



Re-Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Annfield Plain Library

Annfield Plain Library continues to provide a valuable resource to the local community. Working in partnership with its service users and the local community the library is able to provide events and activities for all members of the community. Vivienne and Jean continue to work with the children and young people of Annfield Plain and the surrounding area.

Evidence of dialogue and change –

I have visited the library over the last year to meet with children and young people who have taken part in various activities provided by Annfield Plain Library and some in partnership with South Moor and Stanley, other members of the library group.

Joint Activities -

I joined the group at the end of the summer where all of the young people from the three libraries who had completed the reading mission, met for a morning of fun and activities. **The young people designed and created their own art work.** Whilst one group painted other groups played silly games. The young people also enjoyed the buffet and there wasn't much left at the end. The following week I joined the children who had completed the reading mission at Stanley library where they enjoyed a picnic and 'Music with Mummy.'

The Summer Programme -

Apart from the regular library users completing 'The Reading Mission', lots of children and young people visited the library for a summer full of fun. Please see attached timetable. Please note that funding for the events came from the Catchgate Partnership, Councillor Michele Hodgson as well as the library using funds of their own.

Katie Liddell who has met with me for many years to talk about her part in the library has written her own piece as part of my evaluation, to share with us what summer was about. This piece of work was also used as part of the monitoring report for the Local Network Fund, the organisation which Catchgate Community Partnership received funding from.

Another visit to the library –

Often to get the best picture of what happens in the library then sometimes it's just best to spend time there on a normal day, watching the goings of children and young people who use the library on a day to day basis. As part of my last evaluation I highlighted something which Liam Cairns the Director of Investing in Children said "It might be useful to record how many young people enjoy this relationship with the library. It's difficult to capture during an evaluation but are there other young people who might use the library if other things change."

Although numbers haven't been recorded during all of my visits I talked with children and young people who use the library apart from the activities and these are some of the things they had to say:-

Laura aged 10 – 'I have only been coming for a couple of months and I think it's good because instead of buying books we can come here. I find most of the books I want here, but if I don't I can ask and get them next time.'

Jamie aged 8 – Jamie didn't really want to say too much but whilst I talked with his sister he had nearly finished a book, well done.

I also chatted with **Jack** and **Lauren**, aged 4 and 5. They came in and out of the junior section whilst I was sitting, they were choosing books and running backwards and forwards to see their sister who was on the computer. Jack and Lauren's Mam, who is also quite young, told me that they are always in the library as they use the computer. Everytime I visited there were lots of young people filling the computers.

Jordan (a budding actor) – “It’s a great place to come, it’s friendly and ‘aye’ I do feel listened to. You can have a laugh with everybody.”

Katie –“I’m in nearly everyday,I come in straight after school.”

Jordan – “I use the computers, I don’t read it’s not my thing. If I can’t get a computer then I just talk to people, I usually go on MSN or I play some games.”

During the conversation both Katie and Jordan agreed that they thought the library was better for the younger ones, not much for the teenagers and that most things were activity based. But then they said “not many our age come in.” We then had a discussion about other funding pots that they as young people might be able to access with support from Vivienne and Jean.

Katie – “I get books and I always help out with the activities.” Katie also talked about being more involved; perhaps in the planning she said, **“If Jean asked I would say yes.”** I think this is an opportunity for Jean to have more help with the planning and running of the activities in the library and hopefully Katie will have lots more to tell me in my next evaluation.

Jean and Vivienne have also supported Katie in becoming involved in wider debates involving children and young people and Katie has signed up to work with Investing in Children and with a friend Danielle presented Councillor Michele Hodgson with her Investing in Children award during Local Democracy Week.

At the end of my visit I chatted with another young person who told me **“I’ve come since I have moved here, so that’s about a year. I use the computer mostly to do my homework and if you get stuck they will always help you.”**

Dialogue with service users is an on-going process at Annfield Plain Library; the library continues to be the hub of community activity for both young and old. Not much has changed this year but the library staff continue with all of the usual changes which involve young people:

- information on display
- useful websites for homework or places and things of interest to young people
- authors of the month, **chosen with young people**
- **new and relevant books stocked on the shelves and those asked for by young people**
- **children and young people’s artwork on display**

All of the children and young people felt that they were able to talk with, and ask for things from Jean and Vivienne, it this is clearly demonstrated throughout this evaluation that things do happen for children and young people in an informal yet very productive way. Change does not appear to be an issue as all have been quite happy with what has happened over the last year.

I managed to catch up with most of the children and young people who talked to me as part of this evaluation and they all agreed with what I have said and who were all more than happy to recommend with me that Annfield Plain continues to be an Investing in Children member.

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