

Middlesbrough Reads - February 2019 update



The National Literacy Trust Hub in Middlesbrough, known locally as Middlesbrough Reads, was established in June 2012 with the aim of improving the literacy outcomes of children and families in the town. The campaign works alongside Middlesbrough Council's 'Middlesbrough Promise.'

Key Middlesbrough Reads campaign activity in 2018



Pop-up literacy shop – February and April

The Middlesbrough Hub hosted a 'pop-up story shop' at the Hillstreet Shopping Centre to encourage more families in the town to read together. Over 600 free books were handed out and children were treated to storytelling sessions from local author Chris Callaghan.

World Book Day celebrations with Grand Central rail – March

Pupils from Park End Primary School marked World Book Day by taking a literacy-themed train journey with Grand Central to York, where they saw Tim Peake's historic space capsule at the National Railway Museum. The pupils each received a free space-themed WBD books to encourage reading for pleasure.

Summer Reading Challenge

Middlesbrough Reads supported the Reading Agency's Summer Reading Challenge, to encourage children to read up to six books over the Summer. North Ormesby Academy was the most actively involved school this year.



Sing with me - November

To mark World Nursery Rhyme Week, Middlesbrough Reads began working with the Stronger Families School Readiness team to promote the benefits of singing to newborn babies. A set of Sing With Me booklets were produced to remind parents of the

importance of sharing songs and rhymes with babies, and acquaint them with some of the most familiar nursery rhymes. The booklet is given to all new Middlesbrough parents by their health visitor at the six to eight week health check.

Middlesbrough Football Club

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Throughout 2018, Middlesbrough Reads built on its strong existing partnership with Middlesbrough Football Club, regularly gifting books to young fans in the Generation Red Family Zone at the Riverside Stadium, talking to them about what they like to read and encouraging parents or carers to read with their children.

James Cook University Hospital

Neonatal packs

Parents on the neonatal ward at James Cook University Hospital have continued to receive copies of *Guess How Much I Love You* by Sam McBratney and tips on reading to their premature babies. To date over 650 packs have been given away to Middlesbrough families.



Paediatric patient activity packs

Care Volunteers (TCVs) at the hospital gave away a further 350 packs to young people in the wards - which included books, literacy tips and activities.

Middlesbrough Reads also gifted 150 copies of Tom Fletcher's *The Christmasaurus* during the festive period as part of a generous donation from Penguin Random House. Thanks to a partnership with WHSmith, the campaign also received a Christmasaurus cuddly toy, which was awarded to Murphy Gill, aged nine.

Antenatal messaging

Middlesbrough Reads is continuing to provide messaging and books at the Pregnancy, Birth and Beyond antenatal classes. Expectant parents are encouraged to talk, sing and read to their baby in order to help brain and language development.

Bath, Book, Bed

Middlesbrough Reads, Middlesbrough libraries and the Stronger Families School Readiness team have continued to promote bedtime routines as part of four Bath, Book, Bed weeks. More than 500 new parents and carers have received books and tips at baby weighing clinics to let them know about the importance of routines and reading stories.

HomeStart Teesside

Middlesbrough Reads has trained Home-Start volunteers to become Literacy Champions, the National Literacy Trust programme that asks volunteers to promote improving literacy in their local community. The campaign has also secured funding to enable HomeStart Teesside to establish weekly 'Sing, Rhyme and Read' sessions, which give advice on the benefits of reading and singing nursery rhymes from birth onwards.



Nepacs

For the third year in a row, Middlesbrough Reads has donated books to Nepacs, a local charity promoting a positive future for prisoners serving time in the North East and their families. The charity was given more than 170 books and tips enabling prisoners to choose a book to give to their child for Christmas. They also received a hundred £1 World Book Day books.

Feast of fun

Following a meeting with the Bishop of Whitby, Middlesbrough Reads has donated books to the 'Feast of Fun' holiday clubs. The clubs take place in churches, schools and community centres and provide activities including arts and crafts, sports, games and music, while serving health food during the school holidays.

New Middlesbrough Reads collateral

The Middlesbrough Reads team has been working on new campaign leaflets and posters aimed at expectant parents, families with babies and families with early years to primary school children. The collateral identifies the behaviours we want our target audience to adopt and addresses the barriers from preventing them doing this already. These will be available in Spring 2019.



National Literacy Trust programme activity in Middlesbrough

Early Words Together

The Early Words Together programme, which trains early years staff and volunteers to give parents the confidence to support their children's literacy skills at home, has continued to be delivered successfully in several Middlesbrough schools throughout 2018. A Middlesbrough Academy, reported that 74% of pupils involved achieved a good level of development at the end of reception, compared to 65% of all pupils.

Early Words Together at Two

The Early Words Together at Two programme was given a Romanian focus and successfully implemented at Newport Community Hub during the summer term. Ten families engaged in the first six-week cycle and the parents have built their confidence to create a home learning environment. The next delivery is due to commence in Spring 2019.

Young Readers Programme

Seven schools in Middlesbrough have taken part in the Young Readers Programme, which encourages children to read for enjoyment. Teachers reported that participating in the programme had a positive impact on reading attainment and on reading enjoyment. Almost 300 pupils attended a celebration event at Middlesbrough Football Club and attended book readings by Andy Seed and Cathy Cassidy.

Our Stories

Our Stories is a creative writing and performance poetry initiative led by performance poets. More than 100 Year 5 pupils from Abingdon, North Ormesby & Corpus Christi participated in the programme, culminating with 48 pupils being involved in the Grand Final Poetry Slam at Teesside University. School staff noted a rise in confidence and self-esteem among many of the participating pupils.

Media coverage highlights for Middlesbrough Reads

Over 2018 the Middlesbrough Reads campaign was mentioned in 24 pieces of coverage, achieving a reach of 283,908 and an equivalent advertising value of over £9,240. Print and online coverage appeared in titles such as:

- Middlesbrough Gazette
- Northern Echo
- North East Connected
- Love Middlesbrough

Middlesbrough Reads also secured interviews in broadcast outlets on BBC Tees and BBC Radio 4's World at One programme to discuss programme activity and the national literacy picture.

5th Anniversary celebration events

The National Literacy Trust hosted an evening to celebrate the Hub's five year anniversary. This was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the achievements with a range of stakeholders, including the Mayor Cllr David Budd, Director of Public Health, Edward Kunonga and Director of the National Literacy Trust, Jonathan Douglas.

Supported by Arriva North East, a literacy-themed bus tour also visited local community centres in Easterside, Grove Hill, Thorntree, North Ormesby and Newport on Wednesday 8 August. Children were invited on board to enjoy storytelling from performance poet Dom Berry and were gifted a brand new book, courtesy of Penguin Random House.

