It has enabled us to explore stories by different authors to find out what type Katie enjoys best, and we have purchased books for her by the same authors to continue her love of reading. I don't think we would have known about some of them if we were not part of the Imagination Library.

We would recommend any parent to register with the Imagination Library, it is an amazing scheme and a brilliant start for children on their reading journey!"

- **Sarah, Katie's mum**



What are we going to do next?

- Continue to work and engage with parents and carers to develop a shared understanding of the importance of reading and book ownership
- Continue to grow and deepen partnerships across North Lincolnshire to further extend the impact of the programme as part of lifelong learning, including library membership and supporting children's reading journey after they graduate by working through the Words Count programmes
- Ensure all our young children and families have equal access to the whole range of Imagination Library experiences from birth onwards
- Continue to promote the value and impact of the Imagination Library in North Lincolnshire with parents, carers, partners, settings and schools
- Use our knowledge and experience to promote and inform new programmes and activities for the benefit of our youngest children in North Lincolnshire
- Continue to listen to parents and carers to shape our North Lincolnshire Imagination Library offer
- Extend the reach and role of Community Champions for the Imagination Library, especially for families for whom English isn't the first language



www.northlincs.gov.uk/schools-libraries-and-learning/imagination-library/

Follow us:



@NorthLincsCNews



Northlincscouncil



@northlincolnshirecouncil



North Lincolnshire Council

Useful links:

- [Dolly Parton's Imagination Library](#)
- [Booktrust – tips on how to read with your child](#)
- [Hungry Little Minds – fun activities for you and your children](#)
- [Words for Life – fun stuff to do together](#)
- [Talking Point – information on children's communication](#)
- [BBC Tiny Happy People – here to help you develop your child's communication skills](#)
- Save the Children Research – [Read On. Get On](#), [Boost your baby or toddler's brain by playing this summer](#), [Too many boys in England fall behind before starting school](#)
- Literary Trust [Research Reports](#)
- Oxford University Press – [Help to Close the Word Gap](#)

