

Impact Report 2007/2008

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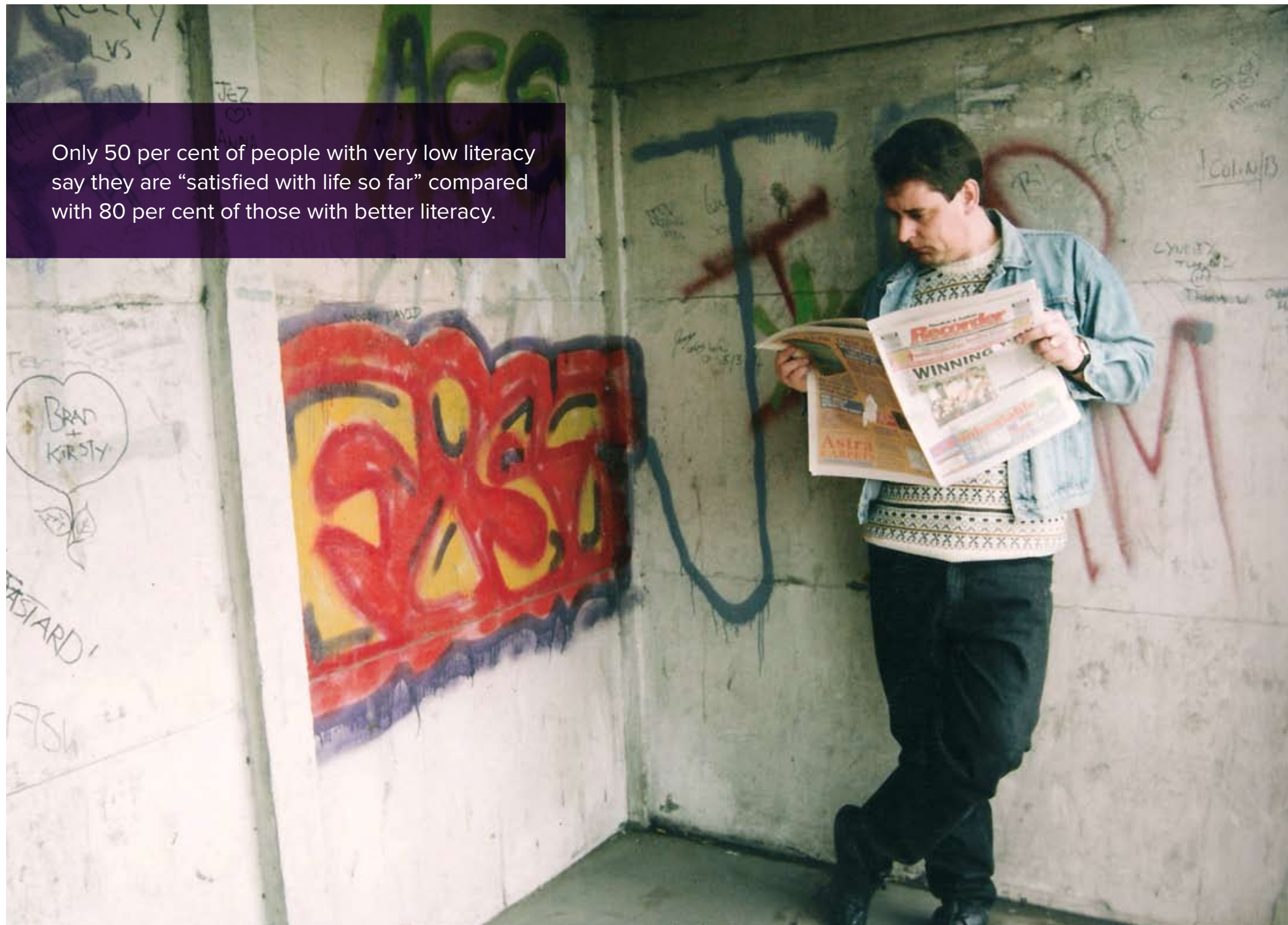
# Literacy changes lives

One in six of us struggle to read and write. Poor literacy skills compromise health, confidence, happiness and employability.

The National Literacy Trust is an independent charity with a vision of everyone having the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills they need to fulfil their own and, ultimately, the nation's potential. We achieve this by:

- ▶ Empowering individuals
- ▶ Supporting professionals
- ▶ Influencing policy and practice

Only 50 per cent of people with very low literacy say they are “satisfied with life so far” compared with 80 per cent of those with better literacy.



## Chairman's message

The National Literacy Trust passionately believes that low levels of literacy are a barrier to social justice. They produce social, economic and cultural exclusion that scars communities and undermines social cohesion.

“We have been proud to lead in the delivery of the 2008 National Year of Reading.”

Literacy is part of a vicious cycle of socio-economic factors that lead to economic and personal deprivation; for many, addressing literacy skills is a key first step in beginning to address and helping to overcome other related factors that lock individuals into a cycle of disadvantage. Therefore, it is essential that we continue to address the challenge of literacy, both within the education sector and beyond.

In 2007-08 we have striven to inspire and engage individual learners, meeting them on their own terms with relevant and appealing initiatives. We have provided teachers, librarians and other professionals with the information and tools they need to deliver on literacy. Importantly, we have informed our knowledge with research and used this to guide professionals and influence policy through our relationships with key agencies. We have been particularly proud to lead in the delivery of the 2008 National Year of Reading and we will ensure its impact will continue into 2009 and beyond. I am grateful to our hard-working staff team who have made all of this happen.

November 2008 is the fifteenth anniversary of the foundation of the National Literacy Trust. In this time, literacy has increasingly been acknowledged as a national priority, central to school standards and the economic skills agenda. I hope that the next fifteen years will see a growing recognition that literacy is central to social justice and opportunity.



*Amanda Jordan*

Amanda Jordan  
Chairman



“The National Literacy Trust’s fantastic projects, professional help and expertise are helping everyone to enjoy reading.”

Michael Rosen, Children’s Laureate

## Director’s message

My first year as director of the National Literacy Trust has been an incredibly rewarding experience. I have relished the opportunity to make a difference to literacy levels and consequently have a wider social impact on communities across the UK.

This year, we strengthened our research and policy function to enable our work to have a wider impact and greater sustainability. We refined the focus of our projects and the measurement of their outcomes to ensure our work is of maximum benefit.

In developing the 2008 National Year of Reading, we have had a very special opportunity to communicate more widely the importance, potential and rewards of reading and literacy. Our challenge now is to make sure this fantastic work is developed and implemented by local authorities in the years to come.

In November 2008, we will celebrate our fifteenth anniversary. We can be proud of how much we have achieved so far, and the tangible impact we have made on the literacy landscape.

“We have strengthened our research and policy function to enable our work to have wider impact.”

We need to look forward to the next fifteen years and assess how and why literacy will be so important in the digital age. The National Literacy Trust will aim to redefine literacy and develop effective ways to address new challenges.



*Jonathan Douglas*

Jonathan Douglas  
Director

## Key impacts

- Over 24,000 children chose over 55,000 free books to keep
- 1,600 boys were nominated as Reading Champions
- 60 prisons took part in our Reading Champions project
- Sport helped us to engage over 12,000 children and nearly 1,000 adults

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## Empowering individuals

The National Literacy Trust works strategically with disadvantaged communities that have the most to gain from our schemes. Reading for pleasure has been revealed as the most important indicator of the future success of a child (OECD, 2002), and improvements in literacy, at any point in life, can have a profound effect on an individual. The National Literacy Trust aims to inspire a love of reading that will potentially raise literacy levels and life opportunities in every community.

“ We aim to inspire a love of reading that will potentially raise literacy levels in every community.”

In 2007-08, our initiatives empowered individuals by developing their literacy through contexts that inspired and engaged. By providing enjoyable links to literacy that are relevant to people's lives, we gave individuals the opportunity to take control of their learning and gain pleasure in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

From the inspirational events of our targeted bookgifting project, Reading Is Fundamental, UK; to the motivation of role models in our Reading Champions scheme; to the powerful draw of sport utilised by our Reading The Game initiative: we put individual learners in the driving seat.



“It's made me want to read more because I get to choose my own stuff so I find the books more interesting.”

Katy, age 14

## Inspiring a passion for reading

We promoted a love of reading to over 24,000 children and young people aged 0-19 by giving them the opportunity to choose and keep free books at a series of inspirational events. Over 300 Reading Is Fundamental projects, delivered by trained local coordinators, ran a wide variety of events in locations including schools, libraries, prisons and women's refuges. These included everything from simple storytelling sessions to whole school days themed around children's book characters. Each child received a bookplate for each book, a sticker and a bookmark as well as a book bag. Ninety-five per cent of local project coordinators said the events improved children's enjoyment of reading and 83 per cent reported increased parental involvement.

## Readers are champions

In schools, prisons and other settings, we involved children and young people in creating a reading culture and celebrating reading role models. During this year, 860 schools joined our male-focused Reading Champions initiative, nominating nearly 1,600 boys as Reading Champions. The boys took charge of their own reading, promoting it to their peers and gaining recognition and awards for their involvement. Reading Champions has been so successful that many schools have even begun nominating girls, too. In partnership with RED Reads, we used the power of role models in reading promotion posters featuring multicultural celebrities from the worlds of sport and popular culture.

Sport helped us to engage new audiences in literacy programmes, with our Reading The Game initiative reaching over 12,000 children and nearly 1,000 adults. Our competition with World Wrestling Entertainment encouraged 1,000 young people to read five books and write to a wrestler persuading them to read. Our work with football clubs, including every Premier League club, brought together fans to write, read, listen and speak about their passion. Sporting heroes changed perceptions of reading, with 97 per cent of children who took part in our Premier League projects saying they would now read more regularly.

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## Charlotte's story

Charlotte Colwell-Treacy from Greenwich and daughter Louise, aged three

My son Ryan is eight and has a speech and language impediment. When he was little, I had no idea how important it was to read to him. Ryan was a bit behind when he started school and he has struggled with his schoolwork since.

“Since I started sharing books with Louise, she can never get enough of them.”

When I had my daughter Louise, I wanted to do what I could to make an impact on her language development and reading, but I didn't know how. I saw a flyer for a Reading Is Fundamental event at my library in Greenwich and we went along together. Louise enjoyed it so much that we never missed an event. Since I started sharing books with Louise, she can never get enough of them. Thanks to this initiative, Louise was able to choose and keep books that she loves. She carried them around with her everywhere – to the shops and the park. She asked anyone and everyone to 'read it'. She even gave the books to her brother and his mates, and Ryan read to her. Louise and Ryan really encourage each other.

Sharing books has become part of our daily routine. And now Louise has started reading by herself, there's no stopping her.

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## Sam's story

Sam Phillips, Reading Champion from Staffordshire

It was the World Wrestling Entertainment competition that really got me reading again. I like reading magazines the best, like WWE magazine, Match and GamesMaster. I like information books more than stories, especially facts about wrestlers, games cheats and cars. I mainly read magazines about wrestling, because I love it so much. It keeps me up to date with the news, profiles of the WWE stars and tournaments coming up. I can really feel part of it. I cannot wait until the new WWE wrestling magazine comes out every month. I read to stop me from being bored. I read anywhere, especially on holiday.

“ I like reading magazines the best. I read to stop me from being bored. I read anywhere, especially on holiday.”

Being good at reading helps me to understand my school work. I see people in class who do not read, because they don't want to, or they find it hard, and they miss out on lots of stuff. As well as finding out lots of information about things you are interested in, it can be fun too.



## Supporting professionals

Our holistic approach links educational, family and other settings to achieve higher literacy outcomes for all. Professionals need effective and accessible resources and strategies to help learners acquire the literacy skills they need to thrive. In 2007-08, our work supported teachers, librarians and other literacy professionals, giving them the tools, information and inspiration they need to deliver successful literacy provision for a variety of age groups.

“ Professionals need effective and accessible resources and strategies to help learners.”

Our website, conferences and information resources provided clear and valuable guidance on best practice in all aspects of literacy. We offered tailored resources for early years professionals through our Talk To Your Baby campaign, while Reading Connects gave senior management in schools a framework for creating a whole-school reading culture. The 2008 National Year of Reading took a strategic approach and provided inspiration at a national and regional level.

We also worked in partnership with others to reach our target audiences. Everybody Writes, run by Booktrust, offered classroom teachers innovative ideas and practical online resources to get pupils excited about writing, as well as working directly with 1,400 pupils. The Vital Link project, run by The Reading Agency, connected libraries and adult literacy providers to promote motivating and engaging reading activities for learners.

## Key impacts

- 285,000 downloads of Talk To Your Baby resources
- 1,700 schools joined Reading Connects initiative
- 66,000 family involvement toolkits downloaded
- World's first literacy Wiki launched

## The right tools for the job

Our comprehensive website provided information, resources and inspiration for literacy practitioners across the UK, with an average of 15,000 visits a day, while our email newsletter kept over 12,000 subscribers informed of the latest literacy news and policy issues.

Our Talk To Your Baby campaign continued to champion children's language experience from birth to three, by supporting early years practitioners and parents. New resources focused on young children with hearing or visual impairments and the role of fathers. In this year alone, the website received a million page visits, with 285,000 resources being downloaded from the site. Talk To Your Baby also held consultation meetings with 185 early years practitioners from 54 local authorities.

## Strategic and holistic approaches

Our Reading Connects initiative supported primary and secondary school senior management, encouraging schools to embed a creative and holistic approach to promoting reading for pleasure into their policies, vision and practice. Over 1,700 schools joined Reading Connects in 2007-08 and it was promoted as a key way to mark the 2008 National Year of Reading.

“Schools were encouraged to embed a creative and holistic approach to promoting reading for pleasure.”

Following extensive research projects, the 2008 National Year of Reading created a wide range of resources for regional stakeholders, including communications toolkits, promotional materials, and a resource-rich website, featuring the revolutionary Wikireadia, a user-generated online database of practitioner case studies.

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## A local authority's story

Mary Campbell, Service improvement manager - early prevention, Leicester City Council

We have recently developed a multi-agency strategy to promote early communication skills across Leicester. After attending the Talk To Your Baby conference in 2006 and hearing about the work of Stoke Speaks Out, we were motivated to develop our own strategic plan to help improve speaking and listening skills of young children within the city. As a result, we now have an embedded plan that builds on previous joint working between services for children and young people, and speech and language therapy.

“After attending the Talk To Your Baby conference we were motivated to develop our own strategic plan.”

The Talk To Your Baby website provides inspirational examples of effective practice for early years communication projects. These have informed our planning and will continue to do so - the content is really helpful. Talk To Your Baby's downloadable information sheets are used widely across services in the city and the translations are particularly popular. We use them not only as resources for parents, but also to help us create our own resources within the local authority.

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## A school's story

Martin Cooper, Deputy head, Mile Oak Primary School, Brighton

We are so proud to have won the Reading Connects primary school of the year award 2007-08. We have begun to transform ourselves into a community of readers in a relatively short space of time - and without a huge injection of capital.

When I joined Mile Oak in 2004, I noticed that children rarely carried books in and out of school. The libraries were difficult to locate, not child-friendly and there was no encouragement for pupils to take books home. My aim was to transform Mile Oak into a book-rich environment.

“The children love their library. They are always organising competitions and presenting at assembly to get other pupils reading.”

We now have book racks along every corridor and in the playground, and we hold book clubs, author visits and book swaps run by pupils and parents. We converted a cloakroom and adjoining art cupboard into a reading cave, full of beanbags, cushions and lava lamps. The children love it.

The libraries are run by Year 6 librarians. They organise competitions and present at assembly to get other pupils reading. Children who are seen to be positive reading role models become Reading Champions and wear special t-shirts as school uniform. They also have their photographs displayed around the school and recommend books for others to read.

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## Influencing policy and practice

Our policy and research work aims to improve literacy attitudes, habits and skills by influencing national policy and practice. We believe that achieving high levels of literacy in society can play a powerful part in levelling social inequalities. Research shows the potential influence of literacy skills on many aspects of life, from being a home-owner to enjoying good mental health. The National Literacy Trust aims to both enhance provision by influencing literacy policy and practice, and raise awareness of the importance of literacy beyond educational contexts. By working holistically, we hope to realise higher literacy levels and achieve equality of opportunity for all.

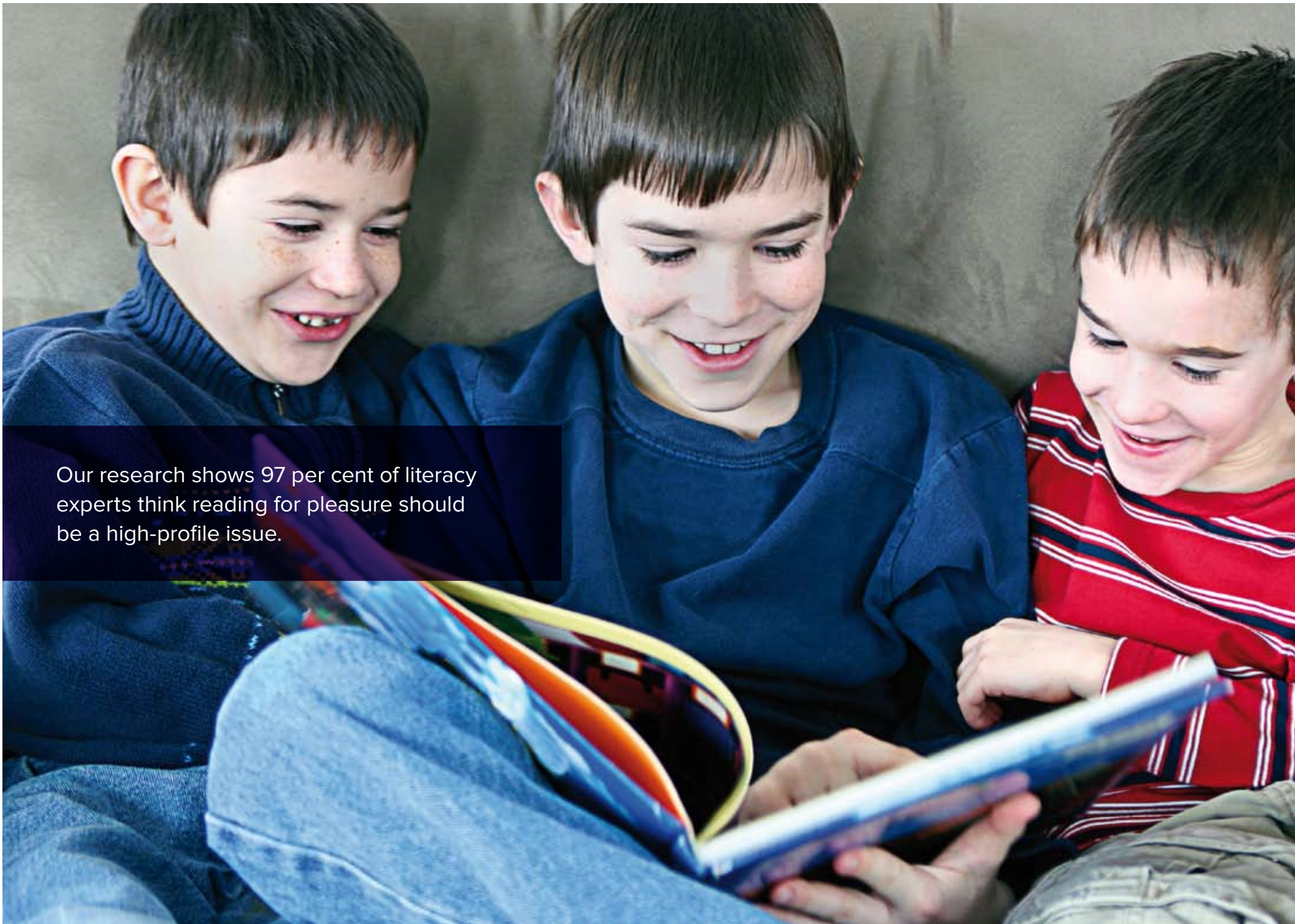
“We enhanced provision by influencing policy and raising awareness of the importance of literacy.”

In 2007-08, through compelling partnerships across different sectors, we influenced government with the aim of placing literacy firmly on the agenda, as well as making state provision for literacy as effective as it can be. Our research function gave us the ammunition to champion the cause of literacy, and inform both our practice and that of professionals and other agencies. Our lead role in the development and delivery of the 2008 National Year of Reading helped to raise awareness of literacy among government and key agencies, and subsequently among the general public.

## Key impacts

- First UK policy scoping of key literacy issues
- Key role in the Government's Children's Plan
- Shaped education recommendations of Breakthrough Britain
- Launched the 2008 National Year of Reading at 10 Downing Street

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Our research shows 97 per cent of literacy experts think reading for pleasure should be a high-profile issue.

## Putting literacy on the agenda

Our expertise and partnerships enabled us to play a leading role in informing and responding to relevant policy. NLT director Jonathan Douglas sat on an expert advisory panel for the Government's Children's Plan. We also convened a special meeting of the Children's Plan's strategic forum introducing the Department for Children, Schools and Families to leaders from a range of organisations within the literacy sector.

Our thinking around the central role of family literacy in establishing social justice was influential in shaping the education recommendations of the Conservative Party's Social Justice Policy Group's Breakthrough Britain. In response to this report, we held a seminar for leading thinkers from the literacy sector chaired by Ryan Robson, co-author of the report.

## 2008 National Year of Reading

As the lead agency in the 2008 National Year of Reading, we engaged local authorities, business and education with a national launch conference in October 2007, attended by Government ministers Ed Balls and Jim Knight, the Today programme's Jim Naughtie and John Bird, founder of The Big Issue.

“ We met with local authorities across the country and recruited 150 local coordinators for the National Year of Reading. ”

In addition, we held a nationwide series of meetings with local authority representatives, recruiting 150 local coordinators to take forward activity across the country. We orchestrated the sector launch of the Year at 10 Downing Street in January 2008, and a wider celebration, also at Number 10, attended by the Prime Minister and seven ministers, in April 2008.

## Informing practice

In 2007-08, National Literacy Trust research explored a number of literacy issues, informing the strategic direction of the NLT and the practice of professionals. We conducted a large-scale survey of pupils' perceptions of readers, and our findings played a key part in the development and messaging of the 2008 National Year of Reading. We also carried out the first 'Literacy - What's hot, what's not' policy scoping survey of key literacy issues, speaking to 35 UK experts.

“We continued to strive for a coordinated infrastructure to support literacy in the home.”

We continued to strive for a coordinated infrastructure to support literacy in the home. The 'Every home a reading home' conference, in October 2007, offered inspirational strategic thinking, practical applications and networking opportunities to enable local authorities and professionals to create an effective local strategy. We are now seeking to pilot a local approach which further integrates support for literacy in the home.



## Research in focus

Christina Clark, Head of research, National Literacy Trust

In 2007, we surveyed over 1,600 primary and secondary pupils from 29 schools to explore how they define a reader, and whether they see themselves as such.

We found that the majority of pupils who did not describe themselves as readers nevertheless read a large variety of texts outside of school, including magazines, blogs and websites. They simply did not read the types of texts that they perceived 'readers' to read, such as fiction books and poetry.

“What children like to read at home differs significantly from the material that they feel they are encouraged to read at school.”

When asked about the characteristics of readers, pupils who did not see themselves as readers were also more likely to describe them in undesirable terms, such as being boring, having no friends and being geeky.

This research had two main implications for the work of the National Literacy Trust and other literacy professionals. Firstly, we needed to widen the definition of reading, thereby allowing young people to start seeing themselves as readers no matter what types of materials they enjoy. At the same time, we needed to revamp the stereotype of a reader as boring and uncool. Role models from the family and peer groups have an important role to play in getting this message across. The research played a key part in developing the messaging of the 2008 National Year of Reading and other National Literacy Trust initiatives, such as our Reading Champions project.

# Financial summary

National Literacy Trust summarised financial statement for the year ended 31 March 2008

	Incorporated charity 2008 £'000	Unincorporated charity 2007 £'000
<b>Income</b>		
National Reading Campaign	237	195
Reading Is Fundamental, UK	464	305
Talk To Your Baby	69	74
Reading The Game	260	126
National Year of Reading	1,084	-
Other restricted income	74	65
Unrestricted income	598	570
	<b>2,786</b>	<b>1,335</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
National Reading Campaign	257	195
Reading Is Fundamental, UK	426	309
Talk To Your Baby	92	71
Reading The Game	186	112
National Year of Reading	835	-
Other restricted expenditure	47	2
	<b>1,843</b>	<b>689</b>
Unrestricted expenditure	565	608
Total expenditure	<b>2,408</b>	<b>1,297</b>
<b>NET INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>38</b>

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2008		2008 £'000	2007 £'000
Fixed assets		26	3
Net current assets			
- Reading Is Fundamental	194	156	
- Reading The Game	134	56	
- Talk To Your Baby	6	62	
- National Year of Reading	249		
- Other restricted	49	115	
- Unrestricted	253	141	
		<b>885</b>	<b>530</b>
<b>Total net assets</b>		<b>911</b>	<b>533</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Restricted funds		651	391
Unrestricted funds		260	142
		<b>911</b>	<b>533</b>

#### Trustees' statement

These summarised financial statements contain information from both the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 March 2008, but are not the full statutory report and accounts. The full financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 17 September 2008 and subsequently submitted to the Charity Commission and to Companies House. They received an unqualified audit report. Copies may be obtained from the NLT.

#### Auditors' statement to the National Literacy Trust

We have examined the summary financial statements of The National Literacy Trust, which comprise the summary statement of financial activities and summary balance sheet. The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with the recommendations of the charities SORP. Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements with the full financial statements and Trustees' Annual Report. We also read the other information contained in the summarised annual report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the summarised financial statements. We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 1999/6, The auditors' statement on the summary financial statement, issued by the Auditing Practices Board for use in the United Kingdom. Our report on the organisation's full annual financial statements describes the basis of our audit opinion on the financial statements.



# How you can help

Literacy changes lives. You can help us support people to achieve their full potential. Our projects reach people in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the UK, where the need is greatest.

Every penny you give will make a difference to our work. Please make a donation today.

**£10** could help us reach up to three families with motivational reading events, resources and storytelling activities.

**£20** means a child could choose and keep three free books.

**£60** could give four children the chance to attend an inspirational reading event at their local team's football stadium.

**£150** could help to support up to 200 parents in communicating and learning with their children.

For every £1 you give...

**96p** is spent directly on activity to raise literacy standards

**3p** is spent on generating funds

**1p** is spent on management and governance of the organisation



# Thank you

The National Literacy Trust is an independent charity dependent upon voluntary donations. We would like to thank everyone who has supported our work in the past year. Companies, foundations, individual supporters and government departments have all provided vital support to our work, and many of these are listed below.

Accio UK  
Arts Council England  
Bank of England  
Bookrelief  
Borders UK and Ireland  
British Airways  
British Land  
BT  
Charities Aid Foundation  
Clifford Chance  
Department for Children, Schools and Families  
Entertainment Rights  
Good Gifts Catalogue  
Hounslow Learning Zone  
Insight partnership  
John Lyon's Charity  
Newby Trust Limited  
NKD Group  
Paragon  
Pitney Bowes  
Pixiella Trust  
Pleon  
Premier League

Reed Elsevier  
Renaissance Learning  
SFIA Educational Trust  
Sir John Cass's Foundation  
Slaughter and May  
Starbucks Coffee Company (UK & Ireland)  
Teleperformance  
The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust  
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The Edgar E Lawley Trust  
The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation  
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The National Literacy Trust is an independent charity that changes lives through literacy.

**National  
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