

BOOKSTART PROJECT REPORT

Report By: Bryan Twitty, CIS Manager

Purpose

1. To inform the Partnership of the role out of the extended Bookstart scheme involving Libraries, NHS and other Partners.

Background

- 2 The Partnership will be aware of the original Bookstart project which it has part funded in the past. The Sure Start Unit Nationally has now agreed to sponsor the scheme and as well as providing the initial free pack to babies aged 6-9 months this extended funding allows the provision of further packs at age 18months and 3 years.

- 3 Each year the scheme will now reach 1.7 million children and offers the opportunity to make every home a place where learning is fun. The SureStart Unit understands that Bookstart will contribute to many areas highlighting the following:

- Promote the key role of parents in their babies social development and learning
- Raise awareness of adult literacy issues and provide a point of entry to related services
- Encourage parents to read with their babies from a very early age, supporting early communication and language development
- Encourage and improve take-up of use of local library services
- Support a number of other priorities including Arts for Everyone, Lifelong Learning, Basic Skills and DCMS 'Framework for the Future'

4. The scheme will offer the following packs to children:

- Bookstart Baby pack - 0-12 months, canvas bag containing 2 board books a book of rhymes and a place mat.
- Bookstart + Toddlers pack – 18-30 months, bright satchel containing 2 books, crayons and pad.
- My Bookstart Treasure Box – 18-36 months approx, treasure box with secret compartment containing 2 books, coloured pencils and pad
- Booktouch – 0-4 years, for visually impaired children aged 0-4 years

- Bookstart Book Crawl – a library joining incentive to include free materials
5. “Bookstart” and “Bookstart + Toddlers” Pack are accessed via Health Visitors and at Clinic and Health checks. However, the SureStart Unit hopes that the “Bookstart Treasure Box” could be accessed by parents when their children attend Early Years settings, including Children’s Centres and SureStart local programmes. Childminders would be encouraged to access the pack at libraries for the children in their care.
 6. To this end the EYDCP Newsletter, in an article and editorial has introduced settings to the scheme and the opportunity, which this affords parents and their children. The contact within the Library Service is Sarah Chedgoy (Learning and Access Manager) who is able to provide the settings further information and will run “roadshows” shortly. Full background papers are available.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Partnership notes the extension of the scheme and offers encouragement to settings to participate.