

Question 1: In no more than 500 words please outline key outcomes of your project

The Selby District Children's Reading Festival had two key outcomes. These were the promotion of literacy and books to children and their families who would not otherwise have had access to an event like this, and also the promotion of Selby Town, bringing communities together, also promoting wellbeing and provisions for the youth of the town.

All 42 schools within the Selby District were invited to attend the families and communities day that was held at Selby Abbey on the Saturday.

In addition in January all 42 schools were invited to take part in writing an eight-line poem about Selby Abbey to help celebrate 950 years.

We held an evening with the artists event at Selby Town Hall with special guest Michael Bradley who flew in from Ireland especially for the event. Michael is one of the patrons of Children's Literature Festivals. I was pleased that Deputy Mayor Malik Rofidi was able to attend this event and was received positively by all. The Mayor of Selby, Eva Lambert also attended the event opening on the Wednesday with Malik, both Eva and Malik are two true dedicated individuals and assets to the town.

In the run up to the families and communities day, we held two days of author read aloud interactive sessions, inviting children via the schools. The event is held for the children and not the school. We decided that the best way to ensure all children had an equal opportunity, was to invite via the school, as some parents may not have attended or brought their children to the families and communities day.

There were a series of read aloud sessions with authors who covered all primary school age ranges, as well as book signings and other activities. In addition to reading aloud, the authors also answered questions. The children who were unable to attend with their family on the Saturday received their book via their school.

Schools who received free books courtesy of Central CEF:

Selby Community Primary: Selby Abbey Primary: Barwick Parade: Barlby Bridge: St Marys Primary: Staynor Hall: Thorpe Willoughby: Staynor Hall

£5,000 helped to provide 1643 Books. (Books listed on the attached spreadsheet)

The impact of this event on the children and their families is hard to measure quantitatively, but the feedback from parents has been extremely positive and there have been calls for another event. The aim of the event was to get the books directly to the children and to give them an opportunity to experience a reading-centred event that they would not otherwise have had. Children and families from Selby and the district attended and in addition families travelled from Leeds, Hull, Doncaster and York. The event reached children both from deprived areas and those that are more affluent, promoting equal opportunities for all. This has had a positive impact on the children

The event brought people into the Abbey and the town in general thus having a positive impact on the town on that day in particular.

Question 2: No more than 500 words: Demonstrate how project has met community development plan objectives that were identified in original application for funding

Photos from the day are the most striking demonstration of how the project has met the objectives of providing activities for young people and the community and also promoting the work and funding of Central CEF. All children who attended on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday received free read aloud-interactive sessions with authors. This promoted a positive impact on learning, including, reading and writing skills and children's self esteem, with free books of their own to keep and treasure at home. The author signed each book and they got to meet that author through the read aloud sessions. It was important that the books made it to individual children to maximise the impact and did not just end up in school libraries. The event was an opportunity for all regardless of background. Children's horizons were expanded by meeting the authors, and being able to ask them questions. The sessions were fun and engaging to ensure children saw books as a fun thing to own. The children were also encouraged to visit their local library and it is hoped that the event would promote conversations in the home about books and reading. Whole families were given a positive learning focus through the event.

The family day was well attended throughout and brought in people from both inside and outside the town. We had attendances from Hull, Sheffield, Doncaster, York and Leeds.

It gave those in more rural villages the opportunity to attend an event that would not normally happen in their local area. The event helped to not only promote literacy, but the work of organisations based in the district such as volunteers, Selby Soroptimists, and businesses within the area. It presented a positive image of the town and district to its community and showed that people within the district care about its children and their future.

Question 3: no more the 250 words: Please give any additional benefits or objectives that the project has met that were not anticipated in original application for funding.

Numbers on the day exceeded expectation and the positive benefits of this for all those who attended cannot be underestimated, meaning that many children and families were reached by this project. Increasing positive activities for young children and their families is paramount in our communities, helping to bring people together. Making our communities feeling valued, helps to improve health and wellbeing.

Question 4: Any other comments

In addition to the festival, we will be promoting the special commemorative poetry book to help celebrate 950 years of Selby Abbey. Selby Abbey have donated £750 to this project and the remainder is to be met by Poems & Pictures Ltd and Christina Gabbitas. The book will be produced to help raise funds for the Abbey and sold within their shop. Christina may also publish this nationally, which will give more profile to the Abbey and Selby.

We will be publishing a special impact report for the whole festival which will be produced in the coming weeks.

All the time spent on this project by Christina Gabbitas and all who help is voluntary. It is anticipated that the next festival will be held in March 2021 and has been provisionally booked with Selby Abbey.

More testimonials to follow in the impact report.

Comments Feedback :

Victoria Umpleby – Brayton Primary School

The author and poet Donovan Christopher, that had worked with year 4 was excellent. He was very energetic and passionate about writing, which came across well to the children. He engaged them well and all the children, and staff , really enjoyed it. I think it was a really worthwhile experience for the children.

Naomi Smales – Selby Community Primary

Staff were so positive about the whole event and thought the organisation was superb. They said how they arrived and went straight to the designated area and their reading event/story took place straight away and the authors were really great and our Y5/6 children were amazed at the editing process that takes place and now feel not so hard done by when we ask them to edit their work - we definitely don't ask for it to take a year!

Barlby Bridge Primary School - Wendy Hockley

What a wonderful festival! All of the school were able to attend and experience meeting an author. This really made the children excited about reading and writing! I think that we now have some potential authors!! The event was very well organised and all of the children were talking about it afterwards. Thank you!