

## Key benefits of school libraries

- Nearly three decades of research shows positive correlations between high-quality library programs and student achievement (Gretes, 2013; Lance & Kachel, 2018; Scholastic, 2016). [Cf. International Literacy Association, 2022](#)
- More parents report borrowing books or asking their children to borrow books from their school library. Indeed, parents value school libraries regardless of their financial situation and rate their children having access to a school library as important. ([National Literacy Trust report, 2023](#)).
- Support for school libraries was universal among parents, with more than 9 in 10 (92.3%) saying that their children having access to a good school library was important. ([National Literacy Trust report, 2023](#)).
- A [2013 study from Robert Gordon University](#) showed that school libraries have demonstrable impact on:
  - Higher test or exam scores equating to academic attainment: this includes academic attainment in the form of higher standardised test scores in reading, language arts, history and maths, and better grades in curriculum assignments or exams;
  - Successful curriculum or learning outcomes, including information literacy: this includes higher quality project work, the development and practice of information literacy, increased knowledge and reading development; and

- Positive attitudes towards learning: including increased motivation, improved attitude towards learning tasks, self-esteem, and wider reading for pleasure.
- In a [2018 study on why children and young people use school libraries](#), the National Literacy Trust used a mental wellbeing index (which combines life satisfaction, coping skills and self-belief variables into a scale from 1 to 10) to explore the impact of school libraries on mental wellbeing.
  - The findings showed that children and young people who use the school library have, on average, higher mental wellbeing scores.
  - Those who don't use the school library are nearly twice as likely to have low mental wellbeing than they are to have high mental wellbeing.
- A considerable body of international evidence demonstrates that school libraries support improved attainment, successful curriculum or learning outcomes and positive attitudes to learning ([Williams, D., et al, 2013](#)).
- Findings illustrate that nearly a quarter of schools in Scotland do not have a school library space, and two-thirds of school libraries in Scotland have no library budget at all ([CILIP Great School Libraries, 2023](#)).
- In 2022 BookTrust undertook a programme to create a bespoke library space in 6 different primary schools in England, named '[Life Changing Libraries](#),' with support from Waterstones Childrens Laureate Cressida Cowell.

Each dedicated library was stocked with more than 1000 specially curated books, and supported staff with training and mentoring from specialists to develop a culture of reading for pleasure.

- Key findings include:

"As a result of the facilities, pupils were spending more time reading for pleasure and, consequently, experiencing improvements in their wellbeing.

Attention, engagement, confidence and motivation to learn were all reported to have increased, and there were reports of improved academic achievement and/or more rapid academic progress since the libraries were installed. In particular, demonstrable improvements in children's writing ability were described as a result of increased access to books that ignited children's imaginations and enhanced their vocabulary. The schools also reported increased enthusiasm and desire to learn to read amongst key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 pupils, as the library facilitated a shift in children's attitudes towards reading. Rather than seeing it as a chore, they began to see reading as pleasurable and were excited to improve their reading ability so they could access the wealth of texts in the new library."

- 10 years of service reductions in Scotland have left some authorities with no librarians and many with one between two or more schools.
  - An extensive body of evidence highlights the contribution of school librarians to improved exam scores and achievement, and their role in creating a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment where all pupils have equitable access to curriculum-related learning resources ([Times Educational Supplement, 24/2/2023](#)).