

Carolynn Rankin
Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

Avril Brock
Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

Carol Wootton
Early Years Librarian, Sure Start Wakefield East, UK

Dr Edward Halpin
Leeds Metropolitan University, UK

The role of the early years librarian in developing an information community: A case study of effective partnerships and early years literacy within a Sure Start project in Wakefield.

Abstract: Sure Start is a UK government initiative addressing social exclusion in local communities through a multi-disciplinary team approach. The Early Years Librarian can be a significant team member in responding to child development and early years literacy. A case study of the Wakefield district investigates the role of the Early Years Librarians in responding to the government agenda. Partnership work and focusing of provision based on parental consultation are key issues.

Résumé : Le projet « Sure Start » est une initiative du gouvernement du Royaume-Uni abordant le problème de l'exclusion sociale dans les communautés locales, à travers l'approche d'une équipe multidisciplinaire. Les bibliothécaires « Early Years » peuvent jouer un rôle important dans le développement de l'enfant et dans la première phase de culture informationnelle. Une étude de cas dans la circonscription de Wakefield explore le rôle des bibliothécaires « Early Years » œuvrant pour le plan d'action du gouvernement. Le travail de partenariat et l'utilisation de dispositions basées sur la consultation parentale sont des questions-clés.

1. Introduction

This research project reports on the role of early years librarians in developing an information community in Wakefield, a local authority area in West Yorkshire, England. The research project was carried out between December 2005 and January 2007. Inter-professional and inter-agency working are important features of UK government initiatives such as the Sure Start Local Programmes for young children. Sure Start is a government programme which addresses social exclusion in local communities through a multi-disciplinary team approach. This encourages working together in new ways that would cut across old professional and agency boundaries and focus on local family and community needs. Within this team the Early Years Librarian can be a significant actor in responding to child development and early years' literacy skills, alongside a range of other skilled professionals. The research project investigates the importance of partnership work and the refocusing of provision to meet needs using community profiling and user feedback.

2. Research questions

This research project considered a number of questions

- the role of early years librarians in delivering early years literacy programmes
- the involvement of early years librarians in interdisciplinary teams
- the political drivers underpinning the practitioner role
- the library as a community space

3. Background to the study – three themes

There are three themes connected by this research project and which need to be woven together to explore the environment in which the early years librarians work. The first theme is early language and literacy development, or emergent literacy and this is inextricably linked to the second theme of the role of the library and librarians in supporting literacy. The third theme is of an emerging political agenda in the UK with government initiatives focusing on radical reform for children, young people and families. This paper will explore the three themes in seeking to provide a context for the field work carried out in the case study area in Wakefield.

3.1 Early Years Language and Literacy Development

Literacy skills are vital in society today, and an early introduction to literacy through storytelling and the library can provide a foundation and confidence in the use of words and communication. McKechnie (2006) notes research factors that foster early reading and emergent literacy such as hearing stories read aloud and having ready access to reading materials at home, at school, or through a public library. She also provides practical suggestions as to what libraries can do and what parents can do based on evidence from the research literature. Number one on the list for parents is ‘Read to your child’.

In responding to the DfES/HM Treasury Joint Policy Review on Children and Young People the National Literacy Trust noted that research shows that when parents talk and sing to children, share books and take them to the library, they help children to develop the literacy skills that can protect against social exclusion later in life. Such practises are more important than parents’ social class and their levels of education in terms of child outcomes (Akerman, 2006).

Bookstart, run by national charity Booktrust, was the first national baby book-giving programme in the world. Bookstart began in the UK in 1992 with 300 babies. By 2001, there had been over one million Bookstart babies. In an overview of the first five years of Bookstart Wade (1998) writes that the scheme was initiated in 1992 by the Book Trust working in co-operation with Birmingham Library Services, South Birmingham Health Authority and Birmingham University School of Education. .

‘Bookstart recognises the central role that parents and carers play in the children’s intellectual, emotional and moral development. Stories and rhymes lay the foundation for literacy development and much else including pleasure and quality time shared by adults and their children’ (Wade 1998, 6)

Wade also flagged up the importance of multi-agency co-operation indicating that partnerships between professions with differing roles and expertise had contributed to the success of projects and that partnerships has included liaison between library staff, health visitors and early years professionals. He proposed that Bookstart projects explore ways of supporting parents and carers after the initial book gifting, suggesting there is scope

for much “library in the community” work, not only through library-based work, but also in outreach activities in clinics, supermarkets and toddler groups. Wade’s report also indicated the implications for the adequate staffing and funding of library services, a factor which continues to be an issue in the Wakefield case study area discussed later in this paper.

Bookstart operates through locally based organisations by giving a free pack of books to babies with guidance material for parents and carers. The aim is that every child in the UK should enjoy and benefit from books from as early an age as possible. Bookstart for babies 0-12 months aims to provide a canvas bag to every new baby born in the UK containing baby books, a booklet for parents setting out information and advice on sharing stories with young children, a Sure Start leaflet and a booklist and invitation to join the local library. In the majority of cases the Bookstart bag is given to parents by their health visitor at the eight month health check.

3.2 The role of the library and librarians in supporting literacy

The second theme in this paper relates to the role of the library and librarians in supporting literacy. Libraries and librarians are a vital aid to literacy development, they have the resources to help parents make sure their child has the best start in life.

“Libraries also perceive the importance of reading as contributing to the social and cultural development of the child and seek to develop this in different ways” (Lonsdale 2000, 31)

According to the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

‘Museums, libraries and archives are uniquely placed to support families and early year’s children. They are based in the community and offer accessible learning opportunities that particularly support inter-generational groups [MLA website]’.

The MLA website provides a positive message about working with the Department for Education and Skills and Sure Start to develop and strengthen the place of libraries in the government’s programme for families and children. There is now a powerful base of more than 200 early years staff delivering Sure Start through libraries and libraries are in the process of ‘re-creating themselves as family friendly environments’

The generic message is that reading with young children is important no matter what your mother language or your cultural experience. The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) research demonstrated the importance of parents in children’s early educational achievements. Wilkie (2002) uses positive evidence from the EPPE project in her introduction to a Youth Libraries publication

“When Professor Kathy Sylva, the principal investigator for the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) research team was asked by the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education and Employment “*What is it that parents should do in those early years?*”, she replied ‘*Take them to the library*’ “

The Place for Children research (Elkin and Kinnell 2000) included in its coverage an attempt to assess how significant the public library service in the UK was continuing to be in supporting the reading developments of children and young people from birth through to 16 Elkin writes that ‘*Every child needs the library: children are the future movers and shakers of the nation. Reading has a value in children’s personal, social and imaginative development.*’ (Elkin and Kinnell 2000, 118)

A working group from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) provided an overview of library services to children and young people in the Start with the Child report published in 2002. This is at the centre of advocacy activity and argues that libraries can change children's lives.

“Reading is a hugely important part of children's and young people's development. Books inspire their imagination, help them to grow emotionally, and develop their understanding of the world and their place in the local and global community, past and present. Libraries are a hugely important part of Children's and young people's lives because they bring books and children together; they provide reading opportunities free of charge, and so they encourage experimentation and learning” (CILIP 2002, 9)

This report also commented on the emergence of partnership schemes:

“Many library authorities are working closely with Sure Start schemes, and gaining funding for early years workers, additional mobile services and for supporting Bookstart in Sure Start areas. In Wakefield, Sure Start has funded the Sunshine library, the first designated early years library in the country” (CILIP 2002, 39)

CILIP are also involved in partnership funding for the Early Years Library Network. Established in 2003, the Early Years Library Network (EYLN) is a three-year joint venture between the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, CILIP and the Museums Libraries & Archives Council (MLA), formerly Resource. Its brief is to raise the quality of library services to pre-school children by providing a national support mechanism for the large number of recently appointed specialist staff. EYLN will encourage libraries to be recognised as key contributors to early years education as part of the wider education and learning communities. The EYLN also has a stated aim to advocate the vital role of regular library use on the development of pre and early literacy skills.

3.3 Emerging political agenda in the UK - political drivers

The third theme in this discussion relates to political drivers in the UK and focuses on the Sure Start story. Sure Start was launched in 1998 as a major cross-departmental governmental programme that aims to deliver the best start in life for every child and was a key part of the Labour government's strategy to end child poverty by 2020 and tackle social exclusion (DfES 2002). Sure Start Local Programmes formed a central part of the Government's anti-poverty agenda, seeking to integrate and expand health, childcare, early education and family support services to families with young children living in economically deprived areas. With the aim of providing a more holistic approach to service delivery, including a focus on early language and reading, Sure Start supports families from pregnancy right through until children are 14, including those with special educational needs and those with disabilities up to age 16. Offering a wide range of programmes targeted at particular local areas or disadvantaged groups within England, Sure Start works in partnership with local authorities, Primary Care Trusts, Jobcentre Plus, local communities, public agencies and voluntary and private sector organisations and aims to achieve better outcomes for children, parents and communities by increasing the availability of childcare for all children improving health and emotional development for young children and supporting parents as parents and in their aspirations towards employment.

Sure Start programmes vary from area to area as they are tailored to the needs of their particular community. Sure Start offers public libraries the opportunity to use partnership projects to target some of the hardest to reach families in a community. Love (2001) describes the benefits of working within a partnership in the London Borough of Enfield and how those benefits accrue to the customers – parents, carers and children, as well as to the partners. *“Families joining the public library service through a Sure Start route would have access in the longer term to study support, home-work centres, community language resources and a whole network of resources and expertise”* (2001, 166).

The Every Child Matters programme forms a key part of the emerging political agenda in the UK has government initiatives focusing on radical reform for children, young people and families. The Every Child Matters (2003) consultation Green Paper was part of the Government's response to the inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié and outlined plans to improve the services supporting children from all backgrounds, looking at how such a framework will be able to help those most at risk. The document presented plans to develop the roles of the voluntary and community sectors, schools and health bodies and looked at the progress towards a framework of services which will support every child. The importance of information sharing between different Government agencies was stressed.

Every Child Matters: Change for Children (DfES 2004) followed on from the Government Green Paper ‘Every Child Matters’ and the subsequent Children Act passed in November 2004. This act raises the degree of accountability, especially at Local Authority level. Every Child Matters: Change for Children sets out the national framework for local change programmes to build services around the needs of children and young people and takes forward the Government’s vision of radical reform for children, young people and families and is a major new approach to the well-being of children from birth to age 19. The Government’s declared aim is for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle;
- Staying safe: being protected from harm and neglect;
- Enjoying and Achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood;
- Making a Positive Contribution: being involved with the community and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour;
- Economic wellbeing: not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

Every Child Matters: Change for Children sets out a national framework for 150 local programmes of change to be led by Local Authorities and their partners to enable this change. The main focus areas are early intervention, a shared sense of responsibility, information sharing and integrated front line services. Emphasis is placed upon the idea that, for each child to fulfil their potential, there must be a greater deal of co-operation, not only between Government agencies, but also between schools, general practitioners, sports organisations and the Voluntary and Community sector. However the document does not specifically mention literacy or libraries.

DfES (2006) has published Change for Children: Making It Happen – Working Together for Children, Young People and Families, to support the development and implementation of more effective front-line integrated working practice across the children's workforce. This contains explanations of integrated working policies and uses examples from front-line staff to demonstrate the benefits of the tools and processes, focusing on guidance on information sharing, the Common Assessment Framework and Best practice in multi-agency working. Sure Start children's centres are given as an example of an integrated service where 'different services such as health and education are co-located to form a highly visible hub in the community'. Again there is no specific mention of literacy needs or the involvement of libraries and librarians in this guidance document.

4. Methodology

An action research approach has been adopted in exploring the complex landscape of government legislation and initiatives interwoven with local community needs in the case study area. This is an iterative approach that feeds back into and informs practice. It recognises that research questions arise originally from the experience of people working in the field and reflecting on their work. This research project used a range of methods to obtain the data. An initial scoping review of the literature was undertaken relating to pre-school library provision and a critical document analysis of policy and implementation plans for the Sure Start programme in England. There is much information readily available on this government scheme in terms of policy documents and formal evaluation has been published, though little of this appears to relate directly to early years library provision other than a report on the value of buildings to the operation of Sure Start (Ball and Niven 2005).

To gather information on the Wakefield case study area, qualitative, in-depth semi structured interviews were conducted with the Wakefield East Sure Start Programme Manager and the Senior Library Manager Librarian with responsibility for Children and Community Services. Semi structured interviews were also undertaken with the three Early Years Librarians working in the district. The interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the interviewees and transcribed to enable analysis. Qualitative and quantitative data from the on-going service evaluation and parental feedback was made available by the early years librarians. Site visits were made to the two early years libraries already in operation (Sunshine and Rainbow) supplemented by non-participant observation of library practitioners in two out reach sessions for pre-school children and their parents and carers. The analysis was formed by an understanding of the role of the early years librarians in their service environments and what has emerged is a rich picture of activity in support of the needs of the particular local communities.

5. The case study area – Wakefield District

This case study is based on the Wakefield District in West Yorkshire and investigates the role of the public library service and the early years' librarians in promoting early years' literacy and responding to the government agenda.

The Wakefield district in West Yorkshire covers some 350 square kilometres and has a population of 315,000 people living in a diverse range of city, urban and rural communities. The district has emerged from over a century of reliance on coal mining to become a manufacturing, shopping and distribution centre.

5.1 Trends in partnership work – the expansion of early years provision in Wakefield

Until the early 1990s the focus of attention for children's services in Wakefield was to provide for school age, particularly primary school children. In the mid 1990s Wakefield was one of the first local authorities to establish the Bookstart scheme which would later be rolled out nationally with government sponsorship. There was no specific finance available at the outset and so European funding was found through Adult Education Services and the first Bookstart project officer appointed. A second project officer with Urdu language skills was appointed to work with Asian families in the East Moor area. Commercial sponsorship of the Bookstart packs in 2000 by Sainsbury's supermarket expanded the provision and instead of delivering to one hundred children the packs were delivered across the whole district to about 3500 children.

Due to the drive, energy and leadership of senior library staff Wakefield Local Authority have pioneered embedding libraries for young children and their families within Sure Start/Children's Centres and two of these are well-established, with a third in the planning/building stage of development. They have proved to be extremely successful in promoting family involvement in early reading. The early years librarians have documented the achievements and have both qualitative and quantitative evidence for their success in supporting the community.

The innovative Sunshine Library, located in a community centre on the Lupset Estate opened in 2001 and was the first early years library in the UK. Designed with the help of parents and by removing traditional barriers it has become a key social space in the local area. The Sunshine Library was purpose-built to support early language development and book enjoyment among families living in a deprived community. It was developed as a partnership between Sure Start, Wakefield Library Service and Lupset Community Centre with additional funding from the Coalfield Regeneration Trust. Built as part of a local community centre the Sunshine Library is next door to a nursery school and a satellite library runs at the nearby Asian Women's Centre.

5.2 Value of parental consultation & local community involvement in shaping service provision

Communities give purpose to libraries and parents and children were actively involved throughout the planning and development of the Sunshine library and were consulted during the drafting of the plans. They helped select stock and loan materials, furniture and equipment. They were involved in choosing the farmyard theme for the library interior and the 'Sunshine' name for the library.

'Over the five years that the services have been operating [professional library] staff have developed services to meet local needs – it is impossible to have a 'one-size-fits all service' - Sunshine Librarian

A study commissioned by the National Evaluation of Sure Start (NESS) used six Sure Start case-study areas to take a closer look at parents' experiences of empowerment, at the forms of effects of mutual support and community action that has been developed. The researchers *'found substantial evidence for experiences of individual parent empowerment'* (Williams and Churchill 2006, 5). Parents in the study expressed the value of Sure Start in terms of increased confidence, skills and self esteem as parents. One factor that influenced the possibilities for empowerment involved transforming professional relationships with parents. Williams and Churchill (2006) note that many

parents commented that Sure Start staff treated them differently from other professionals in the health, education and welfare services; this involved being welcoming, friendly, supportive and non-judgemental. The study also found that when Sure Start Local Programmes provided responsive, accessible, available and inclusive services this also enhanced parent's access to resources. This involved dedicated outreach work, flexible times and locations for activities and regular information in the community targeted at those with and without English language skills (2006, 7). Empowering local communities was also an element, and this meant that teams needed to have community development skills as well as family support and health related expertise. Although this NESS study did not specifically involve library services these findings echo the evidence base gathered by the early years librarians in the Wakefield case study.

'I really don't know what I would have done without the Sunshine, I really don't know how I would have coped. Nobody knew how depressed I was – it was the only place I could face coming to' Mum who has a child with Down's syndrome

'Libraries like the Sunshine should be accessible to all communities. The long term problems resulting from low literacy levels could be vastly reduced if the first experiences of books and reading materials were like those available to the lucky children living in the Wakefield West Sure Start area'. Local parent

The Sunshine Librarian was aware that *'a lot of our parents who use this library wouldn't ever go into a traditional library. Loads of reasons why – they might have had a poor experience at school or they don't want to be judged on their parenting skills or lack of them – they just don't want anything official. A lot of it is peer recommendation really because sometimes they're more likely to go 'oh go on, I'll meet you up there'*

Williams and Churchill (2006) provide an observation on a NESS evaluation to back this up *'One particular success of Sure Start is its multiplier effect. That is to say, that the messages parents absorb, they pass on to other parents. This meant that a robust ethos could influence parents' own relationships with each other, with their children and families, as well as with the community at large'* (2006, 9)

Forde and Weinberger (2001) describe how parents have been involved in a project to produce story sacks as a community resource for a Sure Start initiative in Sheffield. The project has been documented from the early stage of establishing the groups. The social aspect has been a central feature of the work, and by providing an opportunity for parents to interact has offered a sense of social cohesion.

5.3 The importance of the early years library as a place - the role and importance of buildings and locations

The strapline that we try and put on everything is 'Come on in , the kettle's on' ...Sunshine Librarian

'The beauty of having a library that's targeted to a particular age group is that you can have the right staff, you can decorate it, you can target to the particular age group; whereas usually in our libraries we are trying to do all things for everybody and have difficulty in attracting all the age groups' – Senior Library Manager

In developing the early years provision in Wakefield the library staff were very aware of the need to break down traditional barriers. They want the early years libraries to be seen as a non threatening environment, and the library as a community space. All families receive a friendly welcome, and those visiting the purpose built Sunshine library are offered a hot drink on arrival. There are baby changing and feeding facilities. There are no charges associated with using the libraries and no fines for over due books. It is important to think about how the traditional barriers to access and use can be broken down and removed. Dewe (1995) writes about encouraging play, reading aloud, storytimes, other activities such as arts & crafts. In this way the library can assist the child's intellectual development.

'There is a strongly held view that libraries offer a welcoming, neutral space that provides opportunities for personal, cultural and community development in appropriate circumstance' (Harris & Dudley 2005, 18).

The success of the Sunshine library encouraged the development of a further early years library at Airedale. The Rainbow Library opened in 2003 as an integral part of a new build which includes a Sure Start centre, a social services family centre, an adult education centre and a community café. The Early Years Librarian there runs a range of programmes and service and collaborates effectively with the other key workers such as the speech and language therapists.

The third early years library in the case study area will be part of a new children's centre at Pinders Primary School. This is a partnership development between Sure Start Wakefield East, Pinderfields Hospital School, Pinders Primary School and Wakefield Public Library service. The story of the planning, design and funding of the Pinders centre will be documented as a separate project report but raises the issue of librarians having an opportunity to add their professional voice and practitioner vision to project team planning.

It is important to make information available to parents to encourage them to bring their families to the library and make the library a community – welcoming all. Wakefield Council has created The Pride Awards to recognise outstanding achievements by employees of the local authority. One category of award is for the citizens to nominate their choice and in 2006 the Sunshine Library Team won the Citizens Award, evidence indeed that this place and its services are valued by the local community.

5.4 Interdisciplinary approach to achieve objectives

Sure Start partners have had to recognise that involvement comes with many strings attached. Making a bid and securing funding requires considerable effort in mapping existing services, identifying gaps in services and budgeting realistically for what you want to provide. There is a complex tapestry of partnerships and potential partnerships, and performance targets are set for programmes. The early years librarians in the Wakefield case study area are achieving very successful results in the services they offer and the varied outreach activities provided, but the funding for their posts is from non core sources and a potential complication is that they are not directly line managed by the public library service.

The Rainbow Early Years Librarian has documented evidence of numerous occasions where parents and carers have been referred on to adult education courses, Basic Skills courses, referrals to Family Support for speech and language, childhood behaviour management, debt and money advice, crèche places and respite care. Early Years staff are involved in outreach work at local clinics, working with Health Visitors and nursery nurses at post-natal classes and at Bookstart plus gifting sessions.

5.5. Findings – some key issues

In a scoping study on family learning and public libraries in the UK, Spacey (2005) found that

‘libraries working with Sure Start would seem to be particularly successful in identifying and targeting new groups of families to involve in library activity. Indeed this would seem to be a reciprocal relationship, which benefits both libraries and Sure Start programmes. The employment of Sure Start librarians has been a significant development in the growing relationship between the early years and the library sector since Sure Start Local Programmes were first set up in 1999’ (Spacey 2005, 32)

The results of the project in the study area indicate the importance of key professionals being willing to develop an interdisciplinary approach to achieve objectives.

The early years librarians in Wakefield have been involved in the training of staff from Sure Start, Homestart, and childminders in story telling and book promotion. They are undertaking outreach work with local nurseries and playgroups and are working with health visitors and nursery nurses at post-natal classes and Bookstart gifting sessions. It seems evident they have had some success in supporting and developing the local community information needs.

6. The International Perspective - a brief overview of the three themes

A select review of the literature indicates international comparisons can be made with early years and emergent literacy projects. In *Learning Environments for Young Children: Rethinking Library Spaces and Services*, Feinberg, Kuchner and Feldman (1998) provide information on library programmes and describe models for ‘coalition building’. Feinberg and Rogoff (1998) describe the Family Place initiative in North America where working with other agencies is the key to finding families who don’t yet patronise the library but need what it offers. Family place libraries initiate or join an existing coalition of family serving organizations connecting scarce resources rather than duplicating them and help to build community.

‘The Family Place’ project takes a holistic and developmentally informed approach to the promotion of emergent literacy and health child development by addressing the needs of children at the earliest stages, and supporting the role of parent as a child’s first and most important teacher’ (Feinberg & Rogoff 1998, 50)

Byrne, Deerr and Kropp (2003) write about the Parent-Child Home Program operating in Middle County Public Library in New York where libraries are working with literacy groups that conduct outreach activities. They echo the view that the library’s physical environment is just as important as the materials offered. Because environment plays such an important role in emergent literacy, it is vital for libraries to create spaces that encourage young children and their parents to engage in age-appropriate activities.

Bourke (2006), describing experiences in Fairfield City in New South Wales, discusses how public libraries can build social capital through networking. Partnership programmes are important and libraries can help to build social capital by providing a safe place for people to meet, socialise and relax. Bourke’s view is that *‘In communities where access to the knowledge society is blocked by illiteracy, information illiteracy, high levels of languages other than English, exclusion and poverty, librarians need to be even more creative in their facilitator’s role’* (2006, 71).

The State Library of Western Australia has developed *Better beginnings*, an early intervention family literacy programme that targets children from birth to 3 years. North and Allen (2005) explain that libraries are the key link between initial intervention and continuing support for parents and family reading centres in libraries help to promote social capital. Designed using a strong collaborative approach between health and library professionals, evaluation found that cross agency cooperation has been a key factor in successful implementation.

The consistent themes in the international literature are effective collaboration between providing agencies, the involvement and contributions of parents and the library as a safe, welcoming community place. The emphasis on government initiatives was not so evident.

7. Conclusions from the Wakefield case study and challenges for the future

The library profession and the early years librarians in particular, play a key role within the complex multi-disciplinary professional team in Wakefield district. The early years librarians have developed an information community based on local needs. There is potential for building social capital as parents and the local community can play a vital role in shaping services but the communication process between the providers and the users requires effective support and management. However, early years librarians need to 'find their professional voice' in order to be effective and successful advocates in the economic and political arena associated with this type of provision. There are also issues about the training of more library staff to delivery increased early years activity. The need for staff was highlighted in the Serving Families Well research prepared for the Early Years Library Network (Book Marketing Limited, 2004) and this report also identified that '*Early years activity is hugely popular with library users but also to parents who do not currently use libraries; it should be considered as a core element of the library service*' (2004, 5)

The Wakefield initiative was started in response to local needs by proactive library staff who seized the opportunity to use partnerships to develop projects. Senior staff have used leadership, planning and political skills to develop the agenda. Library practitioners implementing the services at ground level appear to have boundless enthusiasm and dedication. They have enhanced their community development skills to enable access to a wide range of non-traditional services and outreach provision.

It is intended that future research in this case study area will include what stakeholders feel about the projects; views of parents and carers; what is influencing the changing shape/type of provision; and the importance of the early years library as a social space focusing on the development of the new Pinders Childrens Centre. Wakefield demonstrates the vision behind this pioneering strategy and offer models for the provision of early literacy in a local community. A key consideration is how this early years library provision can be resourced and sustained in the new style integrated Children's Centres now being implemented as an underpinning strategy in the UK.

References

Ackerman, Rodie (2006) DfES/HM Treasury Joint Policy review on Children and Young People. Response from the National Literacy Trust. September 2006

Ball, M and Niven, L (2005) Buildings in Sure Start Local Programmes Research Report NESS/2005/FR/011

Book Marketing Limited (2004) Serving Families Well; Executive Summary of the research project for Framework for the Future Action Plan 2003-2006. Prepared for the Early Years Network. London, Book Marketing Limited.

Bourke, C (2005) Public Libraries: building social capital through networking APLIS 18 (2) June 71-77

Dewe Michael, (1995) Planning and designing libraries for children and young people. Library Association

DfES (2002) Sure Start. Making a Difference for Children and Families. Nottingham, DfES Publications

DfES (2004) Every Child Matters: Change for Children DfES Ref DfES/1081/2004

DfES (2006) Every Child Matters - Making it Happen: Working Together for Children, Young People and Families. Ref DfES/00231/2006 Information booklet available from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00130/>

Every Child Matters (2003) Every Child Matters/ presented to Parliament by Chief Secretary to the Treasury by Command of Her Majesty. London: TSO 2003. OP-CM/5860

Elkin, Judith & Kinnell, Margaret ed.(2000) A place for children: public libraries as a major force in children's reading. British Library Research and Innovation Report 117. Library Association Publishing. 2000

Feinberg, S. Kuchner, J and Feldman S (1998) Learning environments for young children: rethinking library spaces and services American Library Association ISBN 0838907369

Feinberg, Sandra and Rogoff, Caryn (1998) Diversity takes children to a family friendly place. American Libraries August 1998 50-52

Forde, Jan and Weinberger, Jo (2001) Developing a storysack project within a Sure Start initiative: reflections and emerging findings on working together with parents to produce a community resource. A Research and Evaluation Report for Sure Start Foxhill and Parson Cross pp9 Available from <http://www.sheff.ac.uk/surestart/reports/Foxhill/pdf/SSJul01.pdf>

Harris, Kevin and Dudley, Martin (2005) Public Libraries and Community Cohesion – Developing Indicators. London, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2005

Lonsdale, Ray (2000) The Role of the Children's Library in Supporting Literacy IN Elkin, Judith and Kinnell, Margaret (Eds) A Place for Children: Public Libraries as a Major Force in Children's Reading British Library Research and Innovation Report 117, London, Library Association, 2000

Love, Lucy (2001) Making sure from the start: cross sectoral working with pre-school children Library Association Record 2001, Vol 103, Part 3, 166-167

McKechnie, Lynne (2006) Childhood years: becoming a reader
IN Ross, Catherine Sheldrick, McKechnie, Lynne (E.F.) and Rothbauer, Paulette M
(2006) Reading matters: what research reveals about reading, libraries and community.
Libraries Unlimited. ISBN 1-59158-066-8

North, S and Allen, Nola (2005) A better beginning with books and libraries for Western Australian babies. APLIS 2005, vol18, numb 4, 131-136

Spacey, R (2005) Family learning and public libraries: a scoping study. National Institute for Continuing Adult Education (NAICE) 2005.

Start with the Child (2002). Report on the CILIP Working Group on Library Provision for Children and Young People (2002) ISBN 0 954 379225

Sure Start (2005) A Sure Start Children's Centre for every community. Phase 2 planning guidance (2006-08) July 2005 ISBN 1-84478-540-8 can be downloaded from
www.surestart.gov.uk

Wade, Barrie (1998) A gift for life: Bookstart, the first five years – a description and evaluation of an exploratory British project to encourage sharing books with babies.
Book Trust 1998

Wilkie, S ed (2002) Take them to the library Youth libraries Group, 2002
ISBN 0946581 223

Williams, F and Churchill, H (2006) Empowering parents in Sure Start Local Programmes. National Evaluation of Sure Start (NESS) Institute for the Study of Children, Families and Social Issues, Birkbeck, University of London. Research Report
NESS/2006/FR/018