



Impact Report

2022 - 2023 highlights

learn to

love to

read

Who we are – our vision

Working to support children's early literacy in Wandsworth

We are delighted to share our latest annual impact report. It is well recognised that improving a child's early literacy has a huge effect on their future life opportunities. We hope this report demonstrates the need for our work, the approach we take to meet that need, and our successes and challenges over the past academic year.

As an organisation we are just approaching our tenth birthday. Every year when I write this introduction, I say the need has never been greater. The really sad thing is that this is still true. In Wandsworth, 27% of Key Stage 1 and 25% of Key Stage 2 children did not reach the expected standard of reading when tested in summer 2023. Hundreds of children are falling short in reading fluency and confidence. The pandemic has had a huge impact on children's education, and a Key Stage 2 Disadvantage Gap Index figure of 3.2 shows that pupils from more difficult backgrounds are still less likely to succeed.

Learn to Love to Read is a local charity that supports children who are finding learning to read challenging or who are at risk of starting school poorly prepared for learning to read. Working in the London borough of Wandsworth since 2014, we work in partnership with primary schools, providing trained volunteer teams to improve reading levels, build confidence and inspire a love of reading. Understanding that early intervention is key, we run parent and toddler classes and work to engage parents in supporting their children's development. This year we have expanded the range of parent talks and workshops delivered to parents at our partner schools and have also increased the range of venues and the areas of Wandsworth where our early literacy classes are delivered.

We continue to be guided by our vision, 'every child a reader'. We use our five strategic pillars to target and refine what we do: embedded in the local community; serving the whole family; providing continuity of support; targeting the greatest need; and committed to quality delivery and measuring impact. During this academic year we had a consistent staff team, working together to deliver high quality services that make a real difference.



We would love you to join us in our mission to see 'every child a reader'. Perhaps you could become a reading volunteer if you live locally? Or perhaps you could offer vital financial support as a regular monthly donor, to allow us to budget and plan confidently for growth? If you are inspired by what you read here, please do get in touch with our Head of Operations, Matilda Tuke, matilda@l2l2r.org.

TERESA HARRIS
Founder, Learn to Love to Read

The need

Government statistics for 2022–23 show that while the percentage of children reaching the expected standard nationally in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 rose slightly to 68% (from 67% in 2021–22), the number of pupils meeting the expected standard of reading at the end of Key Stage 2 fell to 73% (from 75% in 2021–22). Pupils in Key Stage 2 experienced significant disruption to their learning during the pandemic, particularly at the end of Year 3 and in Year 4.

In Wandsworth, 73% of pupils met the expected standard in reading in Key Stage 1, above the national figure. The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 2 was also higher than the national figure at 75%, but showed a considerable drop from 2021–22 where the figure was 81%.

The government's Disadvantage Gap Index for children in Key Stage 2 fell from 3.23 in 2022 to 3.2 in 2023. However a comparison to the figure of 2.91 in 2019 demonstrates how the pandemic is still impacting disadvantaged pupils across the country.

National Literacy Trust research shows a 26% decrease in the number of children and young people aged 8–18 who read daily in their free time since 2005 (38% in 2005 vs. 28% in 2023), with only just over half reporting that they had been encouraged to read by their parents/carers and only one in five reporting they had read with their family.

Just two in five reported that they had enjoyed reading in their free time, the lowest level since the National Literacy Trust first asked the question in 2005.

The National Literacy Trust emphasises the continued need for the work of organisations like Learn to Love to Read with its comment:

“

Our previous reports cautioned that increasingly visible downward trends in reading enjoyment and frequency should be addressed urgently. Declining reading enjoyment across a growing number of children and young people must act as a wake-up call for all who support children and young people's reading for pleasure and the many benefits it can bring.

”

The cost-of-living crisis also continues to affect the families we work with. Research from the Centre of Literacy in Primary Education shows that book ownership increases parental engagement, yet according to the National Literacy Trust, one in three parents who are struggling financially as a result of the cost-of-living crisis, are buying fewer books for their children.

Our goals for 2022-23

1

Improve literacy levels. Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak and listen in a way that lets us communicate effectively and make sense of the world.

2

Develop early literacy skills so children start school ready to learn to read.

3

Build partnerships with local schools, children's centres and charities, to give all children the opportunity to have positive, frequent reading experiences.

4

Give parents the motivation, skills and confidence to support their children's reading at home.

5

Unlock access to ambitious life opportunities by helping children become confident readers.

6

Help children learn to love to read.

How we strive to meet our goals



One-to-one reading support

We offer children in Years 1, 2 and 3 weekly one-to-one reading sessions with trained volunteers.



Early Years classes

Our face-to-face and online classes for 0 to 4 year olds, focusing on sounds, songs and stories, help children to be ready to read when they start primary school.



Parent engagement

We use our existing parent connections to encourage ongoing parental involvement in their children's reading as well as reaching parents through regular parental talks and workshops.

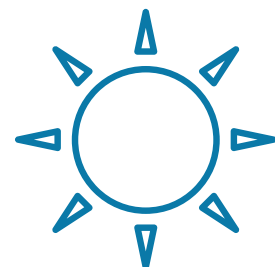


Training and supporting volunteers

Volunteers attend a half-day training session, as well as receiving ongoing support from our Head of Volunteering through regular newsletters, termly meet-ups, virtual volunteering support line and additional training.

Summer programmes

We offer reading-based play sessions for parents to enjoy with their children during the summer holidays.



Theory of change



Impact

- Children close the attainment gap between themselves and their peers.
- Children are not disadvantaged at secondary school and in future life by having low literacy levels.
- Children develop a lifelong love of reading.
- Parents are more likely to help their children with school work in the future.



Outcomes

- Children show progress in their reading skills.
- Children show increased desire to engage with reading through improved attitude and concentration.
- Children's self-confidence in their reading abilities and enjoyment of reading grows.
- Parents' understanding of the importance of their support grows.
- Parents' confidence in their ability to help their children learn increases.



Outputs

- Volunteers read with children once or twice weekly for 20–25 minutes.
- 70 volunteers.
- 152 children supported in 8 schools.
- Nearly 3,000 1-to-1 reading sessions run this academic year.
- 193 families attended 24 sets of Early Years literacy classes.
- 321 parents attended 33 talks and workshops.
- 13 families attended 5 summer reading sessions over the summer holidays.



Activities

- L2L2R forms partnerships with local primary schools who identify children who are below expected levels for reading.
- L2L2R recruits and trains suitable reading volunteers.
- Volunteers read with children weekly for 20–25 minutes, either in school or virtually via Zoom.
- Early Years literacy classes are run for children aged 0 to 4 years, referred by partner schools, children's centres, local charities and social care professionals.
- Gift packs containing books and activities are given to families who attend Early Years classes.
- L2L2R runs regular talks and workshops for parents around literacy and reading.
- L2L2R holds summer reading programme sessions for parents and children in August.



Resources & inputs

- Nationally, in 2023, 27% of children left primary school unable to read at the government's required standard.
- 32% of children finishing Key Stage 1 did not meet the expected levels in reading.
- Only 2 in 5 children aged 8 to 18 years say they enjoy reading.
- Targeted intervention in Early Years and Key Stage 1 pupils, and their parents, is key to helping children who are at risk of not meeting expectations in their reading.

2022-23 highlights

One-to-one reading support

- 152 children supported across eight partner schools in Wandsworth, both face-to-face and virtually.
- Teachers reported that nearly a quarter of children receiving one-to-one reading support from an L2L2R reading volunteer showed an improvement over all four of the measured areas (reading ability, comprehension skills, enjoyment and self-confidence).
- 46% of children were reading at or above their expected age-related levels at the end of the academic year compared to 4% at the start of the year.
- Volunteer feedback showed nearly twice the number of children scoring 5/6 or 6/6 for reading skills and confidence at the end of the year compared to the start of the year.
- Volunteers reported four times the amount of children reading with expression at the end of the year compared to the start of the year.

Parental engagement

- 33 events attended by 321 parents.
- All attendees who provided feedback at the end of events rated them 5/5.

Early Years

- 96 Early Years classes delivered in 2022-23, across 24 sets of classes.
- 193 families engaged with the sessions, with 80% of families attending half or more of their set of four classes.
- 90% of parents who provided feedback rated the class 5/5 for usefulness with 100% rating them 4/5 or 5/5.
- 92% of parents who provided feedback would recommend the classes to other parents.
- 19 children aged 0-5 receiving monthly books from the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.



2022-23 highlights

Volunteering

- 7 volunteer training sessions run for 31 new volunteers in 2022-23.
- 70 volunteers supporting children in school and virtually.
- 97% of volunteers who gave feedback felt they had been well supported in their volunteering role by L2L2R.
- 94% of volunteers who gave feedback felt their volunteering had made a real difference to the children they worked with.

Summer reading programme

- Read and Feed: 5 summer reading sessions held in August 2023.
- 13 families and 26 children attended.
- Nearly 90% of parents and carers who provided feedback felt the sessions had helped them understand more about the types of activities they could do to promote a love of reading and reading skills with their children.



Case study

“Books have been reintroduced to us as a family.”



Rochelle is mother to Neina, 6 years old, and Vincent, 2 years old.

Rochelle first discovered Learn to Love to Read when she attended one of our talks for parents about how to help your child with reading, delivered at Franciscan Children's Centre in Tooting by our Head of Family Programmes, Tara. Rochelle described this talk as a “game changer” for her. “I'd dropped the ball in helping my children love reading and this talk made me see how doable and fun helping your child with reading could be and how important it is for your child's future.”

The talk really made her realise what a difference reading with your child can make. She continues: “It was so helpful to see how a love of reading had benefited Tara's own children and see some of the activities she did with them to make reading fun.” Simple tips like trying non-fiction books with more reluctant readers worked well for her son. “Books have been reintroduced to us as a family since that talk. We went to the library again (when we hadn't for a while) and looked for books Tara had talked about. I have the library app on my phone to reserve books and I have put books all around the house in baskets now and they love dipping into the books at any time. I even read to my child as a gentle way to wake them up in the morning. One day I was reading ‘Shark in the Park’ to my child in the playground after school and a whole group of children joined us to listen to us read.”

During the talk, Tara suggested trying to have books to hand on journeys or when waiting. Rochelle commented: “Today we were waiting around for an appointment and having a Humpty Dumpty book and a Mr Men book in the bag is helping keep us occupied. We also do this on the train.”

Rochelle then attended a set of Early Years classes with Vincent at his nursery school. As part of the classes, attendees receive gifts of books and puzzles each week to use during the class and afterwards at home. Rochelle enjoyed learning about the games she could play with her child as well as building her knowledge about reading including the importance of distinguishing between different sounds in the environment before your child starts reading.

The family also attended Learn to Love to Read's summer reading programme. Rochelle reported that it was great to see which activities the children chose and enjoyed, and how useful it was for Neina to read to one of our reading volunteers.

Rochelle loves sharing the knowledge and passion she now has for encouraging children to read and has even set up a community bookshelf at her housing estate. She enjoys watching the children take books to read and has noticed that other people have now started to put new books in the bookshelf for others to share.

Her daughter Neina is about to begin reading online with a Learn to Love to Read volunteer once a week and she is really excited to get started.

What people say about us



"Dedication of the volunteers has fostered a love for reading even in reluctant readers."

Teacher, partner school



"The classes are great! I've learnt many ways to incorporate playing, singing, chatting and reading with my children into our everyday lives, without it feeling forced or boring. I learnt something new after every session. Thank you!"

Parent of child attending Early Years classes

learn to
love to
read
every child a reader

"Helping children learn to read brought me a personal satisfaction. Witnessing their progress and growth was truly heart warming and inspiring. What I particularly enjoyed was the connection I formed with the children. Seeing their excitement when they grasped new concepts or read a story was very fulfilling. The joy in their eyes made each moment of volunteering worthwhile."

Volunteer

"I really saw her bloom this year, her confidence grew, her voice was louder when reading, she was more prepared to offer answers, suggest what was going on in the text, her pace speeded up and she started to use expression in the last term."

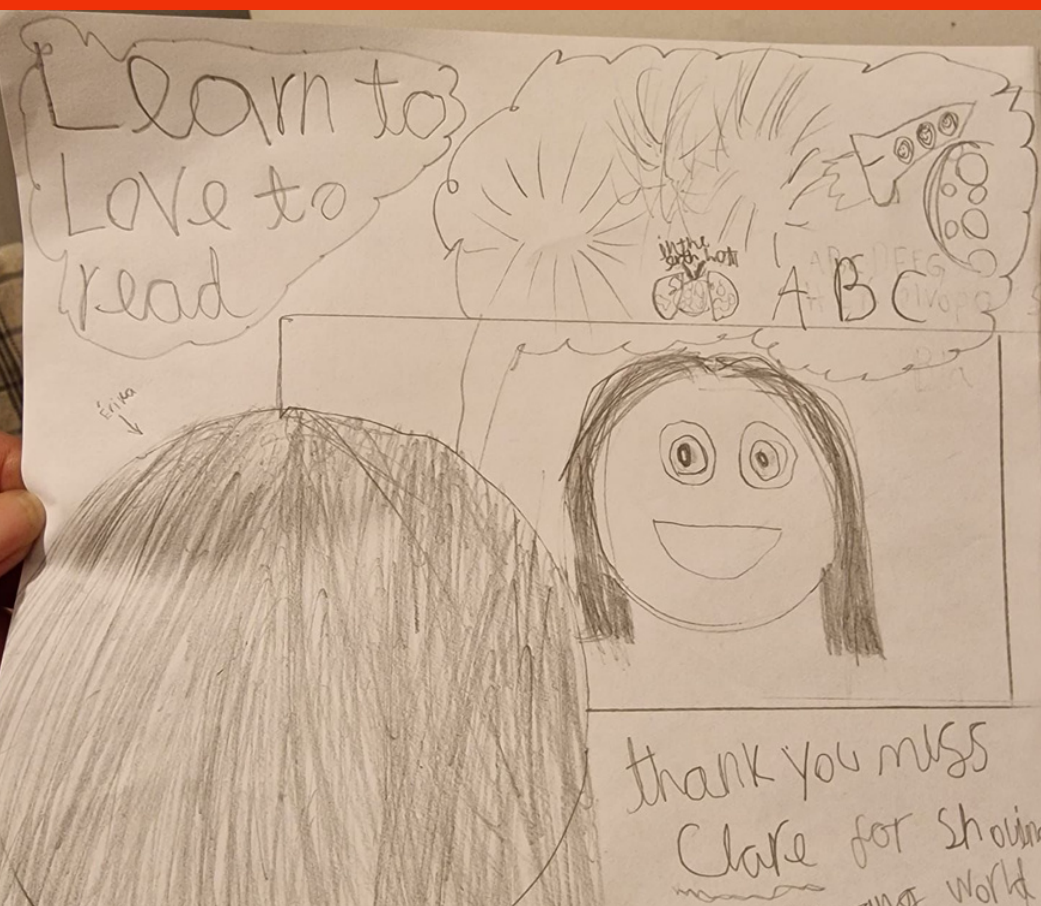
Volunteer



"I had a lot of thoughts during the workshop on how I could apply what was being shown to my own child. I went home and played a few of the games the very same day."

Parent attending talk

What people say about us



"The variety of activities so the children have been able to develop their reading skills without realising it. Also for N to keep up reading practice during holidays on a regular basis. Also great to encourage V to enjoy learning and reading-based activities."

Parent attending Read and Feed with their children

"The girls and I are very grateful for the help we received from Volunteer P. A and M have improved so tremendously in their reading. If I [was] to rate Volunteer P, I will say 100% and thank you so much ... for your time and effort you put into the girls. We highly appreciate your kindness and support."

Parent of child supported virtually

"The books are amazing, and I've been really impressed by the diversity, too. She's engaging with reading much more - she's not reading words yet, but she picks up books and pretends to read. We chat about the pictures. She enjoys books as much as toys now, and I can't wait for her to start school so that she can read even more."

Parent of child receiving Imagination Library books



Our thanks

We'd like to thank everyone who has supported us in the past and throughout 2022-23, especially those grant-making bodies which have supported us for a number of years. We are also extremely grateful to the individuals who fund us on a monthly basis. Their unrestricted donations give us the security and flexibility to continue to develop our work.



**The London
Community
Foundation**



Get involved

Donate

If you'd like to make a donation to help us continue to support children's reading in Wandsworth, please visit www.learn2love2read.org.uk/pages/11-donate or contact Matilda Tuke at matilda@l2l2r.org.

Volunteer

If you're interested in becoming an L2L2R reading volunteer, you can find information and apply online here: www.learn2love2read.org.uk/pages/4-volunteer or contact Matilda Tuke at matilda@l2l2r.org with any questions.

Partner with us

If your organisation would like to find out more about how we might work together please visit: www.learn2love2read.org.uk/pages/3-partner-with-us or get in touch with Tara Coffin at tara@l2l2r.org.

If you work with disadvantaged families in Wandsworth in any capacity we would love to hear from you!

Find us: @learn2love2read



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