

## 50 THINGS CHILDREN SHOULD DO BEFORE THEY TURN 5 YEARS OLD

- A successful local initiative in Bradford turns its sights on helping the early years development of children all over the UK
- Research shows that early intervention to support the development of language, literacy and communication skills in the under-fives has a profound impact on achievement

London, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018: '[50 Things to Do](#)' is a free collection of creative activities that parents and carers can use with their children to support their early years development. It is based on the simple notion that access to life-changing, fun, low-cost or no-cost experiences with your family is a great way to support and develop young children's oracy skills and confidence, so that they enter primary school much more ready to learn. Created by St. Edmund's Nursey School in Bradford and backed by Big Change, it is now launching nationally and available everywhere through [app stores](#).

Research from the Department for Education\*, the Education Foundation, and Public Health England has shown that early intervention to support the development of language, literacy and communication skills in the under-fives has a profound impact on achievement in primary and secondary age phases. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged learners.

Christian Bunting from St. Edmund's Nursery School and Children's Centre in Bradford, said: "50 Things to Do started with the objective of helping to solve the problem of children reaching their first school experience with low literacy levels, language skills, or just a lack of life experiences. This immediately puts them at a disadvantage against the rest of the class, and research shows that most children never recover from this early disadvantage, affecting not just their attainment, but also their confidence and aspirations."

Naz Shah MP, said: "50 Things to Do will make a fantastic contribution to the lives of pre-school children, helping parents and carers enrich the lives of those that they care for and better prepare them for school. In cities like Bradford the facts are clear. Too many children start school with poor language skills and a lack of rich and diverse life experiences. For many parents poverty and social isolation seems to close off many opportunities for play and adventure. 50 things to do uses IT technology matched with the many free cultural and educational opportunities that do exist to overcome these

barriers. Sign-posting to a world to explore and a network of other parents to join. This could be a game changer.”

Councillor Imran Khan, Bradford Council’s deputy leader and portfolio holder for education, employment and skills, said: “50 Things to Do is a fantastic idea and we’re delighted to support it. Learning starts at birth and it continues for life. As a parent myself I think 50 Things to Do is a great way to help our kids enjoy as many positive experiences as possible to help with their confidence and knowledge, to enrich their lives and to stand them in good stead when they enter the classroom. It’s also important that they’re mainly low-cost or free activities, so everyone can get involved. We can be proud that 50 Things to Do has been pioneered in Bradford and will benefit families right across the country as it’s rolled out nationwide.”

Holly Branson, Trustee and Founder of Big Change, said: “We are delighted to be supporting the ‘50 Things to Do’ campaign and toolkit, that helps equip families with creative ways, for parents and children to get out and about in their community, learn new things, and come together across cultures and backgrounds. At Big Change we back innovative ideas that transform the way we support young people to thrive in life. Extensive research has proven that the earlier we develop effective communication skills the greater our chances are of fulfilling our potential. The ‘50 Things to Do’ campaign is a pioneering, fun way of instilling those skills in young children whilst building family and community bonds and sharing the gift of curiosity with the next generation.”

Councillor Lisa Mulherin, Executive Member for Children and Families for Leeds City Council said: “We are delighted to be involved in the fantastic ‘50 Things to Do Before You’re 5’ initiative, which will have a positive impact on the lives of children in Leeds. Supporting all children and young people, particularly those that are vulnerable, to have fun growing up, to be happy and healthy and to be ready for school are core priorities that fit with our vision of becoming a child friendly city. This initiative embeds these values at the core of its aims and outcomes and will revolutionise the way that we interact with our city’s youngest children and their families.”

Notes to editors

Photography for use by the media is available [here](#).

‘50 Things to Do’ website is [here](#) and the app is available on the [Apple and Google Play app stores](#).

\*Department for Education: [Improving social mobility through education policy paper](#).

‘50 Things to Do’ [evidence base](#).

For more information:

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#### About St Edmund's Nursery School, Bradford

The '50 Things to Do' project sprung from the minds of the St Edmund's Nursery School in Bradford. The school has worked closely with a huge range of people in our area, ranging from the families and children that we will be serving, to education experts and special needs experts in nursery schools, primary schools, our local authority and beyond.

<https://www.stedmundsbradford.org.uk/>

#### About Big Change

Big Change is a social impact accelerator that backs big ideas that help young people to thrive in life, not just exams.

<https://www.big-change.org/>