

# WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

## Report by Executive Director of Educational Services

### Educational Services Committee

---

**Subject: Bookbug Programme Update**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To advise committee of the changes resulting from the recent review of Early Years provision in libraries; in particular the changes to the Libraries & Cultural Services Bookbug Programme.
- 1.2** To inform committee of a rolling programme of consultation and feedback involving parents and session leaders.

#### **2. Recommendations**

The Educational Services Committee is recommended to:

- i. Note the contents of this report and the efforts being made by staff to ensure enhanced Early Years provision within Libraries & Cultural Services.
- ii. Note the implementation and content of a rolling programme of consultation with parents, staff and volunteers.
- iii. Receive further feedback on the outcomes of this consultation at the next Educational Services meeting on 15 May 2013.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1** A review of the Early Years literacy programme provided by Libraries & Cultural Services was carried out in autumn 2012. This resulted in enhanced and expanded Pre 5 delivery including a number of changes being made to the Bookbug programme aimed at children aged 0-3 years.
- 3.2** Changes to the Bookbug programme were informed by health and safety concerns, best practise nationally and consultation with professional staff and session leaders. Changes included capping session sizes at 15 children per session, and a new booking system for session places. Contingencies were also made to ensure places for children referred by the CHCP and other support services.
- 3.3** Libraries & Cultural Services identified a gap in provision for children aged 3-5 years and as a result of the review have introduced a new programme of 'Storytime sessions' aimed at supporting literacy for this age group.

Thereby ensuring a seamless link of provision from baby, to nursery and to Primary (through our class visits and homework clubs).

- 3.4** At the full Council meeting on 19 December 2012, a motion was carried concerning the Bookbug service. The motion contained the following paragraph:

*“Council requests that a rolling feedback and consultation exercise is carried out during the first block of [Bookbug] sessions and a report is to be presented to the Educational Services Committee in February identifying any barriers or issues and actions to overcome the concerns identified.”*

#### **4. Main Issues**

- 4.1** Libraries & Cultural Services Pre 5 programme including Bookbug, reflects the council's commitment to Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), improving outcomes for all children and ensuring that resources are used effectively and efficiently. The new libraries Pre 5 programme now supports early years literacy through a progression of library based services from Bookbug for 0-3yrs, through to Storytimes for 3-5yrs and on to our new Homework Clubs for Primary children. These changes and the expansion to include children aged 3-5yrs are also supported by the Scottish Book Trust which coordinates Bookbug nationally.
- 4.2** Every effort is being taken in this new programme to ensure that the highest quality of service is delivered in libraries for children aged 0 – 5yrs. A rolling programme of consultation and evaluation has begun with parents and session leaders on the changes implemented. Consultation and review will continue throughout 2013 in order to ensure equality of provision across the authority and the highest quality of service delivery.
- 4.3** The new Bookbug sessions started after the festive break and the effects of the new programme have only begun to be felt. There is currently a limited amount of anecdotal feedback available from parents and a session leader. This suggests that the smaller group sizes is beneficial.
- a) *“The smaller class size gives an opportunity to get to know the other mothers and babies on an individual and first name basis where it was difficult before. Also for me the smaller class is easier to hear as I have a cochlear implant and the more background noise; the harder it is to make things out. I think it's less overwhelming for the babies as well!”- parent*
- b) *“The children have benefited enormously from the enthusiasm of their leaders and have sparked a keen interest in books from regularly attending our library based sessions. This is such a valuable resource for parents with young children and I can't recommend it enough. The sessions do feel less hectic and the numbers are far more manageable, although I feel there is still room for a couple more, especially toddler age”  
- parent*

c) *“at the first of the new format Bookbug sessions the morning ran smoothly and calmly rather than being manic and everyone ‘just’ getting through it. There was room for everyone, people and prams” – session leader*

- 4.4** A parent from the same pool of respondents identified concerns regarding the registration system.  
*“The oversubscribed classes should be balloted allowing everyone to put their application in and the places are drawn at random. Parents understand the need for reduced numbers and as long as things are fair for everyone there won’t be any problems” - parent*
- 4.5** In order to ensure that parents and session leader’s views are recorded and have input into the future delivery of Bookbug. An evaluation form has been produced for circulation on completion of the first block of Bookbug sessions in February 2013. A copy of this evaluation form is attached as Appendix 1. Both formal and informal consultation with parents and session leaders will be ongoing through 2013 and will assist in identifying any barriers or issues in order that these may be resolved.
- 4.6** In consulting with users and evaluating outcomes Libraries & Cultural Services will take cognisance of the views of parents and session leaders. It is also anticipated that in time a degree of flexibility may be applied to session sizes in specific libraries where there is demand, capacity, and where health and safety implications allow. In addition the results of the evaluation and registration processes will allow us to identify where additional sessions may be required. Where there is demand and staffing allows additional sessions may be implemented.
- 4.7** The changes to Bookbug include increased training and liaison with Bookbug leaders ensuring an enhanced skill base and quality provision for our young people.

## **5. People Implications**

- 5.1** There are no personnel issues identified as a result of this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1** There are no financial implications within this report. All aspects of service delivery will be produced within existing exhibition budgets.

## **7. Risk Analysis**

- 7.1** An assessment of health and safety risks was one of the factors which contributed to the restructuring of the Bookbug service.
- 7.2** The rolling programme of consultation will identify any ongoing risks and will allow staff to mitigate those risks.

## **8. Equalities Impact**

- 8.1** There are no equalities impact issues raised as a consequence of this report. In reviewing and programming Bookbug changes to numbers of places at individual Bookbug sessions reflect the existing usage in each branch, and sufficient sessions will be promoted to accommodate these numbers. The new system is not in place yet at Alexandria Library due to refurbishment an additional session will be provided at this venue to meet anticipated demand.

## **9. Consultation**

- 9.1** Legal Services and the Section 95 officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.
- 9.2** Learning development staff, the Scottish Book Trust and the Bookbug Coordinator have been consulted in relation to the content of this report.

## **10. Strategic Assessment**

- 10.1** The development and implementation of an enhanced Early Years literacy programme in Libraries & Cultural Services reflects the council's aspiration to improve life chances for children and young people which is one of the council's strategic priorities for 2012-2017.
- 10.2** Enhancing Early Year literacy programmes in our libraries will ultimately lead to regeneration. Investing in their future is fundamental to the values of the council. In addition our staff are our most valuable resource and enhancing their skills will have a positive effect on children's learning.
- 10.3** The new and enhanced Early Years literacy programme forms part of an integrated learning programme for children and young people's delivered by Libraries & Cultural Services. The integrated programme being developed is a strategic initiative which makes best use of resources including staffing, with all areas of the service working together making best use of skills and resources. It reflects the council's commitment to Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), improving outcomes for all children and ensuring that resources are used effectively and efficiently.

---

Terry Lanagan  
Executive Director of Education

---

**Person to Contact:** Gill Graham, Section Head Libraries & Cultural Services  
Educational Services, 19 Poplar Road, Dumbaron G82  
2RJ. Tel: 01389 608042.  
E-mail [gill.graham@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:gill.graham@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1.**

Bookbug Evaluation Form

**Wards Affected:**

All Wards