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# Bookstart Treasure Evaluation 2014-15: Survey of gifting partners

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## Introduction

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Book Trust is an independent reading charity which delivers both universal and targeted bookgifting programmes to children and their parents<sup>1</sup> at key stages in their development. Through these programmes, Book Trust encourages parents to share stories, books and rhymes with their children at the youngest possible age, and aims to help families adopt reading habits that will last throughout their child's lifetime.

Through the flagship universal programme Bookstart, every baby and pre-school age child receives free book packs, guidance and support via health visitors, library services and early years settings. Additional packs are also available for dual language and additional needs which include books, guidance and other support.

Bookstart Treasure is the provision for pre-school (aged 3-4) children. Online surveys with Early years practitioners and other operational level staff who currently gift the Bookstart Treasure pack were conducted to gather key insights into:

- The gifting process
- Perceived impacts of the programme on children, parents and the practitioners themselves
- Initial feedback on the new guidance and training materials.

The surveys were administered through Bookstart Coordinators across England and sent to approximately 4598 staff. The surveys ran for 4 weeks from 28 January 2015 to 27 February 2015.

## Responses

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The surveys returned a total of 350 responses. There was representation in all regions of England with a slightly higher response in the East Midlands and South East, and a slightly lower response in the North East, Yorkshire and the Humber and the South West. The table below shows the full breakdown of responses by region.

East of England	13%
East Midlands	25%
London	11%
North East	1%
North West	8%
South East	19%
South West	6%
West Midlands	12%
Yorkshire and the Humber	5%

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'parents' is used throughout this report to refer to parents, carers and legal guardians



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## Job roles

A third of respondents reported as early years practitioners (33%), and 18% reported as early years or nursery teachers<sup>2</sup>. A further 17% reported as children's centre practitioners/teachers, 13% as library staff and 5% as Bookstart Coordinators. Much smaller percentages reported as a variety of other roles related to early years provision including outreach workers and family support workers. Of note were small numbers of respondents who reported as health visitors and community nursery nurses, as they do not come into contact with the targeted age group for Bookstart Treasure. This breakdown can give an indication of the proportions of different job roles that are gifting the Treasure pack, although more work would be needed to establish a more representative picture of Book Trust's gifting partners.

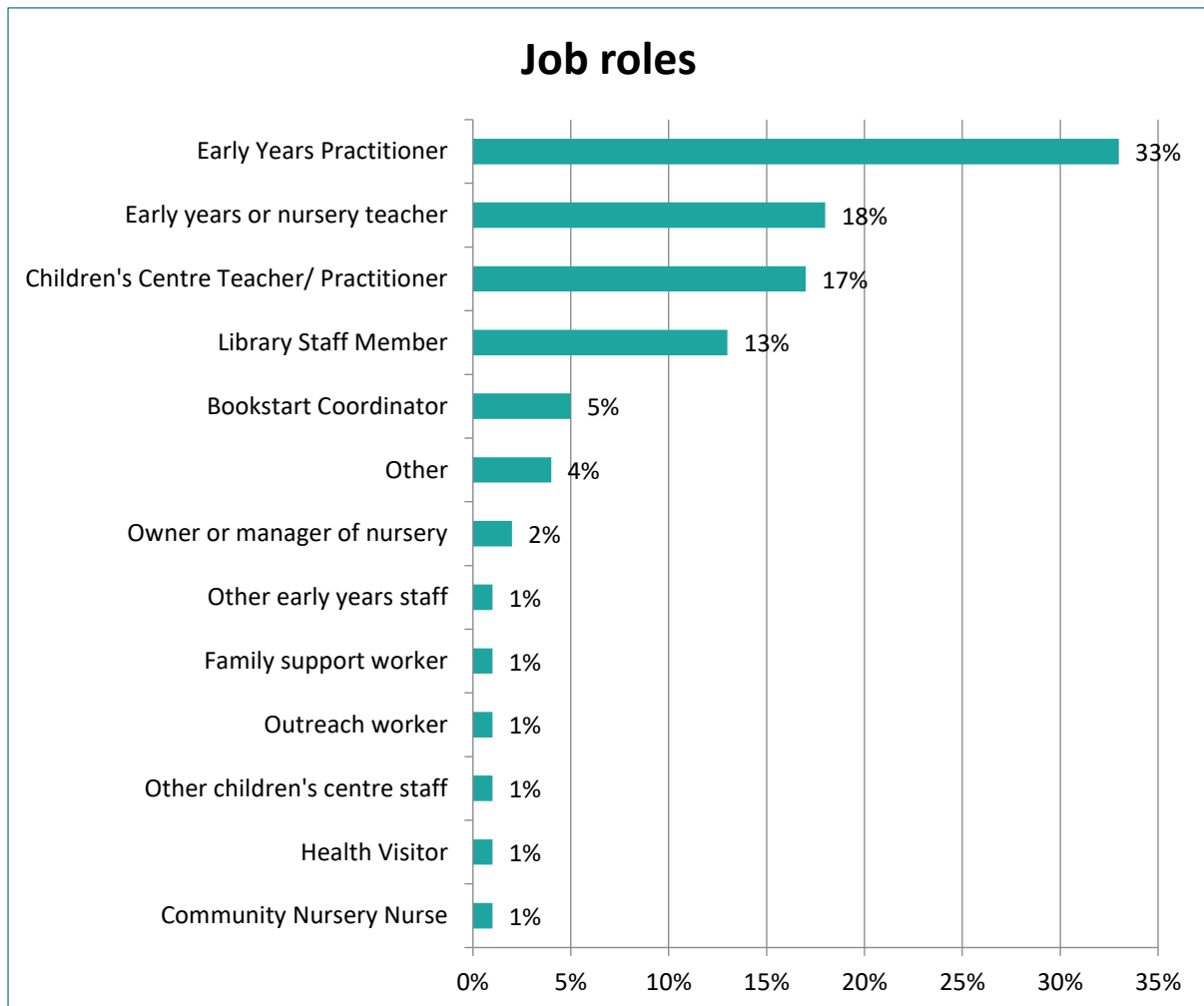


Figure 1: 'What is your role?' N=350. A single response question. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.

<sup>2</sup> 'Early Years practitioner' could also include other roles that people have specified such as 'Early years teacher' or 'Nursery teacher'



The majority of respondents are experienced in their roles, with around two thirds (69%) reporting being in the role for over 5 years. Just under a third are moderately experienced with 15% who reported being in the role for three to four years and 11% for one to two years. Only 5% reported being in the role for less than a year.

## Gifting of the packs

### Which elements of the Bookstart programme are delivered?

All respondents gift the Treasure packs, respondents were also asked about which other elements of the Bookstart programme they incorporate within their organisation.

The majority of settings incorporate rhyme time sessions (74%) and dual language books and guidance (71%). Around a third of organisations incorporate the additional needs packs, with 36% using Booktouch – the packs for children who are blind or partially sighted, 35% using Bookshine – the packs for children who are deaf or hearing impaired, and 33% using Bookstart Star – the packs for children with disabilities affecting fine motor skills.

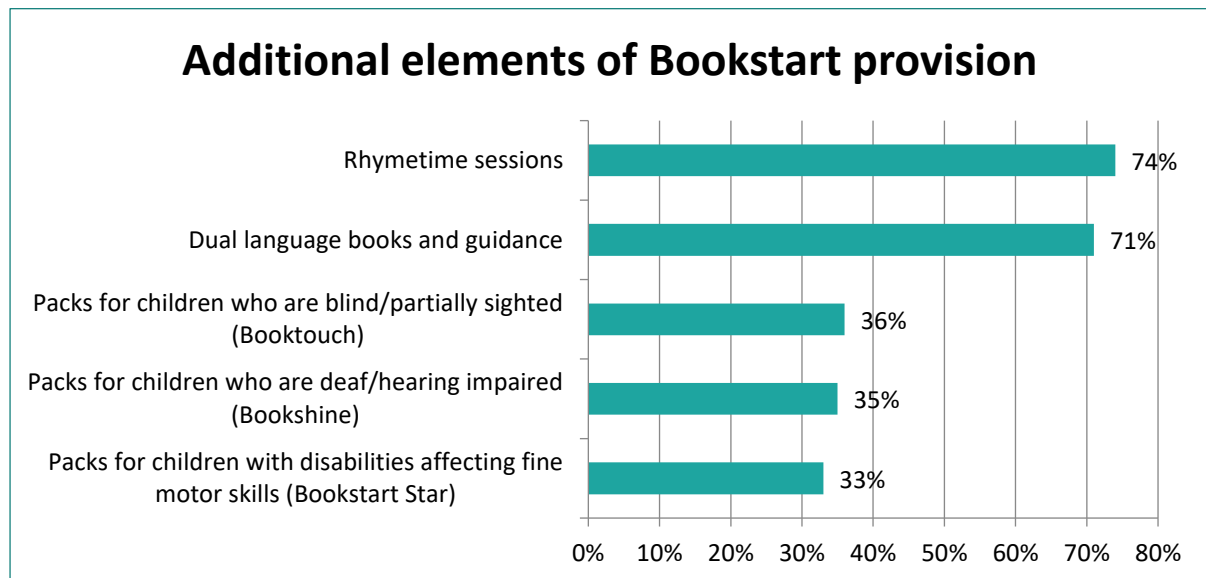


Figure 2: Within your organisation do you incorporate any of the following elements of the Bookstart programme? A series of single response questions.

Library staff and children's centre practitioners are much more likely to incorporate additional elements of Bookstart provision within their organisation. In particular, 89% of library staff report gifting additional needs packs compared with 8% of early years practitioners and 8% of early years/nursery teachers.



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	All respondents (350)	Early years practitioners (114)	Early years/nursery teachers (64)	Children's centre practitioners (60)	Library staff member (41)
Rhyme time	71% (242)	58% (64)	62% (38)	80% (47)	93% (38)
Dual language	74% (250)	59% (64)	57% (35)	97% (56)	98% (40)
Additional needs	34% (112)	8% (8)	8% (14)	43% (24)	89% (36)

Figure 3: Within your organisation do you incorporate any of the following elements of the Bookstart programme?' by job role. N=350. Figures and percentages for additional needs are an average across the three packs

Respondents identified numerous benefits to the organisation, with the highest percentage of respondents agreeing that the additional resources:

- Encourage parental engagement with reading and literacy (96%)
- Promoted equality of access to reading and literacy (90%)
- Enables us to reach disadvantaged children (82%).

Around half of respondents also agreed that the packs help build library membership (55%) and help identify literacy issues (50%).

### Logistics of receiving the packs

The majority of respondents (83%) reported they had liaised with a Bookstart Coordinator to receive their packs, with a further 11% reporting liaising with a librarian. Smaller numbers of respondents were Bookstart Coordinators and had organised the packs themselves (2%), had liaised with their local authority (1%) or didn't know how they had received them.

Around half (59%) reported that the packs were couriered, with 33% reporting they were delivered to the setting in person. Smaller percentages reported that someone from the setting went to pick them up (6%).



## Age of gifting

The majority of respondents (62%) give out the packs in line with the guidance they receive; during the academic year in which the child turns 4. Just over a third of respondents (38%) report gifting the packs during the academic year in which the child turns 3. Smaller numbers give out the pack before (17%) or after (7%) this time.

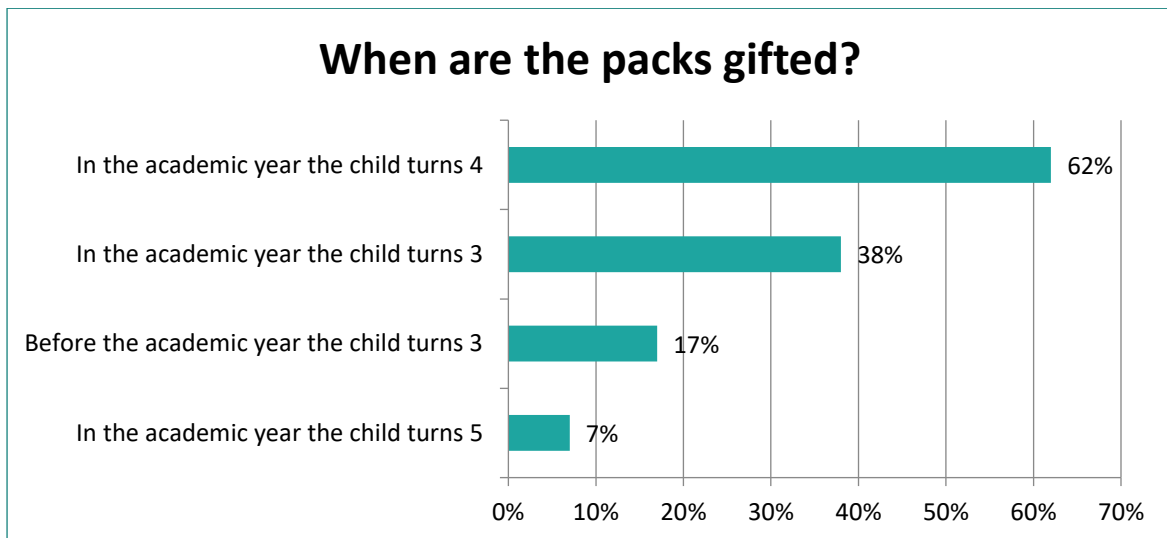


Figure 4: 'In general, at what age of child do you give families the Bookstart Treasure pack? N=350. More than one answer could be given so percentages do not sum to 100.

There was some variation of gifting age by job role (see figure 5), of particular note:

- 86% of early years/nursery teachers and 70% of early years practitioners report gifting the pack to children in the academic year they turn 4, compared with 62% of all respondents
- 58% of library staff report gifting the pack to children in the academic year they turn 3, compared with 38% of all respondents
- 46% of children's centre practitioners report gifting the pack to children before the academic year they turn 3, compared with 17% of all respondents
- 19% of early years/nursery teachers report gifting the packs to children in the academic year they turn 5, compared with 7% of all respondents.



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	All respondents (350)	Early years practitioners (114)	Early years/nursery teachers (64)	Children's centre practitioners (60)	Library staff member (41)
In the academic year the child turns 4	62% (213)	70% (79)	86% (55)	39% (23)	48% (19)
In the academic year the child turns 3	38% (130)	37% (42)	13% (8)	49% (29)	58% (23)
Before the academic year the child turns 3	17% (57)	13% (15)	0% (0)	46% (27)	3% (1)
In the academic year the child turns 5	7% (23)	4% (5)	19% (12)	7% (4)	0% (0)

Figure 5: Age of gifting by job role. N=350. More than one answer could be given so percentages do not sum to 100.

The books in the Treasure packs are specially selected to be appropriate for children aged 3-4, therefore gifting at times outside of this, particularly at a much younger or older age is problematic to an extent. It can also cause problems with distribution due to double gifting.

Respondents who reported gifting outside of the guideline age group were given the opportunity to explain their reasons for this. Due to analytical limitations, it is not possible to ascertain the reasons respondents give for gifting at *specific age groups*, however the following things that were reported by respondents for *any gifting outside the guidelines* can give an indication:

- Were told this was the age group to gift to, either by their setting or by communications from Book Trust (it is likely that this is mostly in relation to those gifting the packs in the academic year the child turns 3)
- Felt this was a suitable age to gift the packs, as the resources are appropriate and relevant for the age group
- The age group that the practitioners come into contact with.

A small minority of respondents also mentioned the following reasons:

- To reach children who have been identified as needing extra support through individual needs assessments
- Gift on entrance to nursery



- Gift the packs as soon as they are available
- Gift to all children at the same time to avoid excluding anyone.

### Location of gifting

Three quarters of respondents (77%) report gifting the pack at an early years setting, a quarter of respondents (27%) report gifting at a children’s centre, 15% report gifting at the library, 9% in the home (including traveller sites and women’s refuges), with a very small minority (1%) reporting they gift at a clinic or health centre.

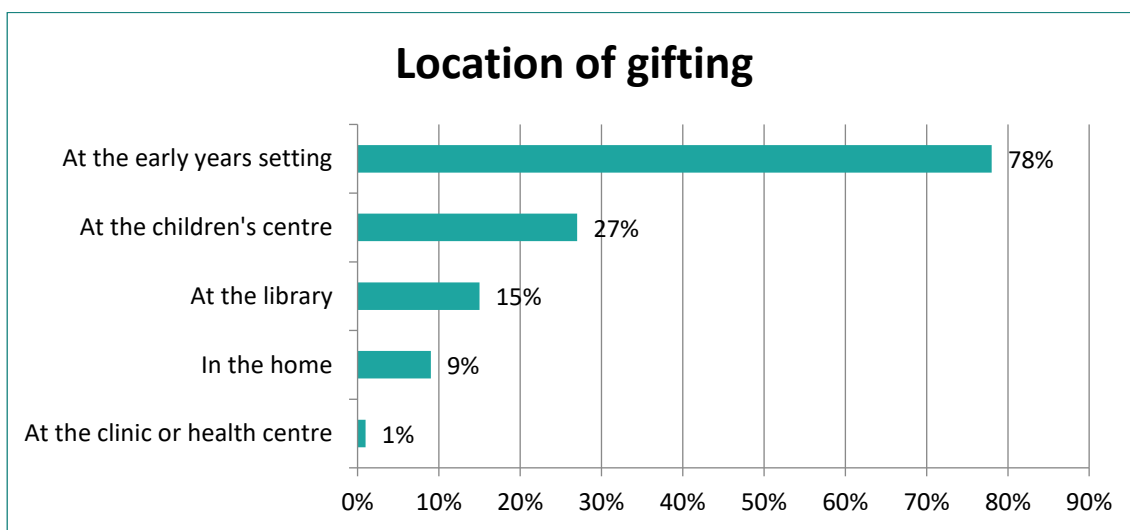


Figure 6: 'Where is the Treasure pack given to the child and/or parent/carer?' N=350. More than one answer could be given so percentages do not sum to 100.

Forty one per cent of respondents reported gifting the packs on a one to one basis, with 35% reporting they gift with a mixture of one to one and group gifting and 24% report gifting as a group. Of note, 55% of early years practitioners report gifting the packs one to one, compared with 10% of library staff. The full breakdowns by main job roles are included in figure 7.

	All respondents (343)	Early years practitioners (112)	Early years/nursery teachers (64)	Children’s centre practitioners (60)	Library staff member (41)
One to one	41% (139)	55% (62)	42% (27)	38% (22)	10% (4)
Group	24% (83)	21% (24)	34% (22)	14% (8)	39% (15)
Mix of both	35% (121)	23% (26)	23% (15)	48% (28)	51% (20)

Figure 7: 'In general, is the Treasure pack given out on a one to one basis or as a group?' by job role. N=350. A single response question. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.





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## Time of gifting

Forty per cent of respondents report gifting as the opportunity arises, with 37% reporting they gift at a specific time and 23% reporting both as the opportunity arises and at a specific time.

Of those that reported gifting at a specific time, the main specific times reported were; at the end of term (22%), on delivery – as soon as the packs arrive (14%), as part of an activity e.g. story time or rhyme time (9%) and as part of an event such as World book day or book week (7%). A wide variety of other specific times were reported by smaller proportions of respondents and are shown in figure 8

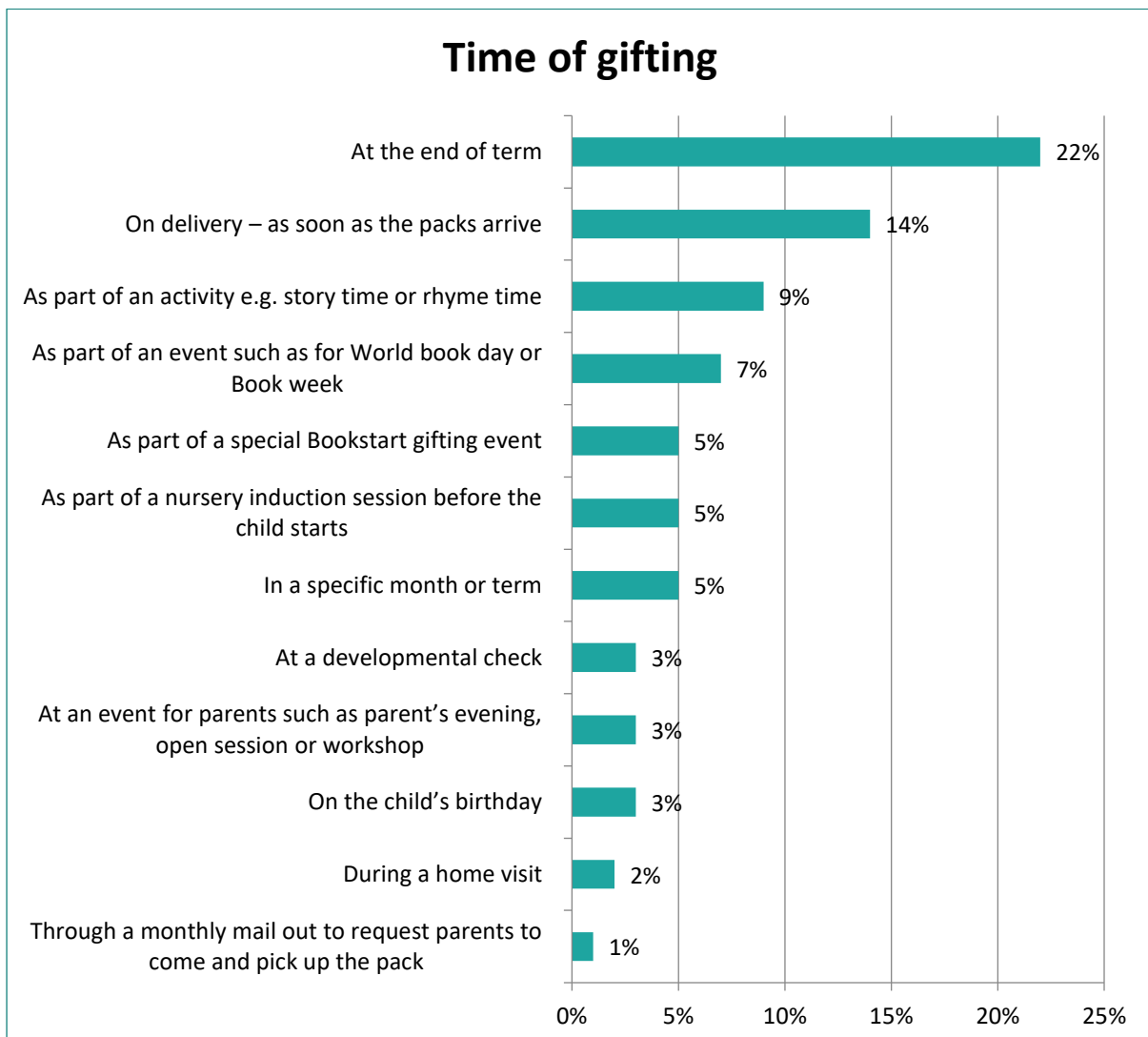


Figure 8: 'What specific times do you gift the Treasure pack at?' N=210. More than one answer could be given so percentages do not sum to 100



## Summary

- The majority of respondents (83%) report liaising with a Bookstart Coordinator to get the packs
- Around half (59%) reported that the packs were couriered, with 33% reporting they were delivered to the setting in person. Smaller percentages reported that someone from the setting went to pick them up (6%)
- The majority of respondents (62%) give out the packs in line with the guidance on age that they receive; in the academic year the child turns 4
- Three quarters of respondents (78%) report gifting the pack at an early years setting, a quarter of respondents (27%) report gifting at a children's centre, 15% report gifting at the library and 10% gift in the home (including traveller sites and women's refuges).
- Forty one per cent of respondents report gifting the packs on a one to one basis, with 35% reporting they gift with a mixture of one to one and group gifting and 24% report gifting as a group
- Forty per cent of respondents report gifting as the opportunity arises, with 37% reporting they gift at a specific time and 23% reporting both as the opportunity arises and at a specific time. A wide variety of specific times were reported including at the end of term, on delivery, and as part of an activity or event.

## Gifting processes

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The majority of respondents (87%) report giving out the packs with the parent/carer and child together. A quarter of respondents (28%) report gifting the pack without the parents present and 10% report gifting it to the parents without the children present.

The respondents were asked to report on the frequency that they carried out a series of best practice processes that accompany gifting the packs.

Some processes are carried out more consistently than others. The statements with the highest percentage of respondents reporting they 'always' carry them out are as follows:

- Talk about the benefits of sharing books (59%)
- Talk about the benefits of sharing rhymes (48%)
- Take the book and other materials out of the pack to show the parent/carer and child (48%).

A small percentage gift the packs without any specific information or guidance, with 7% reporting they always did this, and 37% stating they often did this.



## Best practice gifting processes

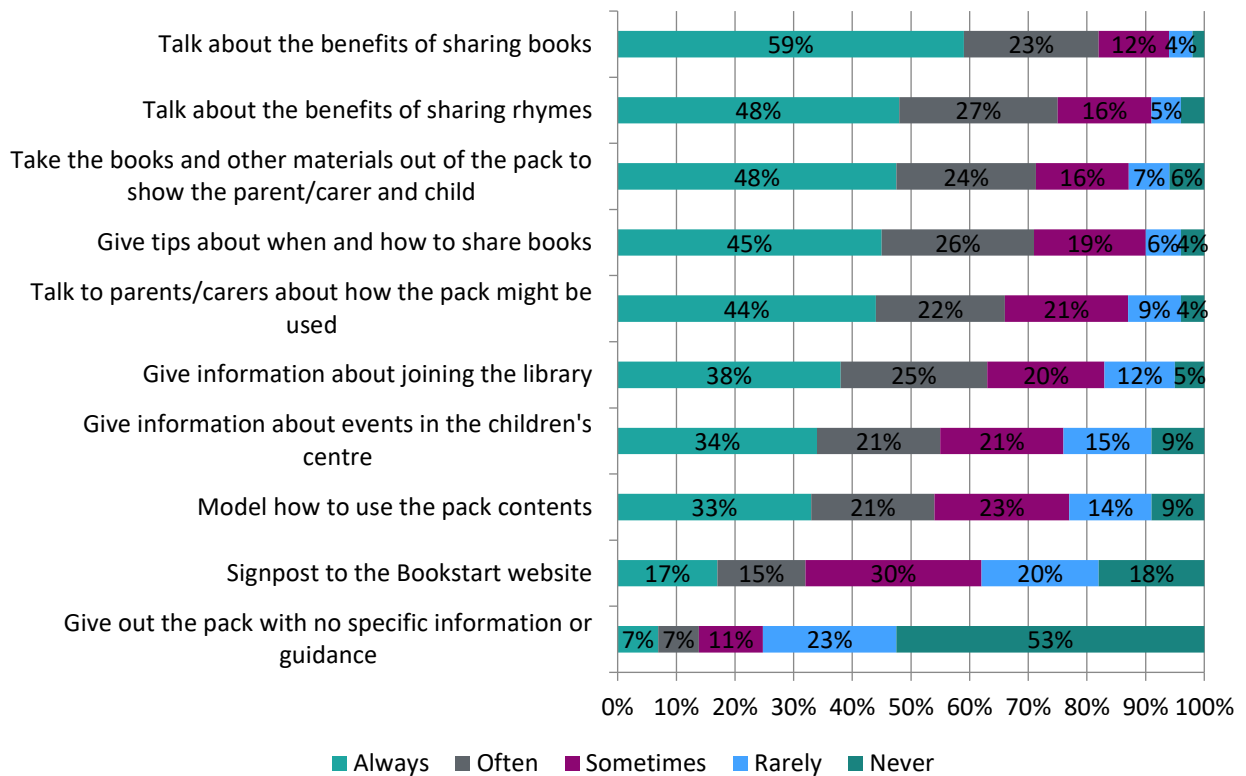


Figure 9: 'When gifting the Bookstart Treasure pack, how often, if at all, do you do the following?' N=350 . A series of single response questions. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.

The findings were consistent across those that gifted one to one and those that gifted in a group. However there was more variation in processes depending on the job role of respondents (see figure 10). Across all best practice gifting processes – children's centre staff are more likely than the average to report always gifting in these ways and Library staff and Early years practitioners are less likely than average to report always doing these best practice gifting processes. A full breakdown of each best practice statement is included in the appendix.



### Respondents who reported always doing a series of best practice gifting processes by job role

	All respondents (350)	Early years practitioners (114)	Early years/nursery teachers (64)	Children's centre practitioners (60)	Library staff member (41)
Average of respondents reporting 'always' across the best practice processes	41% (136)	33% (37)	38% (24)	63% (38)	32% (11)

Figure 10: Average of Respondents who ticked 'always' to each best practice statement (excluding 'give out the pack with no specific information or guidance') by job role. N=350

### Barriers to gifting the packs with information and guidance

Respondents were asked to rank the barriers to gifting the pack with information and guidance from one to four. The graph below (figure 11) shows potential barriers broken down by the percentage of respondents who ranked the statements as either the biggest barrier, or second or third biggest barrier.

Lack of time was reported as being the biggest barrier to gifting the pack with information and guidance, by the largest number of respondents - a third (34%).

Over half of respondents considered that lack of time (reported by 67%) and the parent/carer not being present at the time of gifting (reported by 56%) to be in the top three biggest barriers to gifting the pack with information and guidance, indicating that these barriers are seen as significant.

High parental confidence meaning no need for additional messaging was considered to be in the top three biggest barriers by 43% of respondents, with around half of these (24%) reporting it to be the third biggest barrier respectively.

Lack of knowledge around messaging and lack of confidence in communicating messaging were not reported to be as significant as the other barriers with just 1.6% and 0.3% reporting these to be the biggest barrier. However, a third and a fifth of respondents still consider them to be in the top three biggest barriers to gifting, respectively.



## Barriers to gifting the packs with information and guidance

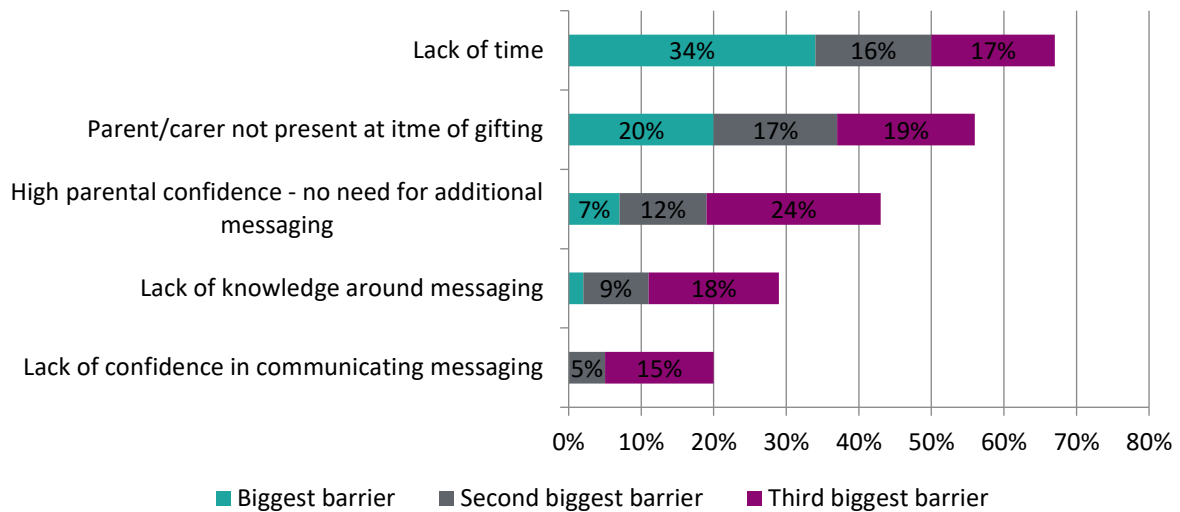


Figure 11: 'What are the barriers to you gifting the pack with information and guidance for the parent/carer? Please rank all that apply (with 1 being the biggest barrier)'. The 4<sup>th</sup> biggest barrier and 'not applicable' are not shown in these results. N=350. A series of single response questions. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.

An open comments section invited respondents to identify any further barriers. Small minorities considered these to be:

- Language barriers – difficulties communicating with non - English speaking or low level English speaking families or in accessing packs and resources (including guidance and information) in dual language format (6%)
- Engagement and access issues – lack of interest in the messaging, difficulties accessing hard to reach families e.g. children not registered with a children's centre or other services (5%).

### Support from Book Trust

A further open comments section invited respondents to identify ways that Book Trust could offer more support in gifting the packs. Most of the requested support is already available from Book Trust, suggesting low levels of awareness amongst a small minority of respondents, and a need to communicate this availability more widely to ensure all practitioners are able to access this support. Key suggestions were:



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- Downloadable, printable additional languages information sheets with a brief explanation of the packs and key messaging to support EAL families (3%). This is already available – a translated version of the guidance leaflet ‘more things to do with books’ is available in 27 community languages. Translated book sharing tips for practitioners to use are also available to download from the website, currently in 10 languages
- Guidance on the key messages to communicate to parents (2%). This information has recently become available on the website in the form of the health visitors handbook but awareness and usage is currently low. This is anticipated to be more widely used going forwards and is discussed in more detail in the section on website and training. Some respondents suggested a one page crib sheet with a checklist of key points to cover, for quick reference when gifting the packs
- Ensure a constant supply of packs at settings and improve communication on when packs will be arriving (2%). This is the responsibility of the Bookstart Coordinators and strategic staff in the setting who may need more support to fulfil this
- Supply a poster to promote the packs, with space to add information on date of gifting sessions and who to speak to for more information on the best ways to share books and stories (2%).

Suggestions from a very small minority of respondents included:

- Ideas for engaging hard to reach families
- Share best practice – practical examples of what other settings do
- Ideas to support a ‘themed’ gifting session and activity
- Evaluation sheet for parents to fill in - could be used to support the setting
- Ability to order dual language books ahead of delivery. This is how Book Trust expect the delivery system to operate and should be part of the Bookstart Coordinators role to find out how many packs will be needed in each area.



## Summary

- The majority of respondents (87%) report giving out the packs with the parent/carer and child together. A quarter of respondents (28%) report gifting the pack without the parents present and 10% report gifting it to the parents without the children present
- Some best practice gifting processes are carried out more consistently than others. The statements with the highest percentage of respondents reporting they 'always' carry them out are as follows; 'talk about the benefits of sharing books' (59%), 'talk about the benefits of sharing rhymes' (48%) and 'take the book and other materials out of the pack to show the parent/carer and child' (48%)
- Lack of time was reported as being the biggest barrier to gifting the pack with information and guidance, by the largest number of respondents - a third (34%).
- Most of the requested support to help with gifting is already available from Book Trust, suggesting low levels of awareness amongst a small minority of respondents, and a need to communicate this availability more widely to ensure all practitioners are able to access this support.

## Bookstart's role

A large majority of respondents (79%) strongly agreed or agreed that Bookstart is an important part of their role, and a quarter (25%) agreed that Bookstart is the core focus of their role – a relatively high percentage considering that the job roles include many other responsibilities. Two thirds of respondents (69%) also agreed however that Bookstart is an add on to their role, and half (50%) agreed that Bookstart is a minor part of their role.

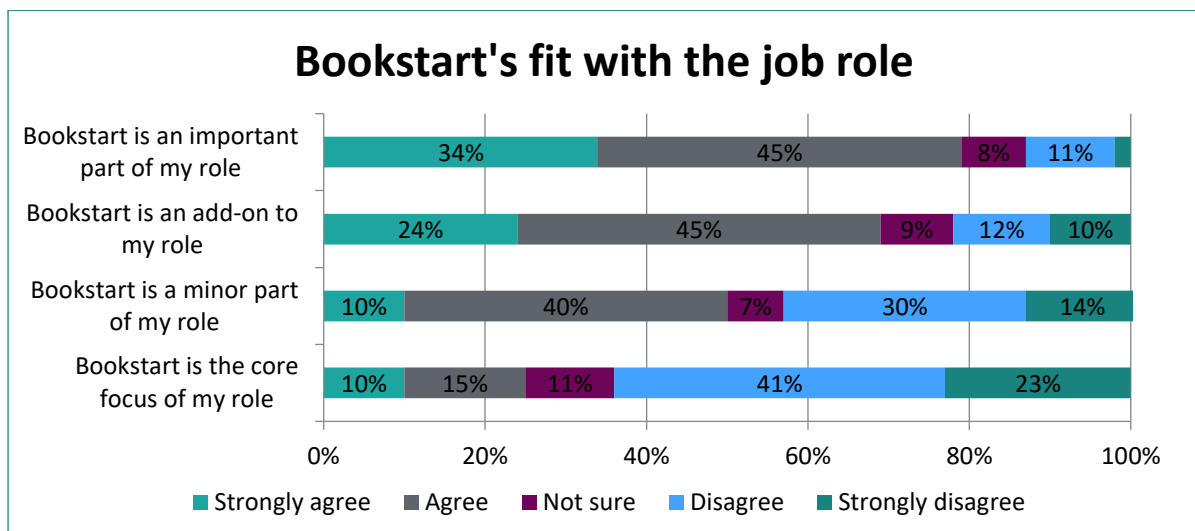


Figure 12: 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Bookstart and your role?' N=350. A series of single response questions. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.



## Impacts

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The respondents were given a set of statements about the potential impacts of the Treasure packs on children and on parents - they were asked to state whether there had been an impact for 'all' 'most' 'some' or 'no' children and parents.

### Impacts on the children

Respondents reported that the Treasure packs had impacted on children across all eight statements.

In terms of reported impacts on **'all' or 'most' children**, the following statements had the highest levels of agreement:

- Exposed the children to books in a creative way (74%)
- Provided a fun way for parents to spend time with their child (73%)
- Increased the child's interest in and enjoyment of books (69%)
- Encouraged the reading of books as part of a daily routine (65%)
- Promoted the development of speech and language (65%).

The final three statements; 'supported the development of concentration', 'increased school readiness' and 'supported good mental health and well-being' had slightly lower levels of agreement in relation to the pack's impact for 'all' or 'most' children, however they were still considered to be important with around 50% agreement for 'all' or 'most' children.

These three statements were slightly more likely than the other statements to be reported as having an impact on **'some' children**;

- Supported the development of concentration (35%)
- Increased school readiness (33%)
- Supported good mental health and well-being (32%).

Extremely small numbers of respondents (less than 1%) reported that the Treasure packs had not benefitted any children in relation to the statements given— only 2% of respondents reported that the packs had not supported good mental health and well-being for any children, and 1% reported the packs had not increased school readiness for any children.





## Impact of Bookstart Treasure on children

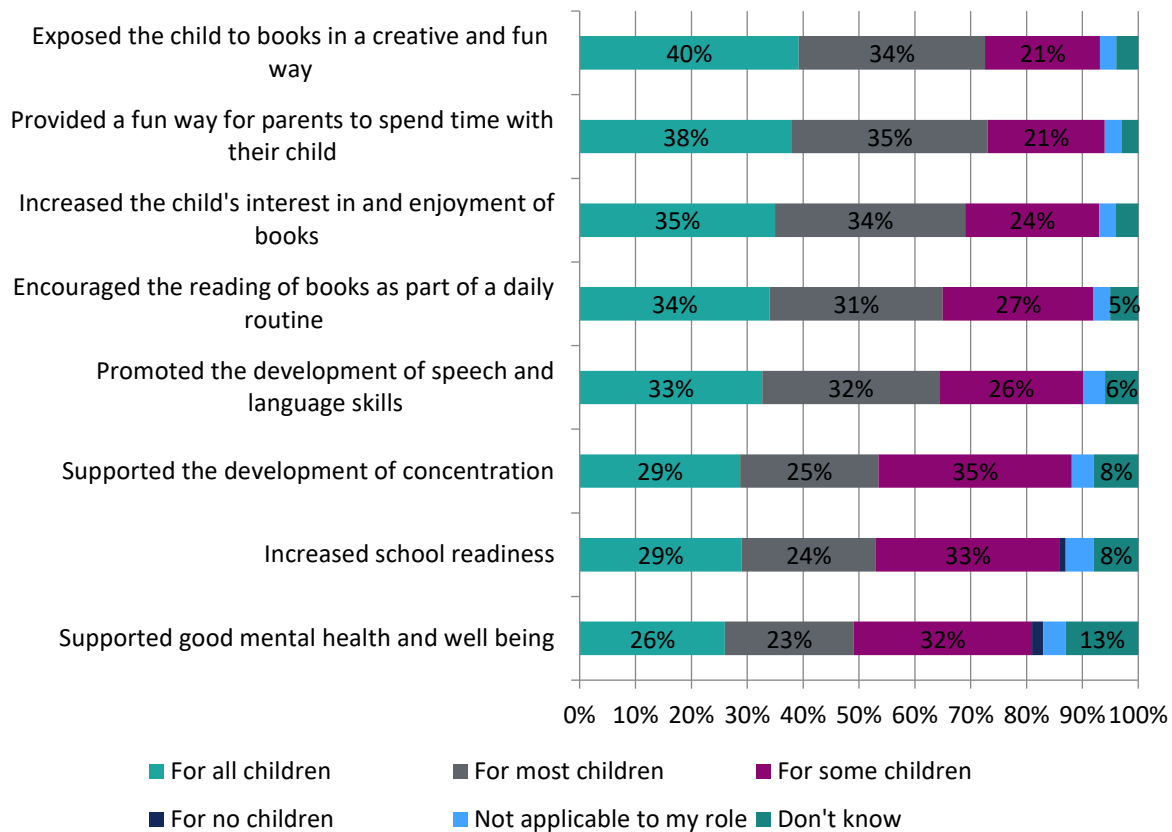


Figure 13: To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the impact of Bookstart Treasure packs on children, based on your experience? N=350. A series of single response questions. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.

Responses from the open comments section provided additional examples to support the findings on the interest, enjoyment and engagement with books as a result of the Treasure packs. Respondents also mentioned the sense of ownership that is fostered by receiving the packs, and the communication, social interaction and inclusion that is enabled because everyone owns a copy of the same book. Other comments also identified the receipt of a present for the child as generating excitement around reading.

- **Interest and engagement with books and reading (6%)**

*Often children bring the books back to the setting to be read over and over again.*  
Early years practitioner, Northamptonshire



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*They like to bring the books back to share at story time. We then read them and other children will comment that they have that book at home. It helps to [hold] their interest and attention when listening to a familiar story, and they are more likely to join in with refrains.* Early years practitioner, Leicestershire

*Those children who recall and talk about the stories prompt other play types including walks and talks, one even led to a cooking activity for all children.* Early years Teacher, Leicestershire

*When children find a copy of the book from Bookstart in our setting, it makes them excited and want to pick up and look at the book.* Nursery teacher, Hertfordshire

- **Book and bag ownership and pride (5%)**

*Bookstart Treasure packs give a sense of ownership to all children, including the most deprived.* Nursery teacher, Sandwell

*Children delighted to own their own books. Self-esteem and pride!* Early years Teacher, Reading

*The children love receiving the packs and look through them enthusiastically. Also they are proud to carry their bags and will often carry them when coming to the centre* Children's centre teacher/practitioner, London

*[The] joy of owning their books and sharing with friends* Nursery teacher, Milton Keynes

- **Excitement generated by receiving a present (4%)**

*The arrival of the book packs always causing great excitement and this generates opportunities to foster a love of books/stories.* Early years practitioner, Reading

*Children love receiving the books especially as we incorporate it with World book day. It's a fun way for the children to receive a 'present' that's not at Christmas or Birthdays. This also helps the children whose parents have little or no money.* Early years Teacher, Northamptonshire

- **Communication – social interactions between children and with the practitioners (3%)**

*They may be the only quality books the child has available at home. Children are able to talk about their books [and] nursery staff will know what they are talking about.* Children's centre teacher/practitioner, Blackburn

*It further enables children to talk about the books that they have, and to talk about the books with each other because they all have the same books.* Early years practitioner, West Midlands



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## Impact on the parents

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Respondents reported that the Treasure packs had impacted on parents across all nine statements.

In terms of reported impacts on **'all' or 'most' parents**, the following statements had the highest levels of agreement:

- Increased access to books (51%)
- Increased the parents/carer's awareness of their child's enjoyment of books (49%)
- Promoted shared reading as part of a daily reading routine (48%)
- Provided a good opportunity for parents to talk to staff at the setting (45%)
- Provided an opportunity for the parent/carer to bond with their child (44%)
- Increased parental confidence to share books with their child (43%).

The following final three statements had lower levels of agreement that there had been impact on 'all' or 'most' parents, and were slightly more likely than the other statements to be reported as having an impact on **'some' children** ;

- Positively changed the way the parent/carer shares books with their child (47%)
- Increased frequency that the parent/carer reads with their child (45%)
- Led to the parent/carer seeking help for their own literacy needs (38%).

Extremely small numbers of respondents (less than 1%) reported that the Treasure packs had not benefitted any parents in relation to the statements given – with the exception of 11% who reported that the packs had not led any parents to seek help for their own literacy needs.

Compared with the impacts reported for children, lower percentages of respondents reported that there had been an impact on 'all' or 'most' parents, and slightly higher percentages of respondents reported there had been an impact on 'some' parents.



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## Impact of the Treasure pack on parents

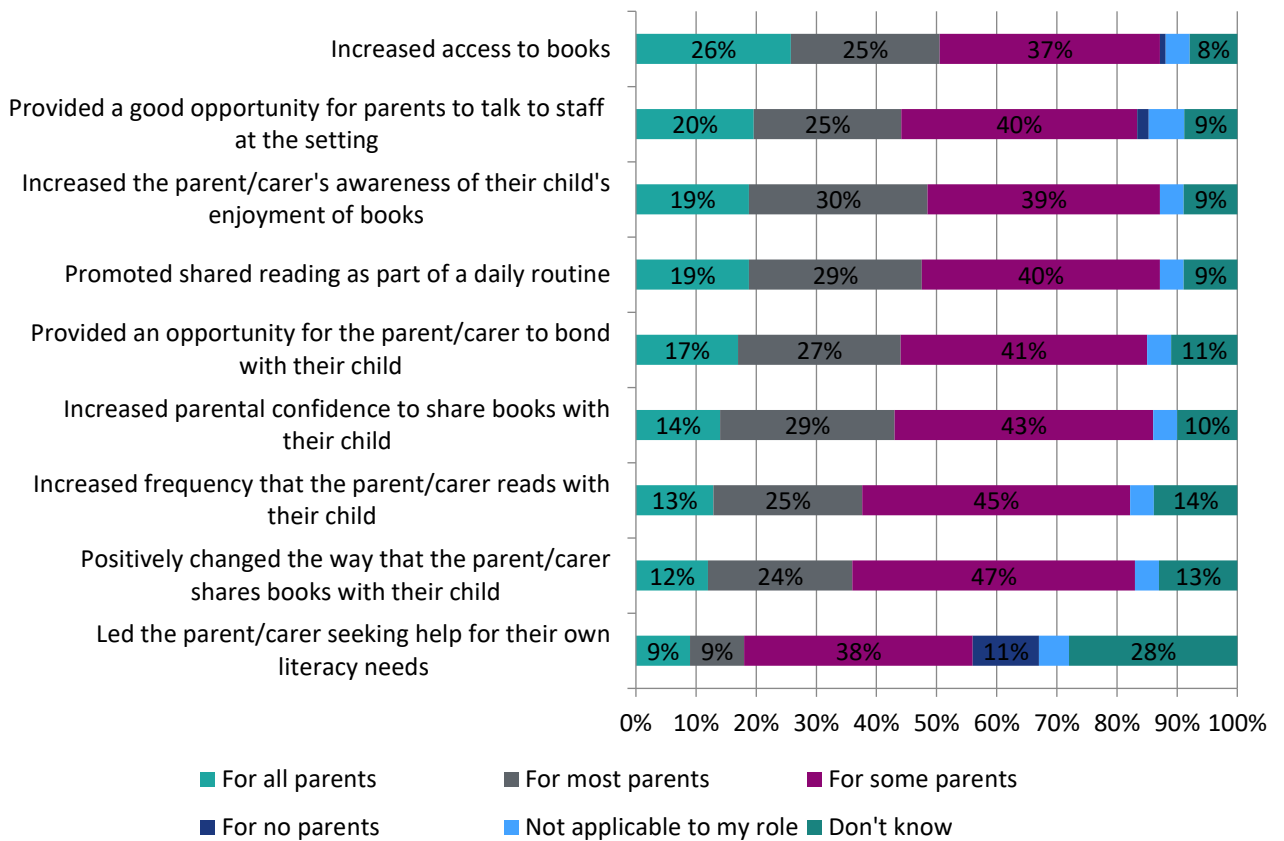


Figure 14: To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the impact of Bookstart Treasure packs on parents, based on your experience? N=350. A series of single response questions. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.

The open comments section on parental impacts identified additional examples to support the findings on increased parental confidence and knowledge of shared reading – in particular confidence to talk about books with child, and raised awareness around books and reading including knowledge on age appropriate titles, how to best share books and the importance of reading every day. Respondents also identified additional impacts such as access and engagement with services, particularly visits to local libraries, and a small minority also reported that the packs had made English language books and rhymes more accessible.



- **Access and engagement with services (6%)**

*More questions asked about stories we have read with the children in nursery, and how they can find the stories we read so they can share [them] at home. Early years practitioner, Birmingham*

*We now have a group of families accessing the local library for Rhyme Time - all this is linked to the Bookstart programme. Instead of the library and the borrowing of books being limited to a certain part of the community, it is now normal for any family to access. Centre Manager, Doncaster*

*The parents are more aware of what is happening in their community and are willing to engage in the activities with their children. Family support worker, Bradford*

*Some of our families have accessed the library as a consequence of inviting the local librarian into Nursery to read to the children and parents when we gift the treasure packs. Nursery teacher, Sandwell*

- **Increased knowledge of book choices and importance of reading, and reading for pleasure (2%)**

*Parents are very grateful for these, and are 'educated' in helping them to read with their children on a daily basis, both in the use of the Bookstart Treasure Packs, and us giving them advice and ideas on how to read with their children; making use of open-ended questions, pointing out letters, helping children to 'read' the story back to them, etc. Early years practitioner, Hertfordshire*

*Increased awareness of what's out there in terms of various titles and [age appropriate] books Bookstart Coordinator, Cheshire*

*More aware of the need for books to be fun Early years practitioner, West Midlands*

- **Increased accessibility of English language books and rhymes (1%)**

*EAL parents can access and share with their children the same books that are enjoyed at school through dual language. Nursery teacher, Hertfordshire*

*Comments from parents / carers: "I found the rhythms and songs helpful as English is not my first language and I don't always know all the lyrics." Library Staff, Kent*

In the open response sections for additional impacts on both children and parents, some respondents (approx. 3% in total) stated that they aren't able to monitor the impact of the packs in any way, and don't observe how the packs are used in the family home.



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## Impact on practitioners

The respondents were given a set of statements about the potential impacts of the Treasure packs on themselves as practitioners, and asked to rate their level of agreement.

The majority of respondents agreed with all of the statements, with the exception of 'helped me meet a target in my role' with just under half (48%) agreeing with this.

The top three impacts identified by the respondents were as follows:

- 73% strongly agreed or agreed that the packs had helped them to signpost parents/carers to the library
- 67% strongly agreed or agreed that the packs had improved collaborative working
- 63% strongly agreed or agreed that the packs had helped them to understand the potential of shared reading for a child's development.

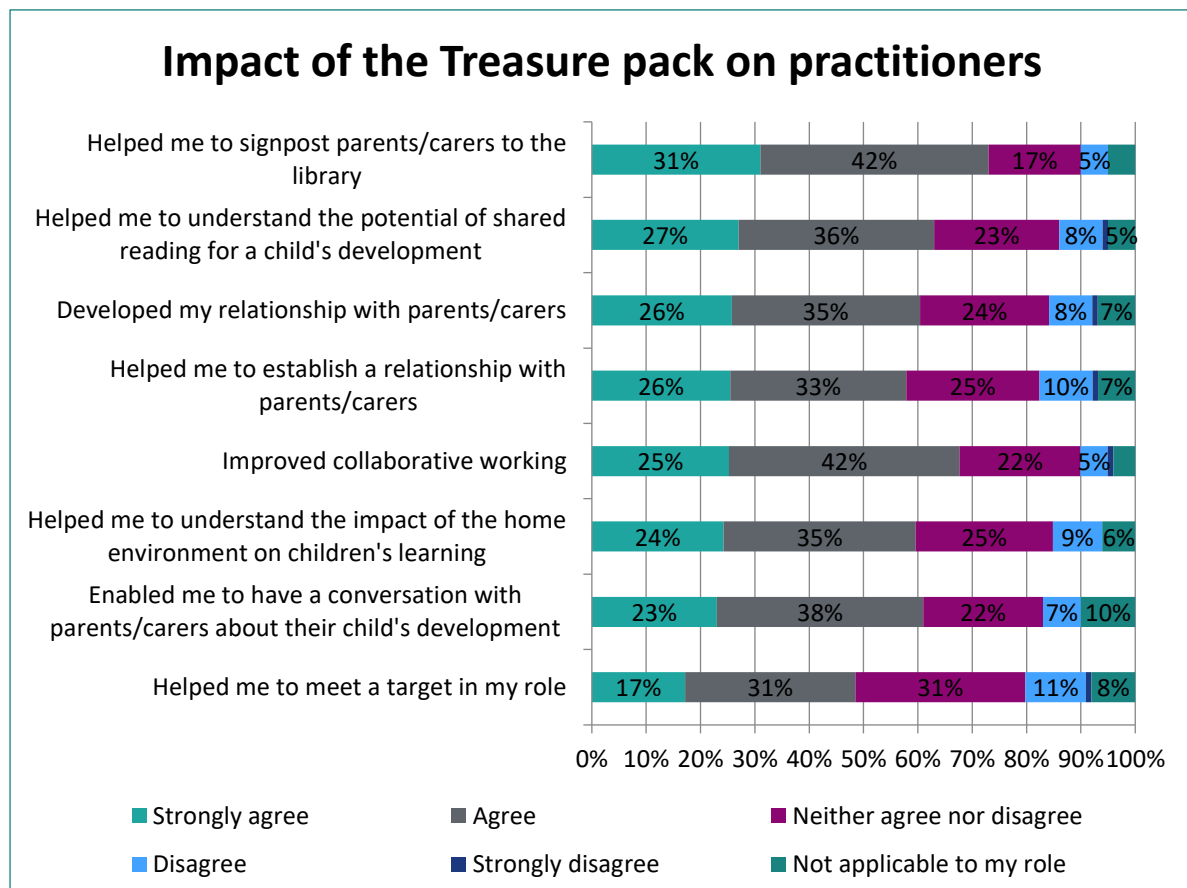


Figure 15: To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the impact of Bookstart Treasure packs on you as a practitioner, based on your experience? N=350. A series of single response questions. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.



In addition to this, practitioners were asked whether they thought they had been up-skilled in terms of knowledge and practice around books and reading for pleasure;

- 57% strongly agreed or agreed that they know more about activities related to books and reading for pleasure as a result of the Bookstart Treasure programme
- 52% strongly agreed or agreed that they do more activities related to books and reading for pleasure as a result of the Bookstart Treasure programme.

A number of comments received in the open response section gave examples of ways in which the packs had supported communication and helped build relationships between themselves and parents (3%).

*For me they have been a vehicle for facilitating conversations, used for modelling, and widened my "vocabulary" of books* Bookstart Coordinator, Staffordshire

*Great method of building relationships with families* Children's centre teacher/practitioner, Norfolk

Some felt that it had not made a difference as they already promote positive literacy practices as part of their role.

## Summary

- Respondents were more likely to agree that there had been an impact on all or most children, than on all or most parents.
- Highest levels of agreement of impact for all or most children were that the packs had exposed the children to books in a creative way (74%), provided a fun way for parents to spend time with their child (73%) and increased the child's interest in and enjoyment of books (69%)
- Highest levels of agreement of impact for all or most parents were that the packs increased access to books (51%), increased the parents/carer's awareness of their child's enjoyment of books (49%) and promoted shared reading as part of a daily reading routine (48%)
- The top three impacts identified by the practitioners on their own practice were the packs had helped them to signpost parents/carers to the library (73%), the packs had improved collaborative working (67%) and the packs had helped them to understand the potential of shared reading for a child's development (63%).



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## Website and training

Fifteen percent of respondents had received training from someone in their organisation on gifting Bookstart Treasure. The graph below indicates the focus of the training session, with the majority of responses reporting content on the importance of messaging (81%), support for parents and carers in establishing a daily reading habit in the home (81%) and signposting to the library (73%). Just over half (52%) also reported that the training included signposting to other services. All respondents reported that this training was useful, with 77% reporting it as very useful.

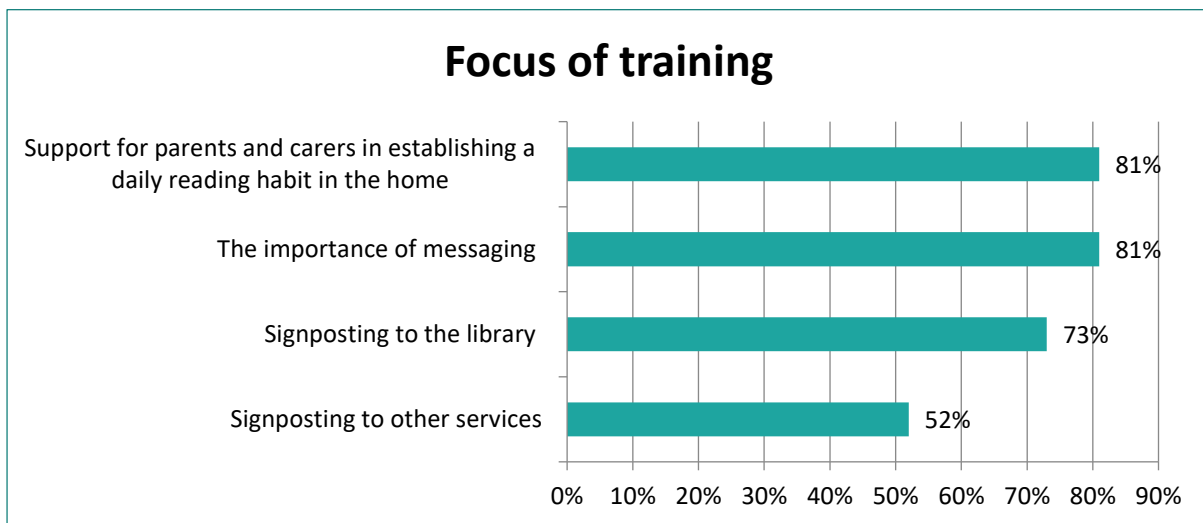


Figure 16: 'What did the training focus on?' N=52. N=350. A series of single response questions.

The Early Years handbook had been made available on the website for just 4 months (uploaded October 2014) prior to the survey period however already almost a third of practitioners (29%) were aware of it at this time. Of these, 38% had used the handbook (37 respondents). Although a very small number of responses, 83% reported finding it useful (31 respondents), with 51% reporting finding it very useful (19 respondents).

## How can the programme be better utilised

Forty per cent of respondents agreed that Bookstart Treasure could be better utilised in their organisation. A wide variety of suggestions for improvement were cited that they would like to be implemented, with minorities of respondents reporting the following key ways:

- Increase staff's knowledge and practice around best practice gifting and messaging (17%)
- Increased staff capacity, although this is not something practitioners have control over (7%)





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- Improve partnership working - to aid with referrals, hold collaborative gifting sessions e.g. a children's centre trip to the library, integration with other services e.g. ICan speech and development programme (3%)
- Staff training – to upskill and raise awareness on importance of messaging (2%)
- Increasing the number of packs they receive. This included additional needs and dual language packs, particularly as some respondents were not aware of this provision (2%)
- Implementing better supply and distribution system – to allow for more consistency and enable better planning e.g. when the books will arrive and what the books will be (1%)
- Better planning – to enable themed activities and invite parents along (1%)
- Increase awareness of web resources and additional provision e.g. additional needs packs
- Improve engagement with hard to reach groups (1%).

## Summary

- Fifteen percent of respondents had received training from someone in their organisation on gifting Bookstart Treasure which is most likely to focus on support for parents and carers in establishing a daily reading habit in the home (81%) and the importance of messaging (81%)
- The Early Years handbook had been made available on the website for just 4 months prior to the survey period however already almost a third of practitioners (29%) were aware of it at this time. Of these, 38% had used the handbook and the majority (83%) found it useful
- Forty per cent of respondents agreed that Bookstart Treasure could be better utilised in their organisation, with key suggestions including increasing the number of packs received, better planning, staff training, increase in awareness of web resources, increased staff capacity, improved partnership working and increased engagement with hard to reach groups.



## Conclusion

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Online surveys with Early years practitioners and other operational level staff who currently gift the Bookstart Treasure pack were conducted to gather key insights into:

- The gifting process
- Perceived impacts of the programme on children, parents and the practitioners themselves
- Initial feedback on the new guidance and training materials.

The research found in relation to the three key outcomes that:

### The gifting process

- The majority of respondents (83%) report liaising with a Bookstart Coordinator to get the packs
- Around half (59%) reported that the packs were couriered, with 33% reporting they were delivered to the setting in person. Smaller percentages reported that someone from the setting went to pick them up (6%)
- The majority of respondents (62%) give out the packs in line with the guidance on age that they receive; in the academic year the child turns 4
- Three quarters of respondents (78%) report gifting the pack at an early years setting, a quarter of respondents (27%) report gifting at a children's centre, 15% report gifting at the library and 10% gift in the home (including traveller sites and women's refuges).
- Forty one per cent of respondents report gifting the packs on a one to one basis, with 35% reporting they gift with a mixture of one to one and group gifting and 24% report gifting as a group
- Forty per cent of respondents report gifting as the opportunity arises, with 37% reporting they gift at a specific time and 23% reporting both as the opportunity arises and at a specific time. A wide variety of specific times were reported including at the end of term, on delivery, and as part of an activity or event
- The majority of respondents (87%) report giving out the packs with the parent/carer and child together. A quarter of respondents (28%) report gifting the pack without the parents present and 10% report gifting it to the parents without the children present
- Some best practice gifting processes are carried out more consistently than others. The statements with the highest percentage of respondents reporting they 'always' carry them out are as follows; 'talk about the benefits of sharing books' (59%), 'talk about the benefits of sharing rhymes' (48%) and 'take the book and other materials out of the pack to show the parent/carer and child' (48%)
- Lack of time was reported as being the biggest barrier to gifting the pack with information and guidance, by the largest number of respondents - a third (34%)



- Most of the requested support to help with gifting is already available from Book Trust, suggesting low levels of awareness amongst a small minority of respondents, and a need to communicate this availability more widely to ensure all practitioners are able to access this support.

### **Perceived impacts of the programme**

- Respondents were more likely to agree that there had been an impact on all or most children, than on all or most parents
- Highest levels of agreement of impact for all or most children were that the packs had exposed the children to books in a creative way (74%), provided a fun way for parents to spend time with their child (73%) and increased the child's interest in and enjoyment of books (69%)
- Highest levels of agreement of impact for all or most parents were that the packs increased access to books (51%), increased the parents/carer's awareness of their child's enjoyment of books (49%) and promoted shared reading as part of a daily reading routine (48%)
- The top three impacts identified by the practitioners on their own practice were the packs had helped them to signpost parents/carers to the library (73%), the packs had improved collaborative working (67%) and the packs had helped them to understand the potential of shared reading for a child's development (63%).

### **Initial feedback on the new guidance and training materials**

- Fifteen percent of respondents had received training from someone in their organisation on gifting Bookstart Treasure which is most likely to focus on support for parents and carers in establishing a daily reading habit in the home (81%) and the importance of messaging (81%)
- The Early Years handbook had been made available on the website for just 4 months prior to the survey period however already almost a third of practitioners (29%) were aware of it at this time. Of these, 38% had used the handbook and the majority (83%) found it useful
- Forty per cent of respondents agreed that Bookstart Treasure could be better utilised in their organisation, with key suggestions including increasing the number of packs received, better planning, staff training, increase in awareness of web resources, increased staff capacity, improved partnership working and increased engagement with hard to reach groups.



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## Appendix

Respondents who report 'always' carrying out a series of best practice gifting processes

	All respondents (350)*	Early years practitioners (114)	Early years/nursery teachers (64)	Children's centre practitioners (60)	Library staff member (41)
Talk about the benefits of sharing books	59% (197)	52% (59)	67% (43)	75% (45)	50% (17)
Take the books and other materials out of the pack to show the parent/carer and child	48% (162)	35% (40)	56% (36)	73% (44)	34% (12)
Talk about the benefits of sharing rhymes	48% (160)	41% (46)	48% (30)	73% (44)	38% (13)
Give tips about when and how to share books	45% (149)	40% (45)	49% (31)	66% (39)	31% (11)
Talk to parents/carers about how the pack might be used	44% (150)	40% (46)	34% (22)	70% (42)	26% (9)
Give information about joining the library	38% (128)	23% (26)	28% (18)	60% (36)	65% (22)
Give information about events in the children's centre	34% (113)	22% (25)	25% (16)	78% (46)	12% (4)
Model how to use the pack contents	33% (112)	28% (32)	31% (20)	55% (33)	21% (7)



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Signpost to the Bookstart website	17% (56)	16% (18)	7% (4)	29% (17)	9% (3)
Give out the pack with no specific information or guidance	7% (22)	8% (9)	0% (0)	14% (8)	3% (1)
Average of all best practice processes**	41%	33%	38%	64%	32%

Figure 17: 'When gifting the Bookstart Baby pack, how often, if at all, do you do the following?' N=597. A series of single response questions. Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.

\*average excludes 'give out the pack with no specific information or guidance'