

First Minister's Reading Challenge Celebrates Schools, Libraries and Community Groups Across Scotland

The winners of the First Minister's Reading Challenge 2018-19 have been announced at an event in Glasgow. Nineteen schools, one library and one book club were honoured at the celebration ceremony, where prizes were awarded by Ross MacKenzie, author of *The Elsewhere Emporium* (Floris).

The Minister for Mental Health, Clare Haughey, also joined the celebration event and presented the Reading Inspiration Award to Whitburn Academy. She also toured the showcase, to view the work that schools, community groups and libraries had completed during their journey. 1,195 groups registered for the First Minister's Reading Challenge, a 20% increase in registrations from the previous year.

The First Minister's Reading Challenge celebration event took place at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel in Glasgow on Monday (10 June). Now in its third year, the Challenge encourages children to read for pleasure and develop a life-long love of books. The awards recognise the efforts of schools and pupils to support reading for enjoyment and create a reading culture in their school, home or community. Schools, libraries and community groups who submitted to the Challenge received a party pack, including certificates signed by the First Minister.

The First Minister's Reading Challenge was launched in 2016 for Primaries 4 to 7 and the third year has expanded to include all primary and secondary schools as well as libraries and community groups. Scottish Book Trust, the national charity changing lives through reading and writing, delivered this exciting reading initiative on behalf of the Scottish Government and every school in Scotland was invited to take part.

The national winner of the School Reading Journey Award was Cowie Primary School, Stirling. As well as creating a new library, the school ensured that every classroom has a beautiful space to encourage reading for pleasure. The school also runs a lunchtime 'Crafty Characters Club' created by older pupils, to help the younger students with their reading. Teachers have also committed to building a reading culture, with a staff book club focusing on children's literature, as well as engaging with authors and the local library.

The First Minister's Reading Challenge opened to secondary schools for the first time in 2018, and Whitburn Academy, West Lothian was awarded national winner of the Reading Inspiration prize. Their project was centred on their most inexperienced readers who became literacy ambassadors for their school. Staff role modelling was also a key part of their project, with teachers sharing 'what I am reading' boards on classroom doors, and participating in literary events. Parents and carers also had the chance to be involved in 'Scotland Reads' workshops, which explored collaborative learning.

A full list of the awards can be found below.

The First Minister said: "I'm delighted that over 1100 primary schools, secondary schools, libraries and community groups from every local authority in Scotland participated in the third year of the First Minister's Reading Challenge.

"My warm congratulations to all those who have taken part – the submissions demonstrate that

Scotland really is a country of readers, and showcase the hard work of the pupils, teachers and librarians who were involved.

“I launched the reading challenge in 2016 to encourage reading for pleasure, which is key to raising attainment and improving literacy. Even more schools registered for it this year, and it was wonderful to see so many examples of how a shared reading culture can build and improve relationships within a community.”

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, said: “Congratulations to all those who took part in the First Minister’s Reading Challenge. Scottish Book Trust was delighted to see so many secondary schools take part in the challenge for the first time. The submissions showcased the fantastic work that schools, libraries and community groups across Scotland have achieved in order to build a reading culture.”

Donna Bullivant, Class Teacher, Cowie Primary School said:

“What a year and what a phenomenal journey we have been on. As a school learning community we have read, read and read even more by immersing ourselves in reading and authors to develop a reading culture and enjoyment for reading – it has been transformational. We are delighted to have won the School Reading Journey Award: participating in the First Minister’s Reading Challenge has inspired and motivated our learners and wider learning community to read widely for enjoyment and develop a love of reading.”

Tracey Loudon, Head Teacher, Whitburn Academy said:

“As a school we couldn’t be more proud of the achievement of our Literacy Leaders. Getting involved in the First Minister’s Reading Challenge has allowed us to build a visible reading culture in school, where our staff and parents have actively encouraged and supported our literacy leaders to build their confidence in reading. At the same time, they have also ensured that they were thoroughly enjoying the amazing new adventures that a good book can take you on.”

Ends

Notes to editors

For more information or images of the winners please contact PR and Marketing Manager KearaDonnachie on keara.donnachie@scottishbooktrust.com or 0131 524 0184.

Full list of awards:

School Reading Journey Award:

- School Reading Journey, national winner: Cowie Primary, Stirling
- School Reading Journey, highly commended: Fernielea School, Aberdeen City
- School Reading Journey, highly commended: St Mary’s Primary, Inverclyde

- GME School Reading Journey, national winner: Sgoil nan Loch, Eilean Siar

School-Community Partnership Reading Journey:

- School-Community Partnership Reading Journey, national winner: Aberlemno Primary, Angus
- School-Community Partnership Reading Journey, highly commended: Muck Primary, Highland

Reading Inspiration Award:

- Reading Inspiration, highly commended: Whitburn Academy, West Lothian
- Reading Inspiration, highly commended: Hillhead High School, Glasgow City
- Reading Inspiration, highly commended: Dunfermline High, Fife

Reading Culture Award:

- Library Reading Culture: Duloch Library, Fife
- Community Reading Culture: Bookberries Book Club, Argyll & Bute

Pupil Reading Journey Award:

- Pupil Reading Journey (P1): P1A class, Oakgrove Primary, Glasgow
- Pupil Reading Journey (P2): P2/1 class, Westquarter Primary, Falkirk
- Pupil Reading Journey (P3): Margherita, Notre Dame Primary School, Glasgow
- Pupil Reading Journey (P4): P4 class, Bo'ness Public School, Falkirk
- Pupil Reading Journey (P5): Gus, Echline Primary School, Edinburgh
- Pupil Reading Journey (P6): P6/7 class, Mossend Primary School, North Lanarkshire
- Pupil Reading Journey (P7): Rebecca, St George's School for Girls, Edinburgh

Reading the Most Books Award:

- School Reading the Most Books: New Deer School, Aberdeenshire
- Pupil Reading the Most Books (Lower Primary): Kari, P1, Bishopton Primary, Renfrewshire
- Pupil Reading the Most Books (Upper Primary): Thomas, P5, Liberton Primary, Edinburgh

About First Minister's Reading Challenge

The First Minister's Reading Challenge was launched in March 2016 and in its first year was open from August 2016 to March 2017 to all Primary 4 to Primary 7 children in local authority and independent schools across Scotland. In its second year the Challenge was expanded to include primaries 1 to 3, and in its third year, the Challenge was expanded to include Secondary Schools, Libraries and Community Groups.

Scottish Book Trust administers the Challenge, working closely with Education Scotland. It includes book suggestions, learning resources, prizes, case studies and ideas to help young people develop a love of reading, as well as the opportunity to apply for author visits.

readingchallenge.scot

@FMReadChallenge

About Scottish Book Trust



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Scottish Book Trust is a national charity changing lives through reading and writing. We believe books and reading have the power to transform lives, and we inspire and support the people of Scotland to read and write for pleasure.

- We give free books to every child in Scotland to ensure families of all backgrounds can share the joy of books at home.
- We work with teachers to inspire children to develop a love of reading, creating innovative classroom activities, book awards and author events.
- We support Scotland's diverse writing community with our training, awards and writing opportunities.
- We fund a range of author events for the public to enjoy and promote Scottish writing to people worldwide.
- We work for a Scotland where everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive through literacy.

scottishbooktrust.com

[@scottishbktrust](https://twitter.com/scottishbktrust)

facebook.com/scottishbktrust

Creative Scotland

Scottish Book Trust is supported by Creative Scotland through Regular Funding. Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. We enable people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland by helping others to develop great ideas and bring them to life. We distribute funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. For further information about Creative Scotland please visit

www.creativescotland.com

Follow us [@creativescots](https://twitter.com/creativescots) and www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland