

**REPORT TO: DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL EDUCATION COMMITTEE: MAY 20<sup>TH</sup> 2002**

**REPORT ON: CHILDCARE FUNDING TO SUPPORT BOOKSTART FOR BABIES IN DUNDEE**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**REPORT NO: 469-2002**

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the provision of funding for Bookstart (Books for Babies) Dundee.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Education Committee note the content of this report and approve the proposed provision of funding for Bookstart (Books for Babies) Dundee.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The full cost of this proposal, £3855 for the period July 2002- March 2004, will be met by funding to local authorities for childcare new projects. An outline of expenditure is included as Appendix 1 of this Report.

## **4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

This funding will support and improve access to services, skills and knowledge needed to enable everyone to play a full part in society.

## **5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This proposal will support the provision of books to all babies born in Dundee.

## **6.0 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

- 6.1 Bookstart grew out of research showing that babies who enjoy an early introduction to books benefit educationally, culturally, emotionally and socially. The Bookstart scheme delivers a free book bag to new parents via health visitors at the 7 – 9 month development check. Book Trust, a national independent charity, initiated and co-ordinates the Bookstart programme nationally. Locally, the project is co-ordinated by staff from Neighbourhood Resources and Development, Education, and Tayside Primary Care NHS Trust.

- 6.2 Since the launch of Bookstart Dundee in May 1999, 4565 book bags have been distributed. Questionnaires completed by parents receiving the bags in the period March 2000 – July 2001 show that there was an increase in the number of babies becoming library members and that a significant number of parents were looking at books with their toddlers on a daily basis. Library staff reported an increase in demand for board books and very simple picture books.

6.3 Sainsbury's sponsored Bookstart until the end of December 2000. Book Trust negotiated further support from a range of agencies until the end of June 2001. Since then the programme has been kept going by the distribution of book bags by health visitors. Bookstart in Scotland will be funded by the Scottish Executive for the period 2002 –2004. These proposals cover the funding of Bookstart until 2004.

6.4 The Early Years and Childcare Team is in an ideal position to support the continued delivery of Bookstart. Considerable work is already under development through a range of projects to promote the role and involvement of parents in their children's learning. Bookstart is an important way to begin the shared enjoyment of books between parents and their children and we know that this is a useful way to develop young children's enthusiasm for reading.

## **7.0 PROPOSAL**

7.1 The Bookstart bag includes two books, a library application form and a laminated nursery rhyme placemat. Funding for the contents of the bag is currently met by Scottish Executive. This proposal covers the cost of cloth book bags and related publicity materials. Additional publicity about local services can be included and the Early Years and Childcare Partnership will produce material about childcare services and parent groups for inclusion in the bags.

7.2 The universal distribution of bags means that all parents can access information about local services and facilities.

7.3 In order to strengthen the co-ordination of the programme, a multi agency steering group comprising staff from the Early Years and Childcare Partnership, Neighbourhood Resources and Development Department and Tayside Primary Care NHS Trust will be established. This group will be able to ensure that the ongoing delivery of Bookstart in Dundee is linked strategically into related initiatives. The group will also be able to promote the potential of Bookstart in supporting social inclusion, parent-child bonding and family learning.

7.4 The Bookstart programme is evaluated nationally and information about the outcomes of the Dundee project will require to be made available for this purpose. A key aim in Dundee will be to ensure that every baby born in the City receives a pack.

## **8.0 CONSULTATION**

8.1 This report has been the subject of consultation with the Directors of Neighbourhood Resources and Development, Support Services and Finance. In addition consultation has included staff from the Primary Care NHS Trust.

## **9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information), were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

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Director of Education

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Date

**APPENDIX 1**

**CHILDCARE FUNDING TO SUPPORT BOOKSTART FOR BABIES IN DUNDEE**

	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>
Publicity Materials	£1000	£1000
Cloth Bags	£ 855	£1000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1855</b>	<b>£2000</b>