

Bookstart Offer 2026-2027

A guide for practitioners working with under-fives.



This leaflet explains Cambridgeshire's current BookTrust Bookstart offer and which partners deliver each stage.

Bookstart Baby



All families with babies up to 12 months are eligible for a free Bookstart Baby pack.

Gifted by health visitors at post-natal visits, usually at the 6–8 week review.

The pack contains an age-appropriate board book, finger puppet, and Sharing Stories Together fold-out leaflet.

This is a fantastic resource to introduce the world of stories to babies!

If any of your families have still not received their pack after baby is three-months old, please contact bookstart@cambridgeshire.gov.uk. A pack can be sent to their nearest library.



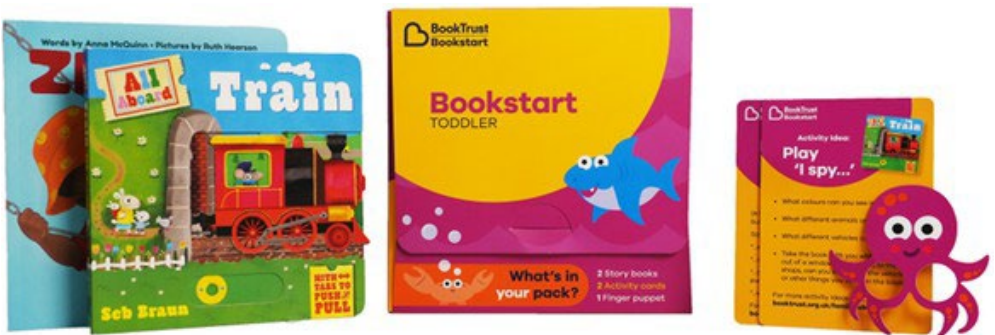
Bookstart Early Years

Bookstart Toddler and Pre-schooler/Nursery are book packs designed to help families have fun reading and share stories with their children. These packs are available to support families at risk of disadvantage.

Bookstart Toddler

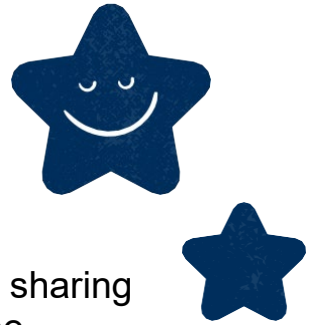
Delivered by Child and Family Centres. The pack contains two books, activity and rhyme cards and a finger puppet to help bring stories to life. It is designed for children aged one to two years but may be suitable for older children working at this developmental level.

Contact your local Child and Family Centre to request packs for families you feel would benefit, especially those who have an open Early Help Assessment, or are eligible for Early Learning for Two-Year-Olds (Funded Two's). Child and Family Centre workers can provide 1:1 support for families in their homes or in groups at Child and Family Centres.



Bookstart Pre-Schooler

Delivered by designated Early Years settings and all Child and Family Centres.



The pack is designed especially for families facing disadvantage - who many need additional support to get started with sharing stories and reading. The packs can also be gifted to any family you think would benefit from having one.

The pack contains two age-appropriate books, two activity cards and a DIY headband.

The Cambridgeshire Early Years, Childcare and School Readiness service have produced supportive guidance to aid practitioners with ideas to support book sharing, with families. This can be found on the [Cambridgeshire Learn Together Supporting Home Learning](#) web pages.



Resources for SEND

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can be gifted the following Bookstart packs by Sensory Support Services:

- Bookstart Shine for children with hearing impairment.
- Bookstart Touch for children with visual impairment.

Children with conditions affecting their fine motor skills can be gifted a Bookstart Start pack by Health Professionals.

However, packs can be borrowed from libraries, and Child and Family Centre workers can also share them via home visits, in Centres or Libraries.



Scan the QR code or visit

[Cambridgeshire Libraries](#) and search 'SEN pack' to reserve your pack and collect from your local library for free.



Bookstart Shine:



For children who are deaf

Bookstart Shine Baby (birth to two years):

Packs include two touchy-feelie board books, rhyme place mat with babies signing, and guidance around sharing books with hearing impaired babies.



Bookstart Shine Toddler (three to five years):

Packs include two age-appropriate books, a rhyme place mat with babies signing, Guidance around sharing books and a British Sign Language bookmark.



Bookstart Touch:



For children who are vision impaired

Bookstart Touch Baby (birth to two years):

Pack contains: two touch-and-feel books and guidance around sharing books with children who are vision impaired.



Bookstart Touch Toddler (three to five years):

Pack contains: two touch-and-feel books and guidance around sharing books with children who have visual impairment.



Bookstart Star:



for children with conditions affecting their fine motor skills

Can be gifted by a health professional following a child's universal health and development review.

Designed for three- to five-year-olds. Pack contains two board books, puppets for playing along with the stories and guidance sheets.



Dual Language Picture Books

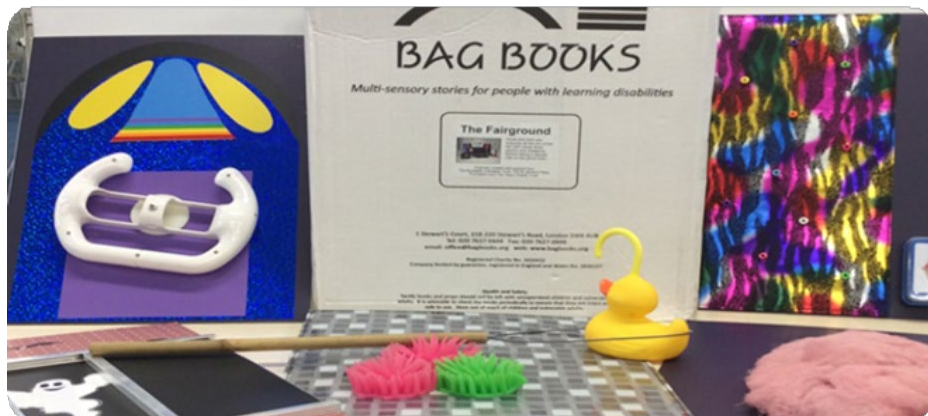
Early Years Settings can order free Dual Language Books for every child aged three who qualifies.

Please only order Dual Language books for children currently attending your setting, whose parents speak only limited English.

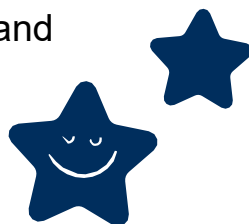
An order form will be sent out each year to all settings in the autumn and summer term. For more information email bookstart@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Cambridgeshire Libraries also have a collection of picture books in a wide range of languages that can be borrowed.

Additional Library Offers



Bag Books: Multi-sensory storytelling kits are available for loan to parents of children and young people with profound/multiple disabilities.

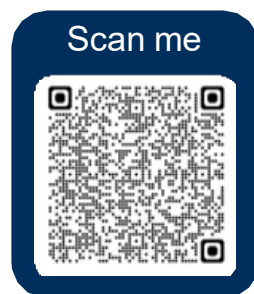


Large Print and Braille books

Libraries have a range of books for children with vision or print impairment to borrow:

- Giant print and Braille picture books (point 72 text).
- ClearVision braille Picture books.
- Customeye story books (point 46 text).
- Spoken word CDs.

Collections are held in Cambridge Central, Ely, and Huntingdon Libraries, but can also be reserved and sent to your local library.



For more information on the Bookstart programme please contact:

Cambridgeshire Bookstart Coordinator, Louise Aldridge
bookstart@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Cambridgeshire Child and Family Centres
sally.stephenson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Healthy Child Programme (NHS)
ccs.cambs.pboro.childrenshealth@nhs.net.

Early Years Service
earlyyears.service@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Sensory Support
sensory.supportteam0-25@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

