



Evaluation for Investing in Children membership

MLA – South Tyneside, Bolden Lane Library

This report will show the positive relationship that exists between the children, young people and library staff of Bolden Lane Library to bring about changes.

Bolden Lane Library is based in the heart of the Bolden community and is a valuable resource for those who use the service.

On my first visit to the library I met with Kathryn Armstrong, Catrin Galt and Elaine McCulloch from South Tyneside Libraries. Elaine is based within Bolden Lane and she gave me lots of background information about the library. However for the purpose of this report I also had the pleasure of meeting with Liam, Sophie, Reece and Laura.

On the two occasions that I visited the library the atmosphere was very friendly and welcoming with all the members of the community mixing together. The layout of the building provides the opportunity for children, young people and the wider community to mix together. The library does not have a formal structure for dialogue to take place amongst children, young people and staff. However, it is evident that this takes place during the various sessions, and is effective due to the informal nature of the sessions that take place. Via this approach it is clear that children and young people feel comfortable giving their ideas and feedback to the staff for changes to be made. It is clear that by altering their approach, staff are enabling changes to occur. Sophie informed me **“I am addicted to the library it’s wicked, I can come and chill and talk to friends.”**

Evidence of dialogue and change

Questionnaires and Surveys

The Children were asked to make changes to the library to make it more appealing to other children. The children and young people completed a questionnaire, and asked **“What do you think would make the library a better place to be?”**

The following suggestions were made:

“Make the children’s library look like a children’s library”

“More PS2’s”

“More computer games”

“Drinks for children in an area away from the computers”

“More computers”

“More new books for boys and girls”

“Have a comic book section”

The children informed me of the changes they have made to the library as a result of the questionnaire.

“We now have new books, which we got to choose. Other children went with the library staff to buy new books and we have got Spiderman and Batman”

“We have the PS2 club, we have our normal PS2 plus we get extra ones brought into the library.”

“The staff got us some money and we bought comics, we have the mango comics”

“The walls are a bit brighter, with different posters and things; more still needs to be done though.”

“We have better games for the PS2, we even have guitar hero that we play during the playstation club.”

Staff Interviews

The children and young people informed me that they were involved in the interviews of the summer reading helpers. **“We got to choose who we wanted; they were helping us, so I thought it was good.”**

The children and young people who I spoke to were happy with the service the library provides. However they would like to work on a few changes, which they recommend they work on with Elaine and the staff team at Bolden Lane Library.

“I think that we should get longer on computers”

“We have done bits of stuff for the walls, but I think we should do something better like having graffiti boards.”

“I think that the library should do more clubs like the craft and playstation club.”

“Could get better posters.”

“I think that everything is great, but I do think that we should be able to take DVD’s out of the library on our card instead of paying for them.”

Bolden Lane Library is creating the opportunity for children and young people to be involved in real decision making, with a real budget, giving them a real chance to make changes within the service.

Bolden Lane Library has excellent dialogue with the children and young people that use their service. The children and young people involved in this report have agreed the content and recommendations. It is with great pleasure that I, on behalf of the children and young people recommend that Bolden Lane Library becomes an Investing in Children Member.

**Kim Kyle
Project Worker
Investing in Children
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