

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 15 February 2017

Background Information and Key Issues:

1. The National Literacy Trust Hub has worked in partnership with public health and the achievement service in Middlesbrough since 2013 to drive awareness of the importance of early year's literacy and language development in the most deprived communities at risk of low literacy and poor health outcomes.
2. A major public campaign promotes reading and talk with babies and children, with posters displayed on the public screen and bus shelters around Middlesbrough. More than 16000 flyers have been distributed to families, through every primary school in the town and supporting information is now included in every baby's personal child health record and included with the child's birth certificate. The hub works closely with JCUH and the premature baby charity BLISS and has trained nursing staff and distributed book packs to parents. The neonatal project was highly commended by the Third Sectors Business Charity Award in 2016. On general wards, staff and 53 therapeutic care volunteers have been trained to be literacy advocates.
3. The hub worked with the children's centres which feed 11 priority primary schools in the town between 2013 and 2015 to deliver the Early Words Together programme to about 200 families. Early Words Together is a six week programme, where trained volunteers from the community work 1:1 with parents and young children to promote good early years practices. Children who have completed the EWT programme are more likely to achieve a good level of development and in particular reach expected levels in communication and language and literacy than pupils of similar starting points who don't complete the programme. The programme is now being rolled out in many schools.
4. Eight town centre GP surgeries have good quality books for younger patients to access alongside messaging about the importance of reading.
5. There is a long established partnership with Middlesbrough Football Club which has included information in match day programmes, book gifting to families through the Generation Red Family Zone and player profiles promoting reading in local media. The hub will be active at the Easter Saturday match against Arsenal.
6. There are some exciting developments planned for 2017 to raise the profile of reading across the town and to impact on achievement in literacy.

- Development of a creative writing and performance poetry resource in identified school with high levels of disadvantage to mirror the successful outcomes in Bradford. (UCA, Thorntree Primary, Acklam Grange and Linthorpe Primary)
- To continue to support the EWT roll out linking with the incremental school readiness model.
- Host a visit from DfE re: Middlesbrough as a potential Opportunity Area.
- Mutually support the 'Reading Town Initiative' with Middlesbrough Achievement Partnership.
- Distribute the Middlesbrough 100 must reads leaflet. Promoting reading for pleasure linked to the NLT 'book benches'
- Develop the parental engagement strand linking libraries and community learning.
- Linking with the EAL group to visit The Beeches School in Peterborough which has excellent outcomes for all children.



Holmwood Special School Achievement 2016-17

- 7 Holmwood is a Middlesbrough primary school for children with a wide range of special needs. Holmwood School specialises in educating children with autism, SEMH and learning difficulties. The pupils come from the whole of the Middlesbrough area and beyond which includes a wide social mix and an average ethnic representation. There are currently 80 pupils on roll.
- 8 The DfE's performance tables 2016 for special schools have been published.

- 9 Out of the nearly 1000 special primary schools - Holmwood has come out as the top performing school.
- 10 The school is 4th in progress for writing. But first in Maths and Reading. They are 4th in attainment for reading. But first in GPS and Maths.
- 11 Ofsted (2012) have previously judged the school as a good school with outstanding safeguarding procedures. Parents agree with inspection findings that their children make good progress in English and Mathematics. The view of one parent is representative of how parents feel about the progress their children are making. *'A fantastic change since he arrived. He has improved in literacy and numeracy and can now work out problems in his head. He really has improved. I would like to give the teachers five stars.'*
- 12 The school is delighted with the results this year.
- 13 The school is providing an excellent education for some of the most vulnerable and challenging pupils in Middlesbrough.

Councillor Janice Brunton
Executive Member for Education & Skills