

Appendix 2. Bookbug Parents Evaluation Comments March 2013.

Q. 4. How often do you use the library? Weekly / Fortnightly / Monthly / Other (please state)
Other <i>"Weekly, for Bookbug only."</i> <i>"Not Often"</i>
Q. 5. How was the space provided for your group? i.e. space for prams / session Very satisfactory / Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory / Very unsatisfactory.
Very Satisfactory – <i>"Ample space for prams. I have attended other Bookbug sessions and found the space was minimal."</i> <i>"Good space for all."</i> <i>"Spacious clean and bright."</i> <i>"Really enjoyed our first session be back next week."</i> <i>"Most enjoyable."</i> Satisfactory – <i>"A wee bit on the small side but Balloch is a small library and the best use was made of space."</i> <i>"If the whole of the ground floor space was utilised, and cushions on the floor, it would be fine."</i> <i>"Plenty space."</i> Unsatisfactory – <i>"perhaps an area of the library could be designated for prams?"</i>
Q. 6. How were the toilet / changing facilities?; Very Satisfactory / Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory / Very Unsatisfactory.
Very Satisfactory – <i>"Clean & fully stocked."</i> Satisfactory – <i>"Being downstairs can be awkward carrying a child."</i> <i>"The toilet is often very cold."</i> <i>"Not brilliant but serves a purpose."</i> Unsatisfactory - <i>"Nothing available, have had to use library floor."</i>

"Toilets need some TLC."

Very Unsatisfactory –

"There are no toilets / changing facilities in Balloch. I hope there are plans to create these facilities."

"No facilities which is bad for babies and young children".

"Very unsatisfactory."

Q. 7. Do you think the size of the group is?;

Too small / Just right / Too large.

Too small –

"Rarely runs at full capacity, might be better to factor in non attendances."

"With non attendance classes can be quiet."

"Could accommodate 20 children to ensure demand is met."

"Most of the children are babies <1yr old. & their participation is obviously limited. Far less opportunity for interaction between toddlers. The group could easily take 20 (at least) as absence also brings numbers down."

"Plenty of space for more people."

"Less of an atmosphere since the numbers have been reduced."

Just right –

"Just right for the size of Balloch library."

"However, since December session has not been full! Capacity each week resulting in children missing out places."

Too large –

"There were times there were too many people and this made for an uncomfortable session."

Didn't tick a box –

"It varies – now we are limited it can be too quiet when some people miss a class."

"Could do with a few more."

"I feel it is not as relaxed, friendly and comfortable due to new number restrictions."

"Preferred the drop in sessions."

"I never had a problem with previous sessions."

"The group size was fine and no one being turned away made it very welcoming for people who might not find it easy to engage / mix which is a benefit for the child and child's future."

Q. 8. How would you rate the Bookbug session or sessions you attend?

Excellent / Very Good / Fair / Poor

Excellent –

*"*Session leader is excellent with the children & my baby loves it."*

"Good mixture of songs and props."

"The leader is lovely"

"The leader is lovely!"

*"*Session leader is excellent. She is great at keeping the children's attention."*

"Very valuable to parents and children."

*"*Session leader is excellent."*

"My son loves going, he likes to sing all the songs & loves playing with the other kids."

"Very relaxed and involves all children."

Very Satisfactory –

*"*Session leader has a really lovely manner with the children and is always very welcoming."*

*"*Session leader is first class!"*

*"*Session leader is friendly relaxed and great with the children- very patient."*

"Kids focus on a book a story, how to listen and concentrate together."

Q. 9. Do you feel the Bookbug session is age appropriate to your child?**Yes / No****Yes –**

"He loves it."

"However there are a lot of babies in the group so it would be nice to have a group with older children."

"It was when we attended it. To be honest, she'd still love to go (at nearly 4)."

"Yes, it is also a great chance to discuss with other parent's worries and solutions about kids problems."

Q. 11. Have you noticed improvement in your child's communication / confidence as a result of attending Bookbug sessions?;**Yes / No****Yes –**

"Through regular attendance, over time with the same people."

"Speech has been advanced as a result."

"Definitely, & good for interacting too."

"My son thoroughly enjoyed the class; he is all smiles as soon as the first song is sung."

"My little boy regularly sings Bookbug songs. Especially disappointing to hear him sing 'Zoom zoom zoom' in the bath the other night knowing we can't go to Bookbug for the foreseeable."

"If my son gets upset, I usually sing him some songs from rhyme time & he calms down very quickly."

"Yes confidence and opens books and talk although currently I haven't a clue what she is saying she clearly does."
"Definitely, my daughter is so full of life during the sessions and when I sing certain songs she claps her hands regardless of where we are."
*"Initially *child was very unsettled. After attending a few sessions learning the songs and singing @ home, *child is more content and can be settled easier."*

Did not tick a box –

"My child has always been confident due to interaction with adults & other children."
"Too young."

Q. 13. How did you find the Registration process?
Straightforward / Complicated

Straightforward –

"Although sometimes hard to make one specific reg. Time with work commitment etc."
"But unnecessary. Creates barrier to access."
"However, some people were told to come into the library to register, & some told to phone in."
"Worrying it's not easy for everyone to commit to each week, but more importantly the thought of a kid being told they are on a waiting list is not good, if it too busy have a second or third session never turn anyone away, you never know how hard it might have been for someone to bring their kid there."
"Busy! Hard to get through by phone but so pleased we got a place."

Complicated –

"Wasn't sure if I could book over phone or I had to come in person. Was a bit stressed I wasn't going to get a space."
"Upon arrival only one person manning the phone and felt as though they were getting priority despite making the effort to come down. Then we were given incorrect waiting list forms in error – Very confusing."
"Did get slightly confusing."
"Difficult & unfair if you're not around on the day of registration."
"I was told I was on the reserve list but only found out by chance that we had a place."
"It is not a good system in fact as a working mother I find it stressful having to call at 9.30 on a Monday (as I am not allowed to make personal calls from work) to try to get a space for my child when a library is a public place and anything like this is good for development and it should be drop in."
"Having to register on a Mon 9.30 is when I work. Why can't we register at the next session?"
"Perhaps it wasn't complicated but it was a bit of a 'bun fight'! Taking phone registrations as well as in the library was chaotic."
"The first block I got my son registered no problem and I got the session I was looking for. The second time was more difficult as we were told that we could either come into the library or do this over the telephone from 9:30am. I was in the library 2 minutes after 9:30 and was initially told there were no places, then it came to light that there were places for the day I wanted but not many."

I did however get my son a place."

"A shambles!"

"The registration was very stressful and unfair. I came out in the snow for the 1st session and didn't get a place. People who can get to the library early will always have a place. This is unfair. Maybe a rolling registration would be fairer."

"The procedure for acknowledging and processing voicemail messages does not appear to work. After leaving a requested message and receiving no response after a couple of hours, I had to call again. When I got through and requested a place, I was informed that I would be first on the waiting list for my preferred session. When I pointed out that I had left a voicemail message earlier, I was treated to an 'oh'. I'm sure that you can see why I do not deem the registration process to be fair."

Did not tick a box –

"Registration could have been easier. Registration for class on required day would have meant less fuss."

"Should not be a registration process."

"Unfair and farcical. Grossly unfair registration system. For a second term I'm on the waiting list because I refuse to be involved in the 'Monday morning registration fiasco'. I also work and can't physically do the Monday registration. A rolling register / ballot would be far better and back to the old drop in sessions would be best of all! Dumbarton on a Wednesday is only suitable class due to other work / family commitments."

"Unfair – so many kids missing out."

"Unnecessary – results in people missing out on a weekly basis when there is capacity at the centre."

"I found the registration process frustrating and very stressful. I also feel it is unfair for parents who can't make it here it for 9.30am."

Q. 14 Did you secure a place at the library of your choice?

Yes / No

**If you answered No did you secure a place at your;
2nd choice / 3rd choice / 4th choice?**

Yes –

"Not for the next session."

No –

"Gavinburn closed down. I live in Bowling."

2nd choice – "Initially wanted to continue at Balloch but full. However this too is excellent."

"Successful after being on wait list for term 1 But not for term 2."

Did not tick a box –

"I have had to change days and thought with your list I wouldn't get a space."

Q. 15. Is there any aspect of the Registration process that you feel we could improve on?

"Allow pre registration for regular attendees."

"Should be the same way to register for everyone. i.e. come into the library or by phone rather than being able to do either. In order to make it fair."

"Everyone does the same process, i.e. phone in or come down to the library. Seemed slightly unfair!"

"Written communication of when to re-register well in advance."

"A mad dash at 09:30 on 4/2/13 is not ideal. More communication to let people know where they stand (on the reserve list)."

"Go back to drop in".

"Yes, register at the session whilst you are there".

"My son has been coming to the same Bookbug session since he was born. I have been unable to get a place for him now – this is ridiculous."

"There is real competition for places. Due to this registration is not equally competitive. People arriving at 9am to register makes this even more difficult."

"It should be left as a drop in for children."

"Have one clearly defined registration process."

"I feel that there has to be a fairer system in place. As mentioned above I did secure a place for my son but was nearly placed on the waiting list. I do understand that not Everyone is able to make it to the library in person; however it did appear that calls were being taken and places booked before 9:30am."

"From speaking to others it seemed confusing."

"Rolling register or ballot system whereby everyone is invited to register – (you'll also have a better idea of interest in the service.)"

A lot of people are now put off registering since it's a waste of time. It is becoming a 'closed group'."

"Access when spaces are available week to week."

"It is not fair to people calling in and registering in person."

"Go back to drop in."

"I feel that Bookbug should still be a drop in service to allow opportunity for all and prevent exclusion."

"Allow more people to attend longer term."

"More sessions so no one misses out?"

"You got to know who there but no one should be turned away."

"Voicemail should not be an option if they are not dealt with in real time."

Q. 16. The number of Bookbug places has not been reduced across the authority, however sessions have been capped at 15 places to resolve health and safety issues, and to ensure the highest quality of provision and to give session leaders the ability to develop quality relationships with both parents and children. Whilst it is very early days in terms of measuring the impact of this change; At this point how would you rate you and your child's experience of these smaller session sizes? - Excellent / Very Good / Good / Fair / Poor ?

Excellent –

“But this does not relate to size but activity.”

“Bookbug sessions provide an excellent service, which is very much in demand.”

*“*Session leader is great with all the kids she always remembers everyone’s names & is very friendly & welcoming.”*

“The same as before. Excellent.”

Very Good –

“Although happy if for any reason the sessions need to be slightly longer to allow everyone access”

Good –

“Numbers have been a bit low I think a few more would be better.”

“I did prefer the drop in sessions as you are not restricted to one particular day or time. At no time did I feel that the drop in sessions were overcrowded. The drop in sessions give more options for parents & would be preferable.”

“Can be a bit empty.”

Fair –

“I feel the session could accommodate more children on a weekly basis.”

“Not enough x-section of ages and with inevitable absence most weeks run at about 10-12. Much ‘easier’ for the leaders perhaps but far less enjoyable for both children & parents. Out of interest – why 15? Where’s the risk assessment that for safety, ‘15’ was the limit?? Surely parents are responsible for their children during the sessions.”

Poor –

“I feel the only time there were H&S issues were the Halloween/Christmas parties. These should be ticket only and only issued to guardians who attend in person.”

Didn’t tick a box –

“Hasn’t affected my child’s experience, but I feel a greater pressure to attend (even in the snow) rather than relaxed nature of drop in sessions.”

“No difference as Balloch was always a smaller group.”

“The larger sessions were better. I am really disappointed that we now do not have a session to attend.”

“Smaller sessions are beneficial but the renewal of registration over such a short space of time means that those who registered in the first term had a relatively short experience.”

“I have some knowledge of health and safety and means of escape, I don’t think it is an issue if exists and fire exists are clear I’m not sure what you are talking about the people capacity of the space would be far more than 15, and the quality of the group was in my view with so many in the main mothers there were enjoying themselves and making friends which is good for the kids and their future.”

*"I don't feel the smaller session sizes have had an effect or made any difference to the overall experience."
"To be honest the session sizes at Balloch were never large and you couldn't fit more than 15 places in comfortably."*

Q. 17. We have identified a gap in provision for children aged 3-5 years; as a result a new additional programme called Storytimes has been developed. Having experienced Bookbug do you feel your child would benefit from participating Storytimes as a follow on from Bookbug Sessions?

Yes / No

Yes –

"When my child is old enough."

"Definitely sounds fantastic."

*"Looking forward to Storytimes for my grandson as I enjoy attending Bookbug Sessions. *Session leader in the library is very good with all the children and the children are very attentive to the leader."*

"Storytime with some nursery rhymes / singing incorporated."

"Not old enough."

"Although what about children aged 2-3. Children aged 3-5 already get storytime at nursery or school so get storytime already. Children aged 2-3 don't."

"Yes although now this has changed. Am no longer happy with the sessions."

"But it's nursery time."

"All sessions are run in the afternoon. My 3 year old was disappointed to leave Bookbug and there is no link to the library for her now until school age unless it's a family visit, as nursery for 3-4yr olds generally runs in the afternoons. A mixture of morning / afternoon sessions would be preferable."

"Yes great idea, before they get lost in computer social reading preparing for school in more than one way great idea. Great chance also for health to come in and also look at possible needs early for a kid."

"If she can get a place?!"

"However all children of 3 should have a nursery space and storytime should be given there."

Q. 19. Have you any further comments or suggestions you would like to make?

"Just hope to secure a place again as we have been attending since my child was 6 weeks old. Hoping it will be a less stressful reg process."

"As a personal suggestion, to not clap after each song, as I feel it interrupts the flow for the babies & they lose concentration. Although happy either way."

"The sessions prove to be an excellent forum for young children to learn social skills as well as developing their interest in books."

"As a great grandmother, I thoroughly enjoy these Bookbug sessions, with my great grandson, and will continue to attend, and I am looking forward to the Storytimes sessions."

"As a grandparent I enjoy the Bookbug sessions with my grandsons. I enjoy all participation, it encourages my grandson to listen, sing and communicate with other children. The Bookbug leader is very good with the children."

"I think all sessions should be capped at 15 as anymore than this would not benefit the children attending."

"Thoroughly enjoy our time at the session."

"My child loved the Bookbug session & I think this is a great alternative to a toddler group."

*"I understand that session sizes have been capped at 15 for health and safety purposes but the drop in sessions at Balloch were never too busy (unlike Alexandria and Dumbarton) and it seems a shame that the registration system has to apply to all libraries. My daughter (18 months) and I have always enjoyed the sessions at Balloch library and secured a place at the first session and second session under the system of registration. I have decided that this coming session will be our last in order to allow other babies / toddlers to benefit from Bookbug sessions. Thank you to all involved in the planning and delivery of the sessions at Balloch, particularly *Session leader."*

"Not happy at the changes made to Bookbug sessions. It was fine as a drop-in facility, as young children are so unpredictable. My daughter has been every week almost for a year and is now going to miss out as I didn't get to register."

*"I think the Bookbug sessions are excellent and my daughter loves them. I will be so upset – for her development – if I don't get a place. I find the registration process (especially for Balloch) unnecessary. *Session leader is fantastic."*

"As a former nursery nurse and social worker I know how important singing is to children. This group provides a service to the community that is so important."

"Please explain how after attending the same session since he was born – I now have no session to attend. I find the situation very upsetting."

"The very nature of Rhyme Time is that it was flexible due to the fact that kids are unpredictable. It is much more routine and this can prove difficult."

"Perhaps more children could attend the weekly sessions however, to prevent 'overcrowding' on special occasions. E.g. Halloween / Christmas, these days could be ticketed to limit numbers. I feel that some children are missing out on the weekly session that suits their family circumstances."

"I feel that overall it is a better change as sometimes the classes were extremely full and my son does benefit better from the smaller classes. It is just more a concern when I return to work as the drop in sessions would have been easier, as you don't need to commit to the same time every week and my son would've been able to go with his childcare provider when it is convenient for them."

"A mix of mornings & afternoons per library would be ideal. Currently, the lack of morning times in Dumbarton is problematic – most ante-pre-school nursery places are in the morning. Overall, Bookbug is an extremely valuable service offered by the library, ensuring engagement with the library from a young age. It allows, often lonely, parents a chance to meet other people, encourages active participation with children and increases literacy levels. As far as I am aware, the only library that was 'too successful' and increased its numbers beyond capacity was Dumbarton library. So why the need for such a big change? Also, why take something so successful, something the Bookbug Co-ordinator, her team & the library have worked so hard to encourage people to come to, and stop people coming??! Seems like madness. Surely the answer is to provide another session in Dumbarton, on a Wednesday if you like, to pick up the slack. I am also aware of new exciting plans for Parenting Classes, Yoga etc. Whilst I fully applaud the direction the library is taking, surely this contradicts earlier cries of 'not enough resources' to put on more sessions. Please don't underestimate how precious Bookbug is to the parents of young children in WDC area, particularly Dumbarton. There is very little

on offer (for free + otherwise) for young children & babies; No wonder there has been an angry reaction to what is, essentially, a cut in services. My daughter and I gained an enormous amount from Bookbug and our early years together would have been very different without it. “

“I am really disgraced by the way the council have handled these changes. There was never any parent consultation beforehand, which, could be the reason for some of the backlash. Bookbug is such a valuable resource to parents with young children & might be the only opportunity parents have to form friendships. I have attended Bookbug since it began over 3 years ago and have watched it progress, gain in popularity and success. It seems crazy to now limit the opportunity in certain areas (namely Dumbarton) for children to form a relationship with books and language. We all know education from an early age is vital & with Dumbarton having a diverse social x-section our children need this service (do not underestimate its importance). Please consider back to back sessions in Dumbarton / community buildings in the surrounding areas (if nos. Are too large for drop ins) I would urge West Dunbartonshire Council to embrace the success & need for this service rather than put the stoppers on. As it is, you are making the library inaccessible place for many.”

“Just hope to secure a place again as we have been attending since my child was 6 weeks old. Hoping it will be a less stressful reg process.”

“The sessions were good when it was drop in but it is good knowing that the sessions will not be crowded.”

“Could more sessions be put on?”

“Excellent service.”

“I feel the capping of session has generated a lot of publicity and this in turn has caused more parents to look for places who are not 100% committed. I have informed the library that I would be willing to take sessions if the situation does not improve.”

“Please put Bookbug back to drop in.”

“I think the capped number is unnecessary. The drop-in element of Bookbug is convenient to parents of young children, committing to going every week is unrealistic.”

“Please do something to stop so many children missing out – I’ll be going out-with West Dunbartonshire so that my child can still attend session’s drop-in.”

“It a good time to bring other stakeholders in to talk about behaviour, diet, and general health for kids and parents, club opening general life chance help and pathways, stop smoking ie a monthly theme. I’m dyslexic excuse the spelling, I was at uni before it was accepted it could have been spotted at a Bookbug session.”

“Really felt session was helpful for communication and fun!”

“Our Bookbug session is great fun! *Session leader is a great asset to the class.”

“This is a great programme, we always enjoy going along to *Session leader’s session. Thanks.”

Please note names of individuals including staff and children have been removed from this public document to respect anonymity.

1. Where a child names was given it has been replaced with - *Child
2. Where a staff member or volunteers name was given it has been replaced with - *Session leader