

Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Commission



Library services provision – improving literacy for children and families through neighbourhood based reading programmes

Neighbourhood Services Overview

The Council's Neighbourhood Services section delivers community and library services to people who live and work in Leicester City.

- A network of 28 facilities, including 9 Multi-Service centres:
- 16 library service points
- 16 community centres offering room hire
- Ward & Community Engagement Team



Library reading programmes: national and local strategic context

Neighbourhood Services are committed to the Universal Offers developed by Libraries Connected and supported Arts Council England:

- **Reading** – Goal: “To help create a more literate and confident society by developing, delivering and promoting reading activities in Neighbourhood facilities”

Other Universal Offers are linked:

- **Health**
- **Culture**
- **Digital**



Reading: The National Context

“Reading and literacy are two of the most fundamental skills in life...

Reading for pleasure is important. Research suggests that both children and adults who do this are healthier, happier and more confident than those who don't. Libraries contribute to this by running reading programmes, hosting book clubs, and by providing advice and guidance to help people extend and develop their reading choices”

Leicester City context

Manifesto commitment May 2019

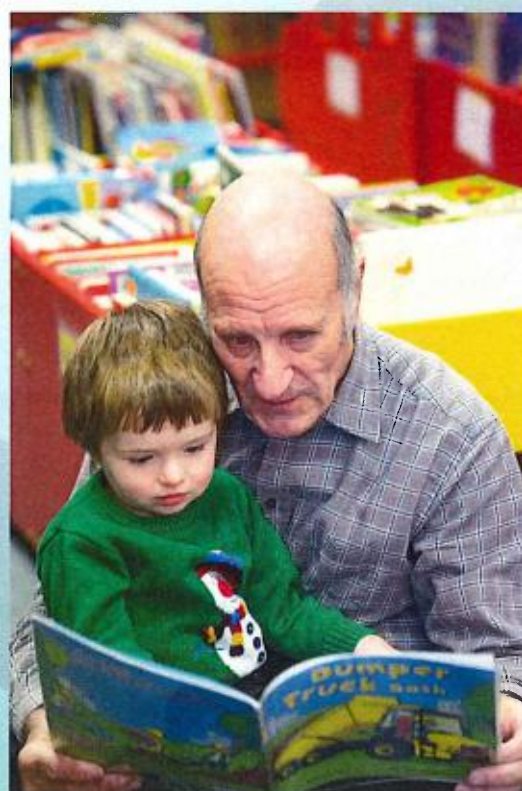
“We will work to ensure that all children grow up in homes with books for them to read and enjoy, including multi lingual texts”

“We will expand our reading projects – Our Best Book, Reading Rampage and the summer reading challenge”

Leicester Libraries

Delivery team and network:

- 16 libraries
- 12 Children & Young People & Family Centres
- 2 Bookbuses
- Library Children & Young People's Team
- Total visits to Neighbourhood Services 2018/19: 2.3million
- 50.6% of all book loans to under 16yrs
- Library Users – 52 % under 16yrs



Libraries: Reading core offer

- Provision of quality book stock for all ages and backgrounds.
- City-wide reading events programme
- Toddler Time (under 5s) weekly sessions
- Family focus – promotion of reading from the very earliest years to create lifelong readers
- Complementing work undertaken by schools – promoting reading for pleasure
- Study support at 11 libraries



Reading Programmes: Early Years and Bookstart

Focus: developing language and pre-reading skills

- Bookstart programme
 - Over £200,000 of books & resources received through Book Trust
 - Book gifting to babies
 - through Health visitors
 - Leicester's reach for distribution of packs is 93%
 - Book corner – targeted interventions
- Foundation Stage
 - Sharing books at home
 - Treasure Box Gifting – Early Years Settings – 94% delivery
 - Packs delivered through Foundation Stage 2 settings
 - Time to read – (delivered in 68 foundation settings)



Primary school children: Our Best Book

Our Best Book

- Developed and led by Leicester Libraries
- Four aims:
 - Inspire and motivate children in Year 5 or Year 6 to be active readers
 - Develop and support reading for pleasure
 - Develop awareness of new titles/authors
 - Provide schools with multiple copies of great accessible books
- Key transition period for children's reading
- 44 city primary schools participated 2019
- 2,500 yrs 5/6 children participated
- Funded by contribution from each school



Our Best Book

- Development – Our Best Picture Book Jan 2020
 - Led by Whatever It Takes (WIT) reading campaign - Will focus on KS1 children
 - Pilot 10 schools
 - Parents involved in voting for best picture book

Secondary Schools

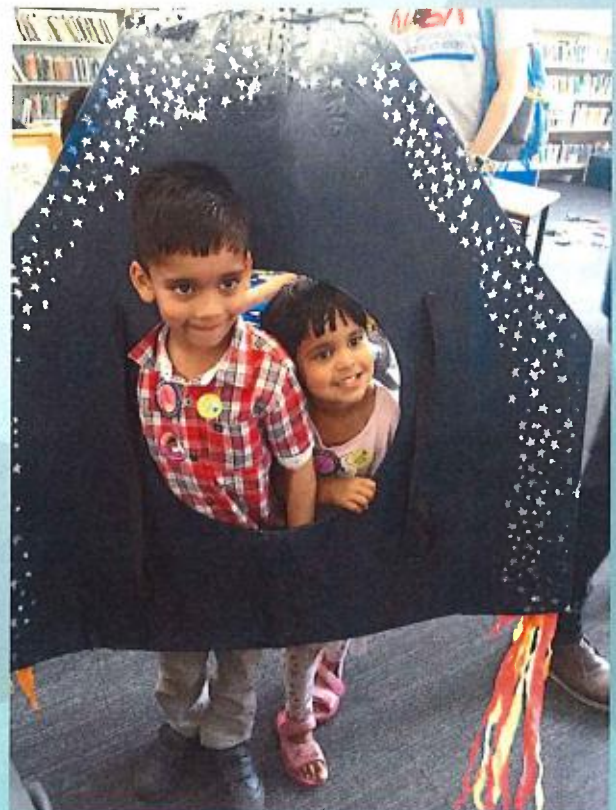
Reading Rampage

- Read it, rate it, pass it on!
- 16 Schools took part 2018-19
- Approximately 2,000 students
- Libraries a delivery partner
- Based on Our Best Book format
- Books are available in schools and libraries
- Book lists published by Libraries



Children's Summer Scheme

- Crucial intervention to prevent the summer “reading dip”
- National Summer Scheme developed by Reading Agency
- Leicester City delivers an expanded local scheme through partnership working
- East Midlands cities:
Participation 2018
 - Leicester City 6837
 - Nottingham City 3236
 - Derby City 2141



Summer Reading Challenge 2019: “Space Chase”

- Target participation: 7000 children already exceeded
- Summer Reading Challenge – read 6 books over the summer and collect rewards!
- Programme of Activities at ALL city libraries to increase engagement
- Family Fun Days
- Partners
 - Schools
 - Children, Young People and Family Centres
 - Spark Arts
 - National Space centre
 - Curve
 - Festivals
 - Public Health
- Strong volunteer support (approx. 40 volunteers in libraries)



Family Reading Programmes

- Summer Scheme for Adults!
 - Space to Read
- Everybody’s Reading Programme
 - Celebration of reading in and around Leicester neighbourhoods and communities
 - 1st – 31st October
 - Neighbourhood Services key partner
 - 35 reading based events in libraries & community centres
- Joint projects with LASALS Family Learning eg School Readiness Programme and Prison family visits
- Leicester Writers Showcase
 - Create a space to engage Leicester writers with their local readership
 - Monthly event at Central Library
 - Role of libraries: from reading to writing
- Jimmy’s Book Club
- Reading groups – eg Westcotes Reading Group formed from friends meeting at Toddler Time



Creative & Cultural Programmes

Bringing reading and language to life

- Imaginative Neighbourhoods projects
 - Arts Council funded (4 x £90k projects)
 - Working in partnership with Spark Arts
 - Targeted interventions within Neighbourhoods
 - Artists in residence
- Among Ideal Friends - Touring performances
 - High quality performances in local libraries and community centres
 - Regional approach working with east midlands library authorities
 - Girl of Ink and Stars Summer 2019



Impact

Our Best Book – Teachers:

“Our Best Book has hugely impacted upon the children’s reading. Their attitude towards reading has positively improved, most notably amongst boys. I believe this is related to the ‘male friendly’ books”

“...the impact of the ‘Best Book scheme’ has encouraged children to take ownership over what they read and given them a purpose for reading for pleasure other than being told to.”

“Our Best Book has inspired even the most reluctant readers to pick up a book and develop reading for pleasure.”

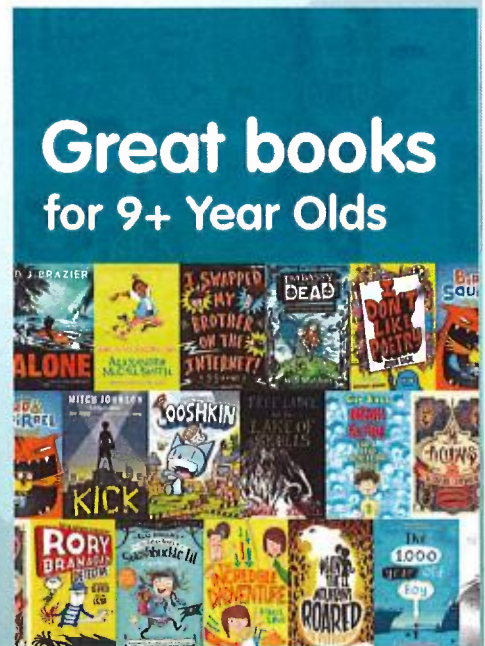
Impact

Our Best Book – What the children said:

“The librarian also helped me get more interested in reading other books that I was less interested in. I love how we went to the library.”

“Everyone loves reading the BEST BOOK!”

“I think the Best Book introduced me to a vast variety of genres I have never thought I would like! Confident because I think I have got better at reading since we have started Our Best Book. Also it made me read more and it made me have a different perspective on books.”



Any Questions?