



MIDDLESBROUGH READING CAMPAIGN

Middlesbrough leading the way in pioneering local literacy initiatives

A revolutionary local approach to raising literacy levels in Middlesbrough is now being rolled out in five other areas of the country.

The National Literacy Trust Hub in Middlesbrough, which is branded as the Middlesbrough Reading Campaign, was launched in 2013. The National Literacy Trust and Middlesbrough Council convene and work with a range of local partners including businesses, health, education and cultural organisations, to address the town's unique literacy challenges and raise literacy levels.

The success of this unique approach led to National Literacy Hubs being launched in Peterborough and Bradford in 2014, Stoke-on-Trent in 2016 and now Swindon and Nottingham Hubs are set to launch in 2018. The approach in each area is tailored in response to local community challenges, targets and needs.

Since the launch of the Middlesbrough Hub, significant progress has been made to close the early years development gap between children in the town and the rest of the country. Between 2013 and 2015, around 200 families in Middlesbrough took part in the National Literacy Trust's Early Words Together programme, which empowers parents to support their children's literacy development.

In the schools that took part, more children achieved a good level of development at age five, narrowing the gap with the national average from 24.8 percentage points in 2013 to 12.5 percentage points in 2015. In the schools that have continued the programme over last two years, the gap with the national average has decreased to just 8.5 percentage points in 2017.

The Middlesbrough Hub, led by Allison Potter, works closely with Public Health to drive awareness of the importance of early years literacy and language development. Information about talking and reading to babies is included in every baby's personal child health record and books are gifted to new and expectant parents. This shared Public Health and literacy agenda is seen as best practice and inspires work in other National Literacy Trust Hubs.

In 2015, an innovative project to support the parents of premature babies was piloted in Middlesbrough. Working with James Cook University Hospital and premature baby charity Bliss, parents whose babies are on the neonatal project are supported with book packs and nursing staff have received literacy training. The project was Highly Commended by the Third Sector's Business Charity Award in 2016 and has since been replicated in Bradford and Stoke-on-Trent.

To find out more about the Middlesbrough Reading Campaign, visit www.turningpages.co.uk.

SEND Improvement Group

The SEND Improvement Group was set up to address the outcome of the Local Area SEND Inspection and wrote a Statement of Action which addresses the key areas of concerns identified within the Local Area Inspection. There are four work streams which are leading on meeting the identified actions within the Written Statement of Action. These work streams provide regular updates to the SEND Improvement Group. The Written Statement of Action which is published on the Local Offer website and the Council website will be fully updated showing the progress of each of the work streams in January 2018. Further monitoring visits from DfE and Health representatives will continue in the New Year with a view to continued improvement. A report will be sent to Ofsted by these representatives in July 2018 identifying progress made.

Early Years Specialist Support Model

The LA consulted with stakeholders over the restructure of the Cleveland Unit and the Inclusion Support Team in June 2017 and discussed the need to develop and implement an Early Years Specialist Support Service which would support the building of inclusive capacity within the Early Years Sector. The model was implemented in September 2017. To date there has been positive feedback from stakeholders regarding the work of the new model.

A further consultation took place with all stakeholders regarding the development of an Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund at the end of October 2017. All local authorities are required to establish an inclusion fund in their local funding systems for 3- and 4-year olds with SEN taking the free entitlement. The purpose of the fund is to support local authorities to work with providers to address the needs of individual children with SEN. This structure will also support local authorities to undertake their responsibilities to strategically commission SEN services as required under the Children and Families Act 2014. Further meetings will be held in January with all stakeholders to ensure they fully understand the new funding model.

SEND Assessment Team 0-25

The SEND Assessment Team are responsible for undertaking the Education, Health and Care Plan process for children and young people 0-25. By the 31st March 2018 all remaining statements of Special Educational Needs from the old system are required to be converted to the new Education, Health and Care Assessment as per the SEND Code of Practice. The team are on track for completing all conversions within the required timeline.

Martonside Children's Centre

Christmas Activities using key learning messages! At Martonside Children's Centre we have shown parents how to have fun at Christmas whilst still sharing key learning messages with parents around getting their child ready for nursery.



Filling and emptying containers with reindeer dust to promote hand eye co-ordination and mathematics – exploring full and empty.

Writing letters to Santa – children should be given opportunities for mark making and using scissors, these activities help strengthen muscles in hands that are later needed for writing.



Exploring baubles and tinsel for sensory play, touch and feel

Gluing and sticking Christmas trees to support hand movements and developing fine motor development



Santa also took time out of his busy toy making schedule to visit the children and gift them all with a Christmas themed book and parents were encouraged to share books with their child at home

The Stronger Families - Family Team have worked in partnership with Pat McBride, who a Middlesbrough resident that has organised over seven hundred hampers for Middlesbrough Families by working with local schools, community members, Health Services and others partners, who have put the hamper together. Along with this, TFM cash for Kids have provided Toys for the hampers.

One hundred and ten Christmas hampers came to Stronger Families for families that are currently receiving early help support from the team. The families were selected by the Family Practitioners from their own caseloads and Practitioners identified those families who they felt that would benefit the most. Without this support the family, including children and young people would be facing hardship over the Christmas period. Staff collected the hampers from different partner organisations which contained food items and age appropriate toys and have distributed these during December.

Councillor Janice Brunton-Dobson
Executive Member for Education & Skills