



Reading from the Start

A partnership to tackle illiteracy and poverty in deprived London areas.

CHALLENGE

Our customer Peabody provides social housing in some of London’s poorest areas, which are facing a challenging legacy of illiteracy, stemming from both low education level in the areas and a high proportion of residents whose first languages are not English.

SOLUTION

Research has shown that providing literacy skills to young children can enable a significant social return and a sustainable change for communities. Backed by this, VINCI Facilities and Peabody wanted to deliver a programme of early intervention to tackle illiteracy. To maximise the social value delivered, VINCI Facilities and Peabody decided to work in a partnership to deliver the Reading from the Start project.

Reading from the Start, fosters a love of reading and positively impacts long term educational outcomes for children aged 0-5 growing up in deprived areas of London. Every month over the course of three years, each child receives a book, and the whole family receives support from trained volunteers and community workers at fun and interactive reading sessions.

The Reading from the Start project and VINCI Facilities/Peabody partnership inaugural won the PPC/TPC award for delivering an innovative approach to creating social value.

When it comes to creating value for a community, every child and every family matters. During the course of the project there has been many individuals who at their first reading sessions turned up quietly, shy and reserved, without knowing any of their neighbours, but who are now actively engaging in the sessions. For many families to attend the sessions have become a regular occurrence, and they are now forming an important part of their local communities. To date, 500 children are already enrolled to receive free books through the project.



BENEFITS

The project is designed to help young children improve their reading skills. This ultimately aids to raise the educational level in these communities, which is one important contributor to tackle poverty and social exclusion.



Social Value is exactly what we are doing here: Helping young children to develop their skills, social and literacy, to ensure that when they start school they are at a levelled playing field.

Josephine O’Connor, Business and Community Investment Manager, VINCI Facilities



Before we came here, my wife didn’t speak to anyone because she doesn’t speak any English. Now she has made friends and it means Tahera gets to learn as well. We are very happy to be able to come here every week.

Abdul Latif, dad to two year old Tahera, participant in Reading from the Start.



Project information

Customer: Peabody

Location: Social Housing Estates in Hackney, Tower Hamlet and Islington, London.

Services: Various FM services.