

News release

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Storybook Launch Tells Tales of Improved Attendance

Nurseries in Sunderland are set to receive a boost this March as a unique storybook designed to encourage regular attendance is launched during a series of special events.

Families from across the city are being invited to the story time sessions which will introduce them to the latest storybook, 'Time for Nursery, Spike', from Sunderland City Council's *Promoting attendance in the early years* support service.

The 'Time for Nursery, Spike' storybook is the latest resource from the support service and uses its mascot Spike to help families introduce a positive routine at home, promote independence and encourage regular nursery attendance.

The book tells the story of Spike's daily routine before, during and after nursery and is designed to be used as a read together resource.

Alongside a special story time, the events will also give the children the opportunity to meet Spike, while parents will have the chance to learn about the benefits of going to nursery regularly in preparation for school. As well as focusing on attendance the events will also introduce the importance of healthy lifestyles and good personal and oral hygiene.

Following the launch events the new storybook will be available for loan in all of the city's libraries while each nursery will also receive a copy to share with their children. The events have been organised by the *Promoting attendance in the early years* service in conjunction with the Sunderland Library Service.

Phil Hayden, Extended Services and Attendance Group Manager at Sunderland City Council, said: "Regular nursery attendance brings with it a number of important benefits for young children and can dramatically improve the transition into primary school. Through exciting resources like the new 'Time for Nursery, Spike' storybook we can help make starting nursery or primary school a less daunting experience.

“Many children can feel apprehensive about nursery but the *Promoting attendance in the early years* service is designed to help families overcome these feelings by working with and supporting both parent and child.”

Promoting attendance in the early years support service is aimed towards young children aged three and four years and their families. Through attending nursery every day and continuing to develop good patterns of attendance, parents can help to offer their child the very best start in life. Nursery can help children to learn new skills, enjoy new experiences, make new friends and have fun while helping to build confidence, self-esteem and relationships.

Families are invited to attend any morning or afternoon session on Tuesday 09 March at Houghton Library; Friday 12 March at Ryhope Library; Tuesday 16 March at City Library; Wednesday 17 March at Sandhill Library; and Thursday 18 March at Bunny Hill Library. All morning sessions will run from 10am to 11am and afternoon sessions from 1.30pm to 2.30pm.

~Ends~

For more information please contact Alex Donaldson at Adessi