



**Creating and Learning Together  
Community Consultation Report  
March 2021**

**Katie Swann  
Literacy Programmes Co-ordinator**

Executive Summary	3
Introduction	4
What we did and how we did it	6
What we found out	9
Recommendations	16
Next steps	20
Appendices	21
• Survey highlights	
• Examples of other organisations, projects and approaches	

## Executive Summary

Craigmillar Literacy Trust carried out a community consultation from September 2020 until March 2021, to understand the context of literacy support in the area from a community wide perspective. This report brings together the findings of the consultation, and makes a number of recommendations for approaches and activities regarding work that is already being delivered as well as areas would will be part of the whole organisational strategy for the future.

### Methods

The consultation used a variety of methods to engage with people including online interviews and surveys, printed questionnaires, feedback at creative events, social media and focus groups. Research was also undertaken to identify and learn from other organisations that support literacy, and/or align with our mission and values.

### Key Findings

The response to the consultation indicates that:

- the understanding of the term literacy across the community is broad and wide ranging,
- there is enthusiasm for an inclusive, community-based literacy support programme in the wider Craigmillar area,
- parents, carers and schools would love to see more creative, fun activities and events that involve families, with a focus on play and informal learning,
- local organisations are keen to work together to explore improving literacy outcomes for every age group, including adults.

### Conclusions

Organisations supporting children and young people in any context can be part of a culture change in which their voices are listened to, respected and influence the world around them. Craigmillar Literacy Trust can support children and young people to build confidence, improve their well-being and self-awareness through fun and creative literacy activities.

### Recommendations

- Building relationships with children, young people and families is key and should be at the heart of all programme decisions, including providing regular, consistent sessions,
- A rights-based approach is crucial to ensure that children and young people survive and thrive, learn and grow, have their voices heard and reach their full potential, so meaningful engagement and participation must be built into any activities,
- Expand our approaches to literacy support to include broader definitions of storytelling, as well as digital skills and self-expression, and provide activities spread across the whole year,
- Explore opportunities to support adult literacy in informal community settings as part of ongoing development.

### Limitations

Restrictions due to Covid-19 impacted on the opportunities to integrate the consultation into everyday events, spaces and contexts and has meant that responses are likely to be limited to people who are actively interested in literacy. Many voices won't have been heard, in particular those of children and young people themselves, which emphasises how crucial it will be to build that into our ongoing development work immediately.

## Introduction

**OUR VISION:** Every person is empowered through literacy in the community of Craigmillar.

**OUR MISSION:** We support people's literacy skills through working with children, young people, families, parents and carers and other adults, and across communities, in Craigmillar.

**OUR VALUES:** Relationships | Community | Partnership and Collaboration | Nurturing and Growing | Empowering People | Being Inclusive

The Craigmillar Literacy Trust aims to inspire everyone in and around Craigmillar to enjoy the pleasures and benefits of reading, writing and other literacy activities. We foster and support a lifelong love of reading, writing and sharing stories to help establish and strengthen these essential life skills.

We do this through two main projects:

*Craigmillar Books for Babies* is a multi-agency project which aims to encourage and support parents and carers to share books and stories with their babies. We promote reading as a relevant and worthwhile source of pleasure which enhances children's early development. We also believe that reading and book sharing enhance early communication and strengthens the bond between the parent/carer and child.

*Creating and Learning Together* offers reading, writing and learning opportunities for children aged 4+, young people and families. Working closely with partners, projects have included the Craigmillar Book Festival, Creative Residencies, My Own Book scheme, and family literacy sessions.

## Community Consultation

For over 20 years, the community of Craigmillar has been going through major redevelopment. Extensive new housing, a retail centre and buildings for council services (including a library) have totally changed the landscape. A new community high school is currently under construction and due to open in 2022. Many new people have moved to the area, yet it still retains a strong sense of heritage and identity.

Within this context, and as part of the longer-term development of the Trust's work, there was a keen desire to reimagine the Creating and Learning Together project. A change in staffing and the end of funding period of one major funder in mid-2020 presented an opportunity to reflect on our work. As the longer-term impact of COVID-19 became a concern, especially around outcomes for children, young people and families, and with a new national context (incorporation of the United Nations on the Convention on the Rights of the Child into Scots Law), it has become even more crucial that children and young people are meaningfully engaged in the development of the next phase of the programme.

The Trust decided to undertake the consultation from September 2020 until March 2021.

The aim of the consultation was to:

- understand more about the purpose of literacy support from a community wide perspective,
- explore the role the Trust can play in supporting literacy,
- consider the approach the Trust could take and what resources would be required.

The key objectives of the consultation were to:

1. Explore the understanding of literacy and the purpose of literacy support from a community perspective,
2. Explore if there is a need for programmes that support the development of literacy skills of children and young people aged 4-16 in Craigmillar,
3. Consider the role that CLT can play in supporting the development of literacy skills in the community,
4. Identify main findings and recommendations which reflect the aspirations of the community,
5. Identify the approach and resources needed to take forward any recommendations.

A secondary objective of the consultation was to find out:

1. What services exist in the area to support the development of adult literacy?
2. What views and suggestions are there to explore the potential for CLT to develop adult literacy services?

As a new member of staff, the consultation was an incredibly useful way to start to build relationships with local families, workers and school staff in what was a very challenging time for the community, and all their support was very much appreciated.

I would like to thank:

- ♥ The parents, carers, school staff and local organisations who have taken the time to talk to me and share their views and ideas,
- ♥ Susan Elsley and the Craigmillar Literacy Trust Board for their vision and encouragement,
- ♥ Kara Whelan, Michelle Jones and all the staff and volunteers from Craigmillar Books for Babies and the Book Festival Programming Group for sharing their extensive knowledge and experience of relationship-based work with families, local context, contacts, and positivity!

Katie Swann

Literacy Programmes Coordinator

## What we did and how we did it

A brief for the Community Consultation was prepared by the Trust. The design of the consultation then evolved over 6 months, being mindful of Covid-19 restrictions and the related pressures on the community, incorporating feedback and advice from Craigmillar Literacy Trust staff and Board, and input and suggestions from local organisations.

The questions in the consultation focused on:

1. What do participants understand by the term 'literacy'?
2. Do children and young people want more support with their literacy skills? Why? What activities or support would they like to participate in?
3. Do organisations working with children and young people consider that there is a need for support to develop children and young people's literacy skills? Why?
4. What kind of support would they like to see developed?
5. What is the impact of COVID-19 on the development of literacy and delivery of literacy support programmes?
6. What is the role of Craigmillar Literacy Trust in supporting the literacy skills of children and young people?
7. Who are the main partners that CLT can work with in the community?
8. What elements of the Craigmillar Books for Babies project and the previous Creating and Learning Programme can be built on?
9. What are the approaches or interventions suggested by participants?
10. Are there other models/approaches to supporting community literacy?

## Surveys

Four surveys were designed which were tailored to the following audiences:

- Parents & carers – shared on social media, at an event, and via the Parent Council
- School staff – via email and on social media,
- Community partners and organisations –via email, social media and word of mouth,
- S1 to S3 students - questionnaire distributed as part of winter book gifting programme.

The first three surveys could be completed online, using any device. Paper copies were also made available, or the survey could be done over the phone. All but one response was completed online. The questionnaire for S1-S3 students was available printed only, and responses have yet to be received. Schools didn't re-open in mid-January, but we expect these will be completed once students return in April 2021.

All the surveys were designed to have a strength-based approach – exploring what is strong in the community, while acknowledging difficulties and challenges that need attention and support. Through this we hoped to build a picture of what literacy support in Craigmillar could look like in the future.

Surveys included a mixture of multiple choice, open questions, and lists ranking suggested activities. A book token incentive was offered to parents/carers and school staff.

#### **Facilitated Group discussions:**

- Craigmillar Books for Babies (CBfB) staff and volunteers
- Craigmillar Literacy Trust Board
- Craigmillar Book Festival Programming Group

#### **Conversations with staff at Craigmillar based organisations**

- Lyra
- Connecting Craigmillar
- Craigmillar Now

#### **Conversations with organisations that work (or might work in the future) in Craigmillar**

- Scottish Chamber Orchestra
- Children's Parliament (with a focus on methodology of consultation with children)
- Edinburgh International Book Festival (Communities Programme)
- City of Edinburgh Council staff
  - Craigmillar Library
  - Lifelong Learning (Literacy, Arts & Creative Learning)

#### **Book Week Scotland Event & Book Gifting**

The Family Story Trail and book gifting in Nov/Dec 2020 were the only opportunities to meet directly with local families as part of the consultation. Links to the consultation were added to all book bags, and we now have a database of families who would like to hear more about future projects and events.

#### **Facebook Live sessions (Feel Good Fridays)**

Prompted by feedback in the consultation that families would like a way to connect their children aged 6-9 with literacy activities during lockdown, the live sessions started in January 2021 on the Craigmillar Book Festival Facebook. Linked to wellbeing topics and focused on storytelling, craft, quizzes and fun games, they have helped to build connections and keep a visible profile for the project and consultation.

#### **Challenges**

During the consultation period the community has been impacted in various ways and at different times by the restrictions due to Covid-19, including social distancing allowing different levels of personal and groups interaction, school, library and community centre closures, as well as non-essential retail closures, and voluntary organisations being heavily involved in responses to the pandemic.

All of these impacted on the ability to integrate the consultation into everyday events, spaces and contexts and has meant that responses are likely to be limited to people who are actively interested in literacy. Many voices won't have been heard, in particular those of children and young people, which is particularly disappointing, and emphasises how crucial it will be to build that into our ongoing development work.

The community around Craigmillar and Niddrie continues to change and it will be essential to build further consultation into our ongoing programme that responds to the needs of a diverse communities including ESOL, intergenerational work, and a wider interest in community-based activities and events.

### **Exploring other models and approaches to supporting community literacy**

As part of the consultation, a number of local, national and UK wide organisations, projects and programmes were researched, exploring the models and approaches they use, and how these align to our vision and values. A list is included in the appendices.



## What we found out

### What is literacy?

It's really encouraging to see that there is strong agreement across all the survey responses that acquiring and developing literacy skills is a part of everyday living – at home, school, work, and in the community, and not just part of formal learning

There were many different and nuanced understandings of what literacy is. Most people felt that the definition of literacy is very broad reaching, and covers lots of skill and experiences, from enjoying reading, understanding choices, and making decisions in our lives, to being creative and problem solving, with key threads being communication and expression. Other forms of literacy were referred to as well, often influenced by the context of the person responding to the survey, including health literacy, digital literacy, information literacy and political literacy.

---

*'Ability to understand medical information (written/verbal) to fully participate in health decisions and access care.'*

*Local GP*

---

It is crucial that we consider these responses in more depth to explore and build an inclusive organisational statement on literacy, which reflects a community wide perspective.

### Responding to Covid-19

Parents and carers clearly missed the library and felt that access to books and the library space was a crucial part of keeping their young readers engaged and motivated. This is strongly reflected in the positive response from families to book gifting in late 2020. One survey response noted that Craigmillar is 'an area that is a lot less affluent than some of the areas where libraries have been re-opened, such as Newington and Stockbridge'.

---

*'The library being closed has had a big impact because we have been unable to access new free books.'*

*Parent/Carer*

---

Since March 2020 voluntary and 3rd sector organisations have been able to be much more responsive in Craigmillar, as even at the completion of this report in February 2021 all Lifelong Learning Council staff are still working entirely from home and unable to meet face to face.

Some local groups have been running online, and for a few brief weeks were even able to meet in limited numbers outside. Families missed the regular social contact of the groups that children and young people usually attend, as well as the related activities and access to resources.

Teachers agreed that it's been difficult to measure the impact on learning, and that each child will have had a unique experience. Some felt that the main barriers to learning at home during Covid-19 were the disruption to family routines, reduced access to books, and

---

*With teaching P1 last year and P2 this year [2020] I relied heavily on parents to support literacy at home.*

*School Staff*

---

limited or no access to devices. They were concerned that levels of involvement of adults in the home in learning was very variable.

Interestingly, it was also noted that in lockdown some families felt they had more one to one time to spend together to share creative activities, and viewed this as one of the positive outcomes of the period.

Most parents, carers and school staff completed the survey in late 2020 so their comments will reflect one period of home schooling, rather than the ongoing school closures and lockdown from December 2020. While it's not clear yet what the longer-term impact of Covid-19 will be on literacy, or learning in general, for children and young people, there is a strong recommendation across other organisations (such as Play Scotland and Children's Parliament) that have been working closely with children and young people to understand their experiences of the last year that play, friendships and a focus on well-being should be essential components in the post Covid recovery plan.

### Literacy in the community

Everyone who responded to the survey felt it was important that there was access to regular local activities that allow children and young people to explore literacy outwith the school or formal learning environment.

Parents and carers who responded felt that doing fun activities together gives children a feeling that parents value their interests, it strengthens the bond between parents and children, and that 'if the kids see adults enjoying it then they're more likely to enjoy the activity too'. They also noted that it's nice to

---

*'For too many of our young people, there just isn't enough literacy support at home. I think being able to offer fun, engaging literary opportunities for the community as a whole is important in upskilling everyone and also offers opportunities for the wider community to bond over shared experiences.'*

*School Staff*

---

spend time together, and do something relaxing for everyone. There was particular interest in events during the school holidays, and there was a clear emphasis on fun!

School staff felt that the more experiences and opportunities children have for wide and varied literacy focus the better – and ultimately the more engaged they will be. Particular

---

*'If it's seen as a fun family activity then he will be more likely to join in'.*

*Parent/Carer*

---

emphasis was given to encouraging and inspiring a love of books and reading, having more conversations at home and generally ensuring that learning is reinforced and supported in a meaningful way.

## Understanding a family-based approach to literacy

While the parents and carers that responded to the consultation were very positive about their involvement with their children's education and activities, it was incredibly useful to talk to staff that have worked with local families.

They explained that difficult experiences at school often stick with people for a long time. Any work with their own children can be incredibly daunting and they prefer to leave it to the schools. Finding a gentle way to unwrap that hurt is really important, using creativity and positivity.

It was also noted that the 'bookish' approach to literacy can be very daunting for parents, and they would love to see more creative approaches (e.g. families working together - starting with simple drawing and designing a book with only pictures). Once people have some success with that, their confidence spirals them on.

---

*We've recently took part in Book Week Scotland [event], it's fun to do it, it encourages kids to talk about books, vote for the favourite one, tell the story about the book at home, talk to nana on the phone about it.*  
 Parent/carer (Survey)

---

A significant number of the parents and carers who responded to the survey would like more guidance on how to support their children if they're struggling or when reading is always a chore, and the effort of reading feels like it doesn't give any benefit. There was a strong interest in 'something out of school that parents and children can go to' to 'go on a journey together, have shared experiences, being read to, sharing books, having fun'.

## Craigmillar Book Festival

---

*Last year my P1 class won the writing competition and that really boosted them and made them feel proud of their achievement.*

*Teacher*

---

The visits by authors and illustrators to primary schools that take place as part of the Book Festival were strongly appreciated by schools, with positive feedback about how these fuel the children's wider interest in books, reading and writing. It wasn't clear if being part of the Book Festival programme contributes to that interest, and no suggestions were made by school staff about how they could

see this working in the future. There was no indication that longer-term connection to or relationship with the Trust was built as part of the Book Festival, with the outcomes clearly linked to the enjoyment on the day, rather than being part of something bigger.

Over recent years there have been one or two events for older children, organised in Castlebrae High School as part of the Book Festival. The Library Development Leader noted very positive long-term outcomes from all the events she had hosted at the school, regardless of whether they were part of a Book Festival, the key connection here being

partnership working and collaboration, and the rapport built by the practitioner with the group.

### Adult Literacy

There has been a number of opportunities for adult literacy activities in Craigmillar. Formal literacy classes were run by City of Edinburgh Council staff at the Whitehouse and Castlerock Edinvar pre Covid-19, and were due to begin again on Microsoft teams in Autumn 2020.

City of Edinburgh Council staff noted that these classes aren't inundated with requests to join, but they know there is more need than demand.

Interest often rises when there is a governmental/national campaign such as the Big Plus reading group.

Face to face was the best way to

promote these groups, and that at Roadshows, for example, they are often approached by older people who found ways to meet challenges presented by their own literacy in their lives but now would like to help grandchildren more. There are concerns in local organisations that literacy issues are now becoming a barrier for many, leading to lower engagement with services, less confidence, more support needed, and more anxiety. Medical services, for example, expressed a strong interest in improving health literacy, while the library highlighted the importance of their role in digital and information literacy for adults.

A reading group is delivered by Open Book in partnership with Craigmillar Library – this moved online and has a small group that attend, although there isn't currently an established local core of participants.

---

*I have worked with literacy workers in the past when doing gardening workshops with people who could not read or write. This problem crops up with some of the people I work with and it was great to work alongside a literacy worker.*

*Community organisation*

---

Connecting Craigmillar runs a number of creative groups, and noted that there are regular requests for literacy, ESOL and numeracy support through this work, or through the Thistle, for people of all ages.

Parents and carers that responded to the survey were also interested in fun literacy activities for themselves, and this could be an interesting area to explore.

### Relationship based

Staff, volunteers, parents and carers, and particularly those who have been involved with Craigmillar Books for Babies, were strong advocates of a relationship-based approach to

working with families. They noted that placing families – the adults, children and young people – at the centre, listening, based in care, love, respect and acceptance to ‘enhance their sense of belonging and value’ was crucial, and that ‘Relationships are the hook!’ to making the connection with literacy.

Sistema Scotland use this approach very successfully through their Big Noise programme. An independent study of Big Noise by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health in 2019 noted that:

“Innovation, sustained commitment and more person-centred ways of working will be central to the achievement of better prospects for disadvantaged communities and fairer outcomes within Scotland as a whole. In these regards Sistema Scotland has shown vision and leadership in the design and delivery of Big Noise. At the heart of Big Noise is a quality, meaningful and trusted relationship between musician and participant. Big Noise musicians are educators, mentors and can become role models.”

*People change lives: consolidating five years of evaluation learning from Sistema Scotland's Big Noise centres in Stirling, Glasgow and Aberdeen, by Glasgow Centre for Population Health (GCPH).*

### Collaborations and partnerships

There was a very positive response from all the organisations working locally involved in the consultation to working in partnership. Many felt that literacy work would fit well with the groups they work with and would be interested in collaborating. Ideas included conversations around history and memory linked to the Craigmillar Archives, blending music, text and storytelling and a number of offers of space for events. Lifelong Learning staff felt they would love to be more involved in working with parents, don't feel they want to ‘push in’ but if there was a catalyst they'd be keen to support it.

---

*I would love to do more partnership work around community-based literacy with a social practice model, linked into creative projects or local actions.*

*Community organisation*

---

### Other models and approaches

Research for the consultation included assessing other organisations who support literacy work with children and young people, considering their approach and how that would align with our vision and values. Many of the larger national organisations focus on reading and writing, which is useful context, but examining place based, relationship based and rights-based approaches (not specifically related to literacy work) has been revealing.

The following examples highlight particular areas of best practice that align with our vision.

*Example 1:* The Village Storytelling Centre (a community arts organisation based in Glasgow) for example uses storytelling and story, in its broadest sense, as a tool to work alongside a wide range of people. Their work recognises how storytelling can support health and well-being, while other aspects promote storytelling as a creative tool, feeding the imaginations

of pre-school children and their parents. This approach fits very well with the local context in Craigmillar.

*Example 2:* Sistema Scotland seek to transform communities through music through the Big Noise project. The programme runs deep in the life of the community, offering pathways from birth through to adulthood, so that music contributes to the wellbeing of participants and in turn tackles structural and very real everyday inequalities.

*Example 3:* The Children's Parliament works with children from their early years to 14 years, with the vision that children grow up in a world of love, happiness and understanding. Their delivery methods focus on the use of creative activities and artistic methods as critical tools to achieve their mission. They are very clear advocates of a rights-based approach, and clearly articulate why this works.

*Example 4:* A recent National Literacy Trust report looked at models for place-based programmes and campaigns, and has the following key findings:

Although there is no one-size-fits-all model when it comes to implementing place-based initiatives, the research reviewed in this literature suggests there are a number of key features of place-based programmes and campaigns that have proved to be effective:

- Shared vision and evaluation framework: defining goals and identifying desired outcomes
- Clear and consistent message: being clear about expectations, assumptions and interests, and having a consistent message
- Clearly defined roles: being clear about responsibilities, co-ordinating activities and developing shared values
- Use of data to understand the local area: developing an understanding of neighbourhood context, analysing data and sharing key learning
- Use of local assets: focusing on the strengths of a local area and how to maximise these, and selecting the right partners
- Realistic ambitions: managing expectations of partners and creating ambitious goals combined with realistic strategies
- Medium-term commitment: thinking about sustainability, transferring power to the local community and linking local activity to regional and national policy
- Engaging communities in design and delivery: building an understanding of the problem and tailoring programmes to the needs of local communities

*The effectiveness of place-based programmes and campaigns in improving outcomes for children: A Literature Review by the National Literacy Trust, April 2020*

## **Children and young people's right to participate**

On 16th March 2021, the Scottish Parliament unanimously passed a bill which will incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law.

Article 12 of the UNCRC states that children have a right to express their views and have these taken into account when decisions are made which affect them. Together, the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights, explain that:

'Involving children and young people in decision-making:

- ensures that their rights are upheld;
- improves the quality of decision-making;
- fosters active citizenship;
- increases children and young people's confidence and self-esteem.

<https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/about-childrens-rights/monitoring-the-uncrc/involving-children-and-young-people/>

The UN Committee is clear that participation must be ongoing and consistent, not be tokenistic and must try to gather representative views. It is important that children and young people are involved in decision-making at both national and local level'.

Organisations supporting children and young people in any context are encouraged to be part of a culture change in which their voices are listened to, respected and influence the world around them.

## Recommendations

The response to the consultation indicates that there is enthusiasm for an inclusive, community-based literacy support programme in the wider Craigmillar area, that parents, carers and schools would love to see more activities and events that involved families, and that local organisations are keen to work together to explore improving literacy outcomes for every age group.

The following recommendations are very much aligned with our mission and values. They would be part of a developmental process with ambitions and activities that are close to the work we are already delivering as well as ones that will stretch us and will be part of the whole organisational strategy for the future.

### Approach

A number of key themes emerged through different strands of the consultation. It is recommended that these are at the heart of our work with children, young people and families.

**Put children and young people's voices at the heart of the programme and create a space where children, young people and families feel valued, heard and respected.** Involve children and young people in informing, designing and evaluating programmes, which are led by their interests so they are engaged in ongoing and meaningful ways rather than simply listened to. This would take into account the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) around participation, freedom of expression, right to play, leisure and culture, and a right to education that meets their needs.

**Contribute to children and young people's wellbeing by providing them with opportunities to explore, develop and extend their literacy skills through creativity.** Be fun, creative and playful, and bring a broad definition of literacy activities to life in unexpected and everyday places. With this focus, our work also has the potential to impact on the detrimental effects of COVID-19 on children's wellbeing and learning.

**Offer a regular, consistent space for families and children to take part in activities, building trust, friendships and ownership.** Have a clear message about what the programme is and how to get involved, and provide an inclusive, friendly environment that reflects and welcomes all the community.

**Ensure the programme allows people to see the outside world, but also celebrates and uses the skills, talents and stories from within the community.** Connect to the history of Craigmillar, in particular Craigmillar Festival Society and community

---

*This history, spirit and the threads of community arts in the area, can really be built on to develop a strong, connected, creative community.*

*Community Organisation (Survey)*

---



arts, to build a sense of belonging, heritage and community spirit.

**Collaborate and bring in funding.** We cannot deliver a programme like this without partners and collaborators. This should include other organisations who work with children and young people locally but also those who can bring in skills and expertise from elsewhere. We should welcome opportunities to take part in community partnerships and programmes, led by children and young people and that support our approaches.

## Programmes

The recommendation is to divide **Creating and Learning Together** into two distinct programmes, working with pre-school and primary aged children and their families/carers as one strand, and a second strand for young people aged 12+. This would allow for more accurate allocation of resources, a focus for funding, plus clearer branding and approaches suitable for different age groups. Some suggestions about how this could look are made below, but it's essential that initial work on engaging with children and young people and working with them is undertaken before the content of these strands is developed any further.

### Preschool - P7 (Working title – Craigmillar Stories for Sharing)

- Use a wide definition of storytelling to shape a programme which is creative, fun, playful, welcoming, accessible, and supports wellbeing,
- Focus on building relationships with families and children through regular, consistent sessions in community spaces, building on the Craigmillar Books for Babies practice,
- Support meaningful engagement and participation by children at all stages of the programme,
- Work in partnership to establish a community approach to involving families.

### S1-S6 (Working Titles – Express Yourself! / Craigmillar Literacy for Life)

- Involve young people in directing, informing, and coproducing a programme that reflects their interests and supports them to increase their self-confidence, explore their identity and express their feelings,
- Explore innovative and creative approaches to a literacy programme with young people, using digital media and performance as well as more traditional small group work with authors, writers, illustrators and poets.
- Collaborate with other organisations to build relationships and create spaces where young people feel welcome.

## Projects

### Craigmillar Book Festival

**Recommendation:** *Develop a yearlong dynamic programme fostering creativity and literacy in the community, rather than an annual festival.*

In the responses to the consultation from schools, it's clear that author and illustrator visits are welcomed and can have a positive impact on self-confidence, motivation and inspiration for children. What is less clear is whether these outcomes are linked to those visits being part of a Book Festival programme. An annual Book Festival requires extensive time and resources to organise which means that the capacity of the Trust to deliver other projects or development work has been limited by this commitment in previous years. We have a unique opportunity post Covid-19 to reimagine how we can best deliver literacy support, and we must consider how the book festival fits within this.

To develop our work with children and young people, and build in a relationship based and rights-based approach that fits with our values we should:

- Celebrate that the Book Festival has been a fantastic learning experience, with a strong legacy,
- Understand that without time to develop and adapt the book festival model has generally remained quite adult owned, and not relationship based or community led,
- Continue to invite authors and illustrators to Craigmillar as part of the community programme across the whole year,
- Move to participation in our programmes being freely chosen by children and young people because they are interested, curious, enthused and see it as being for them,
- Encourage schools to access funding and other opportunities for literacy activities through organisations such as the Scottish Book Trust. This is particularly relevant at the moment with the focus on digital delivery that is likely to continue for the immediate future,
- Recognise that the community understanding of literacy is much broader than books and reading, and that there is widespread support for more community-based work that fosters creativity and reflects the success of the Book Festival's Family Fun Days in a more manageable way that meets our values,
- Work as a community literacy partner with schools particularly when a whole family approach is required and there would be a role for face to face work such as at parents' evenings or roadshows.

### Family Literacy Group

**Recommendation:** *Continue with this approach for children and their parents/carers (P3+)*

Regular, consistent events and activities need to be at the core of the programme. The Family Literacy Group would bring primary aged children and their parents or carers together once a week to enjoy fun, creative activities, with a focus on well-being. Groups

should be kept relatively small so that we can create a space where each family feels comfortable to explore their own outcomes and can contribute to the programme.

### **Creative Residencies**

**Recommendation:** *Continue with this approach for older children and young people (S1+)*

With an emphasis on smaller group work, creative residencies would take place in spaces that young people choose to be in, as part of a programme designed by them.

### **Book gifting**

**Recommendation:** *Expand the book gifting programme and include other literacy materials*

Explore opportunities with Craigmillar Books for Babies to continue the fantastic relationships they build with families, by continuing a gifting programme that also complements universal Scottish Book Trust work in this area. Encourage and support children and young people to choose their own books and other literacy resources, exposing them to a wide range of material that celebrates the diversity of the community and reflects their interests.

### **Storytelling**

**Recommendation:** *Embrace a wide definition of storytelling which entertains, informs, connects and empowers.*

Regular oral or book-based storytelling sessions for P1-P3 and parents or carers would build on the successful practices of Craigmillar Books for Babies and continue those relationships already established as well as providing a space to make new connections. Opening up the definition of storytelling even further, encouraging everyone to be more actively involved, using it as a tool to make sense of the world, build confidence, self-esteem and empathy, make connections and explore expression, offers many exciting opportunities.

### **Events**

**Recommendation:** *Work in partnership to respond to community*

Being part of events that are planned in and by the community is key, and opportunities like the Craigmillar Festival that is being piloted this year are already delivering opportunities for a number of key collaborations.

### **Adult Literacy**

**Recommendation for development:** There is clear gap in provision to support adult literacy in an informal community setting. This new work should be explored as part of ongoing development, and could include partnerships with existing organisations such as Open Book, Council staff both in community development and the library. Initially this could build on our work with families *and a focus on supporting parents and carers where they would like to increase their confidence to offer more support to their children.*

## Next Steps

### **Beginning to develop the programme:**

#### → **Engage with children and young people of all ages**

Children and young people's voices are conspicuously missing from the consultation. We will meaningfully engage and listen to children and young people to get them involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of our programmes. We will proactively work with creative practitioners who have skills in these areas.

#### → **Explore and re-establish the relationship with schools and youth organisations**

Changes in staffing at Craigmillar Literacy Trust, and lockdown/social distancing during Covid-19 have meant that the links with schools and local community organisations that work with children, young people and families are less distinct than they have been in the past. It's important that we talk to them about our approach and build a strong relationship with our key partners.

#### → **Work with Craigmillar Books for Babies staff and volunteers to explore how the relationships they build with families can be continued**

This could include how older siblings can be supported as part of Family Support at Home, ways to continue the book gifting programme, how the Storyteller in Residence model could work for older children, and increasing the age range for books in community book boxes.

#### → **Explore adult literacy opportunities in more depth with key organisations who have expressed an interest:**

- City of Edinburgh Council Lifelong Learning
- Connecting Craigmillar
- Open Book
- Craigmillar Library

#### → **Talk to people about who we are, what we do and why we do it. Build relationships, partnerships and collaborations.**

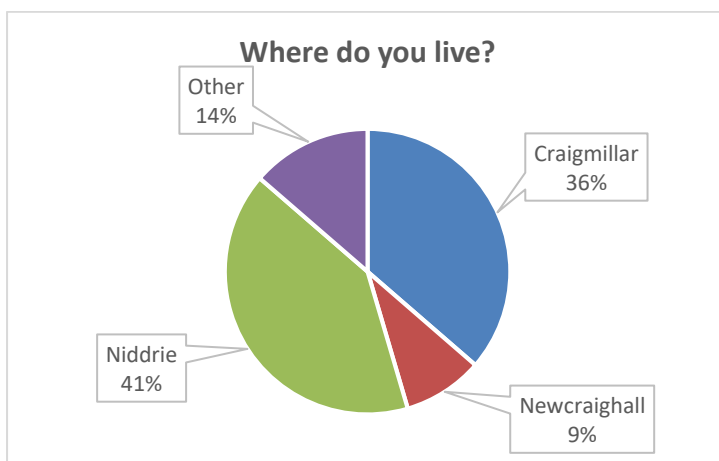
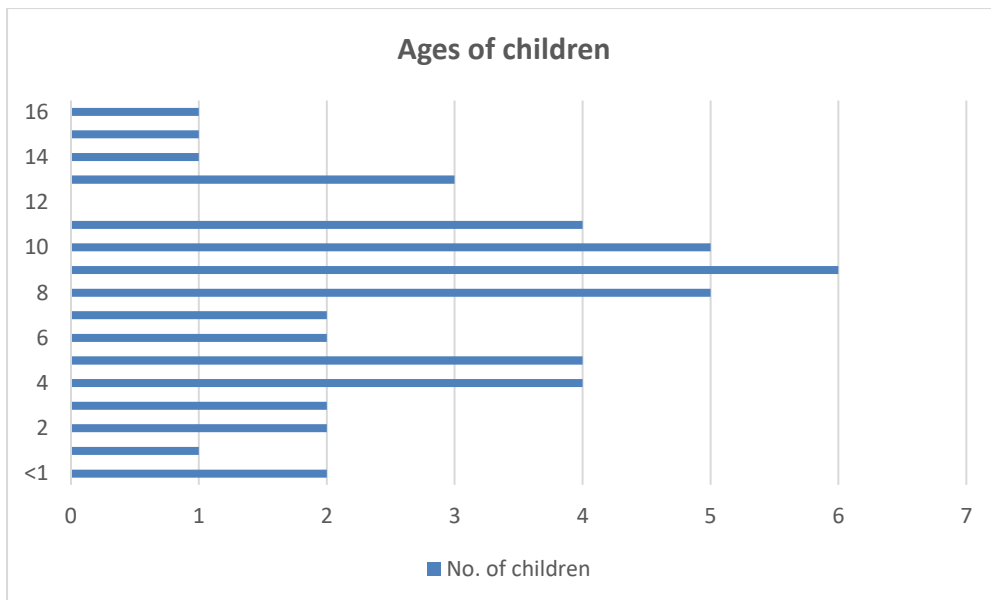
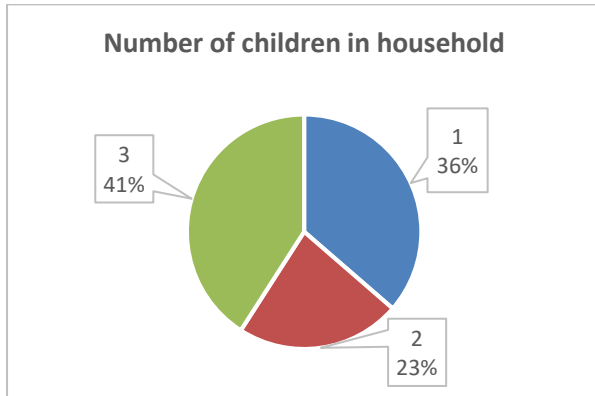
- With people and organisations that value each other equally
- Explore common ground and start there
- Be open to opportunities
- Be flexible and responsive

## Survey highlights

### Parents and Carers

Responses: 22

Total number of children: 45

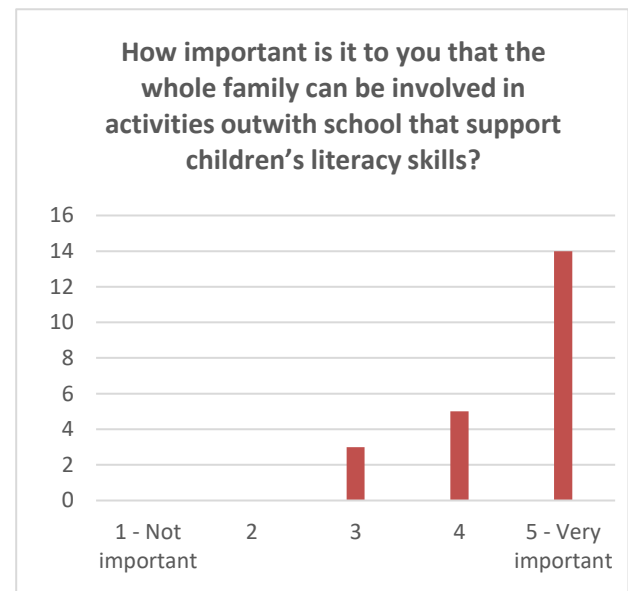
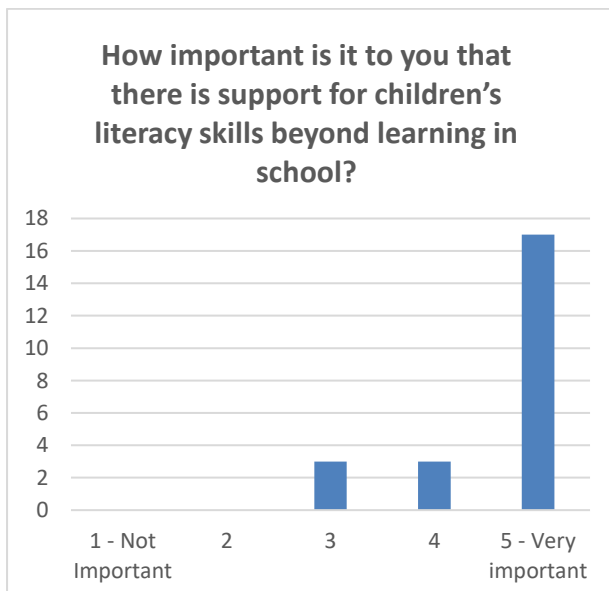


**Languages spoken at home:**

Language	Number of households
Arabic	1
English	17
Hungarian	1
Malayalam	1
Polish	1
Punjabi	1
Scots	1
Scottish	1
Spanish	2
Urdu	2

**Have you or the child/children you care for been involved in any of Craigmillar Literacy Trust's activities before?**

Craigmillar Books for Babies	14
Craigmillar Book Festival in School	13
Craigmillar Book Festival in library/other places	11
Creative Residencies	1
Friday afternoon Mash Sessions	4
My Own Book	3
Volunteering	3
Work	1
Not sure/None of these	6



## School Staff

Responses: 14

**What is your role in the school?**

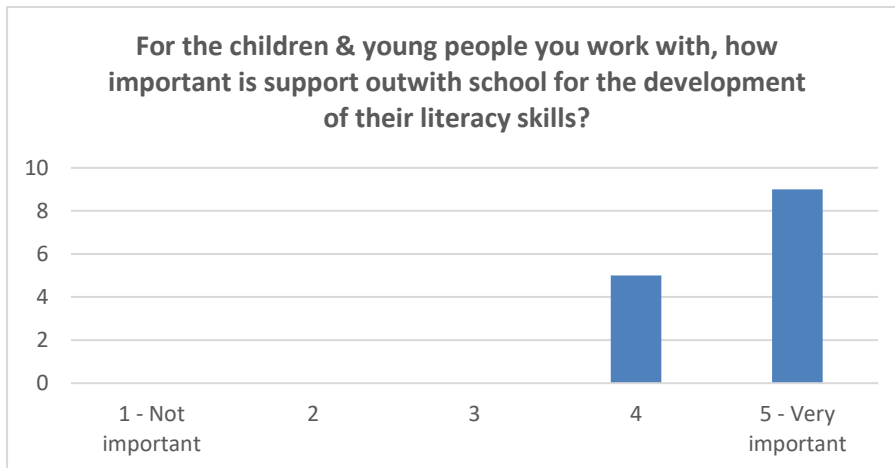
Role	Number of staff
Depute Head Teacher	1
Class Teacher	5
P1 Teacher	1
Senior Development Officer	1
Support for Learning Teacher	1
Teacher	3
Senior Early Years Intervention Officer	1
Library Development Leader	1

**Which ages group(s) do you work with or support?**

Age Group	Number of staff
Nursery	1
P1	2
P2	2
P3	2
P4	1
P5	-
P6	2
P7	-
P1-P7	3
S1-S6	1

**Have you or your class/group been involved in any Craigmillar Literacy Trust activities before?**

Craigmillar Book Festival events in the school	9
Craigmillar Book Festival events in the library or other places	5
Creative Residencies	3
My Own Book (a book given to children to keep)	2
Craigmillar Book Festival story writing competition	4
Activities with Craigmillar Books for Babies	1
Not sure/None of these	5
Other	-

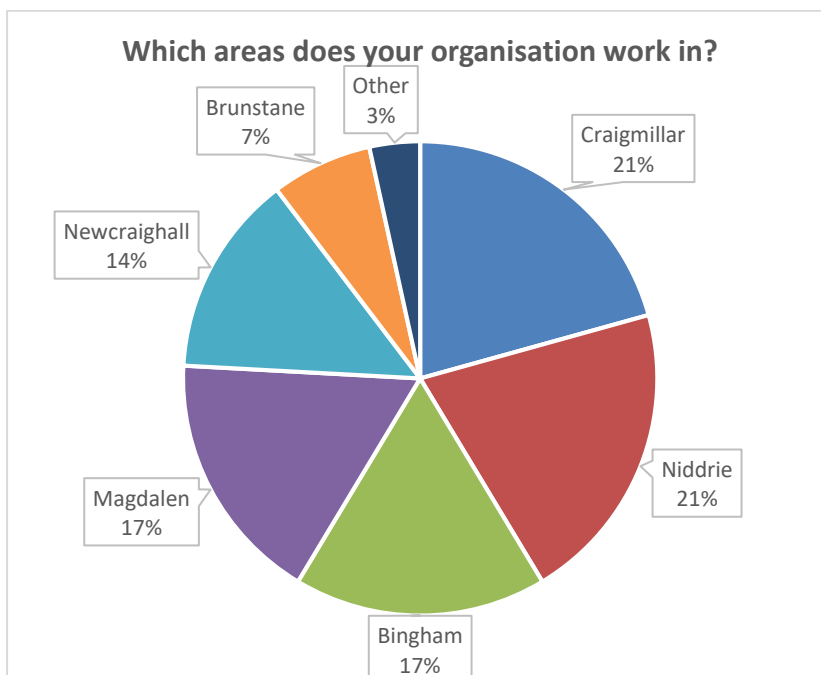


## Community Organisations

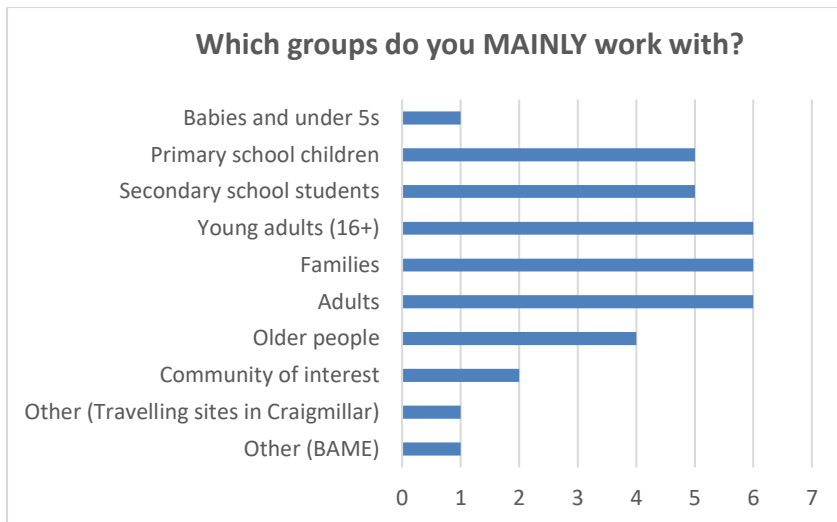
Responses: 7

Organisations:

- Craigmillar Now
- Scottish Chamber Orchestra
- Craigmillar Library (CEC)
- Connecting Craigmillar (Link Up & Thistle Foundation)
- Craigmillar Medical Group
- Carr Gomm
- Lyra







### Has your organisation been involved in any of Craigmillar Literacy Trust's activities?

Worked together to deliver events or design activities as part of Craigmillar Book Festival	2
Worked in partnership with Craigmillar Books for Babies	1
Worked in partnership with Creating & Learning Together (our project for 4-18 year olds)	0
Supported the Trust by providing resources, advice, or space	1
Hosted Craigmillar Book Festival events in your building/space	1
Attended Craigmillar Book Festival events with a group of children or young people	1
We've spoken about it but not worked together yet	4
Other (No - tell me more!)	1
Other (This is something we would be very keen to explore)	1

## Examples of other literacy organisations, projects and programmes

### Scotland - Local

#### **Superpower Agency (Charity)**

[superpoweragency.com/](http://superpoweragency.com/)

*We produce workshops and creative programmes to get young people excited about writing*

*Our two ultimate goals are:*

- *to create Edinburgh's first youth writing centre dedicated exclusively to young people aged 8 – 18 years; a safe space where they can write, create and thrive, and*
- *to bring our writing workshops to schools and communities throughout Scotland*

#### **The Village Storytelling Centre (Charity)**

[www.villagestorytelling.org.uk/](http://www.villagestorytelling.org.uk/)

*The Village Storytelling Centre is all about people and language. We support people to find their voice, and shape and share their own stories.*

#### **Reading is Braw (Place/community-based programme)**

[www.edubuzz.org/readingisbraw/](http://www.edubuzz.org/readingisbraw/)

*Children do better when they read more. We're asking everyone in Whitecraig, Wallyford and Musselburgh to encourage kids to read.*

### Scotland – National

#### **Scottish Book Trust**

[www.scottishbooktrust.com/](http://www.scottishbooktrust.com/)

*We are a national charity that believes books, reading and writing have the power to change lives. A love of reading inspires creativity, improves employment opportunities, mental health and wellbeing and is one of the most effective ways to help break the poverty cycle.*

Programmes for children and young people (universal delivery)

- Bookbug Primary 1 Family Bag
- Read, Write, Count – Primary 2/3 bag and resources

Programmes for children and young people (elective)

- Authors Live (From Scottish Book Trust in partnership with BBC Scotland Learning)
- First Minister's Reading Challenge
- Arts Alive (part-funded workshops, visits and talks for schools)
- Live Literature School Residencies programme (fully-funded residencies for schools, early years groups and other education settings)
- Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour (brings authors, illustrators and a variety of other creative practitioners to schools, libraries and public venues)
- StoryCon (online creative writing and illustration conference for young people)

Other relevant SBT programmes

- Book Week Scotland (national campaign with funding for local events)
- Live Literature (part funded author events)
- Awards and prizes (A range of awards and prizes to support writers, readers and learning professionals across Scotland)

<b>Scottish Poetry Library</b>
<b>Scottish Storytelling Centre</b>
<b>National Library of Scotland</b>
<b>Moat Brae</b>
<b>CILIPS</b>
<b>Edinburgh International Book Festival</b>

## UK

<p><b>Seven Stories - The National Centre for Children's Books</b>  <a href="http://www.sevenstories.org.uk/">www.sevenstories.org.uk/</a>  <i>Working with children's books to create playful and profound experiences for children and young people to enjoy.</i></p>
<p><b>National Literacy Trust (England)</b>  <a href="http://literacytrust.org.uk/">literacytrust.org.uk/</a>  <i>We are an independent charity working with schools and communities to give disadvantaged children the literacy skills to succeed in life.</i></p>
<p><b>Reading Agency (UK)</b>  <a href="http://readingagency.org.uk/">readingagency.org.uk/</a>  <i>Tackling life's big challenges through the proven power of reading</i>            Programmes include: Summer Reading Challenge, Chatterbooks &amp; World Book Night</p>
<p><b>Book Trust (England/Wales/NI)</b>  <a href="http://www.booktrust.org.uk/">www.booktrust.org.uk/</a>  <i>BookTrust transforms lives by getting children and families reading.</i></p>
<p><b>Coram Beanstalk</b>  <a href="http://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/">www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/</a></p>
<p><b>The Children's Literacy Charity (London and Manchester)</b>  <a href="http://thechildrensliteracycharity.org.uk/">thechildrensliteracycharity.org.uk/</a>  <i>Our specially-trained literacy tutors work with the most disadvantaged children in society to help them close their literacy gap.</i></p>

## Other relationship-based and children's rights-based organisations and programmes

<p><b>Sistema Scotland</b>  <a href="https://www.makeabignoise.org.uk/">https://www.makeabignoise.org.uk/</a>  <i>Supporting children, young people and families to realise their potential, improving lives and strengthening communities through music and nurturing relationships.</i></p>
<p><b>Children's Parliament</b>  <a href="https://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/">https://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/</a>  <i>Children's Parliament is Scotland's Centre for Excellence for children's rights and children's voices.</i></p>
<p><b>Together</b>  <a href="https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/">https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/</a>            Together is an alliance of Scottish children's charities that works to improve the awareness, understanding and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).</p>