



Public libraries and schools – why work together? (a)

Political agendas require working together

Partnership – or ‘joined-up’ – working is a priority for national government and local authorities.

*Every Child Matters*¹ envisions the integration of all local services for children.

*The 2004 Children Bill*² makes cooperation and information-sharing essential.

*The DfES Five year strategy*³ shows the need to work in partnership to achieve change in children’s services, education and training.

*Framework for the Future*⁴ urges stronger partnerships with schools in order to encourage children to use libraries.

*The Shared Priorities*⁵ depend on stronger partnership working to achieve the common aims of raising standards in schools and improving the quality of life for children and others.

*Study Support and Out of Hours Learning*⁶ show the value of community-based activities in supporting children’s learning.

Key Research shows the value of working together

*Start with the Child*⁷ – Agencies working together provide better, more integrated packages of family-friendly services.

*Creative Reading*⁸ – School/library partnerships stimulate children’s creativity, and encourage reading for pleasure.

*Fulfilling their Potential*⁹ - Partnership working is the most effective way to help young people extend and enjoy their reading.

*Reading for Change*¹⁰ - Young people’s life chances improve when they read for pleasure. Enjoying reading can break the link between social class and underachievement.

*Inspiring Children*¹¹ - Libraries’ work with children (for example through the Summer Reading Challenge) inspires children and encourages them to read for pleasure and more widely.

1 *Every Child Matters*, DfES, 2003, www.dfes.gov.uk/everychildmatters/downloads.shtml

2 The Children Bill (HL), House of Lords, 19th July 2004, www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmbills/144/2004144.html

3 Five year strategy for children and learners, DfES, July 2004

4 *Framework for the Future* – libraries, learning and information in the next decade, DCMS, 2003

5 ODPM and LGA Shared Priorities, 2001

6 Study Support Quality Development Programme, DfES, 2003

7 *Start With the Child* research report, MLA, 2002; Start with the child report, CILIP, 2002, www.cilip.org.uk/advocacy/startwiththechild/

8 *Creative Reading*, Demos for TRA, 2004

9 *Fulfilling Their Potential*, TRA, 2004

10 *Reading For Change*: performance and engagement across countries: results from PISA 2000, OECD, 2002

11 *Inspiring Children*: the impact of the summer reading challenge, The Reading Agency, 2003



Public libraries and schools – why work together? (b)

Working together to reach every child, every family

Through libraries, teachers can offer all pupils a whole new reading universe.

Through schools, librarians can engage with all children, including those who haven't discovered what the library has to offer.

Children can be encouraged to visit and use library services as individual young citizens, developing their sense of community involvement and individual responsibility.

Research shows that children who are enthusiastic about library use can get their whole family hooked¹².

Working together in different ways can help to pick up children who have not yet discovered reading for pleasure.

The complementary strengths of libraries and schools

Librarians know and are enthusiastic about children's literature and the full range of resources: including books, their authors and IT available to young people via their local library.

Librarians working with children have considerable knowledge of children's books and know which the children are enjoying most.

Libraries are open out of school hours, including at weekends.

Libraries provide a unique community space where children can browse, read, enjoy all kinds of books and follow their individual passions.

Teachers have intimate knowledge of the curriculum, its requirements and of the needs and preferences of individual children.

Libraries and schools together make a powerful and effective combination.

¹² *Inspiring Children: the impact of the Summer Reading Challenge*, The Reading Agency, 2003