



Chartered Institute of Library
and Information Professionals
in Scotland

School Librarianship: An Advocacy Strategy



Our Vision

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland (CILIPS) believes that all learners are entitled to have access to and support from full time, professionally qualified school librarians to develop the skills needed to be successful and participate fully in an information society.

School librarians are key in providing children and young people with the opportunities for reading for enjoyment and inspiring wider reading.



Context

The Scottish Government's focus on literacy is indicated in the Literacy Action Plan. Curriculum for Excellence aims to offer our young people a coherent, flexible and enriched curriculum. Professionally qualified school librarians make a significant positive impact on literacy and curriculum support. Their role in supporting learning was acknowledged by the Royal Society of Edinburgh in the recent publication, *Spreading the Benefits of Digital Participation* (April 2014) and further highlighted in SLIC's Critical Review of the Impact of School Libraries on Learning by Dorothy Williams of Robert Gordon University.

However, the threat of diminishing resources in the public sector and a lack of understanding of the role and impact of school librarians make advocacy for school librarians crucial.

This statement highlights the positive contribution school libraries and school librarians make in supporting the curricular and developmental needs of young people.

School Librarians' Impact on Learning

School Librarians....

- Support children and young people to develop the skills needed to manage today's information overload;
- Develop children and young people to become lifelong learners, problem solvers and independent thinkers;
- Enhance learning by bringing expert knowledge of resources to enrich the learning experiences within Curriculum for Excellence;



- Develop and deliver information and critical literacy within the school curriculum in partnership with teachers;
- Deliver interdisciplinary learning opportunities;
- Develop and deliver digital literacy learning experiences.

School Librarians' Impact on Literacy

School Librarians....



- Create rich experiences and opportunities for reading for pleasure for all learners to motivate them to become lifelong readers;
- Contribute to the literacy policy of the school and the local authority;
- Support and deliver reader development programmes to encourage reading for pleasure, including national initiatives from the Scottish Book Trust and The Reading Agency;

- Develop a reading culture across the school community, including leading reading groups;
- Enrich reading for pleasure through engagement with the wider reading culture e.g. Edinburgh International Book Festival, Scottish Book Trust;
- Support and develop children and young people's reading through knowledge of individual preferences matching them to a range of current fiction.



School Librarians' Impact on Health and Wellbeing

School Librarians....

- Provide a safe, secure and supportive library environment for formal and informal learning;
- Create responsible citizens by providing opportunities leading to formal and informal achievement e.g. Duke of Edinburgh Award and Saltire Awards;
- Educate learners in the safe and ethical use of the internet;
- Develop skills to meet future job market needs and contribute to the positive destination agenda;
- Encourage appreciation of diverse cultures through the provision of resources and the ethos of the library;
- Develop self-esteem, resilience and confidence in learners by providing resources and appropriate opportunities within the library;
- Provide informal pastoral care by supporting young people who have challenging personal and family circumstances;
- Provide opportunities to develop productive relationships with the wider community e.g. libraries, voluntary groups.



Definition of a Qualified Professional Librarian



A qualified practitioner educated to degree or post graduate level in Library and Information Science or working within the Professional Registration framework;

An enthusiastic and knowledgeable person who supports the learning, cultural, leisure and wider needs of the learner;

An information expert who has knowledge of learning styles, best routes to find information, information literacy and transferable skills;

A champion who recognises the benefits of reading for pleasure;

A networker who will develop and cultivate partnership working with other key organisations within and beyond the school, including wider professional agencies;

A dynamic advocate committed to actively promoting their work;

A leader who systematically reflects upon and evaluates their practice.

Advocacy Strategy

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland (CILIPS) will:

- Develop meaningful relationships with Education Scotland;
- Build in a school librarian strand within the Autumn Gathering programme;
- Provide advice and support to individual members;
- Develop the CILIPS website to include best practice of advocacy;
- Advocate for school librarians with national bodies;
- Provide opportunities to engage with the wider library community;
- Commission research on impact of school libraries and school librarians;
- Maintain and develop good relationships with school libraries and school library services across Scotland;
- Provide a forum and opportunities for advocacy for school librarians.



Advocacy Strategy

School librarians will:

- Take responsibility for the advocacy of their own work;
- Actively advocate to the school community and beyond;
- Contribute to CILIPS website;
- Reflect on the impact of their work;
- Report on impact and disseminate information to a wider audience, including senior management, school improvement officers and professional press;
- Participate in active research;
- Maintain active engagement with senior management.



Good Practice

In order for the professional school librarian to be able to deliver a proactive, relevant service, support from senior management is essential. Evidence demonstrates that this support includes:

- an understanding of the role and specific skill set of the school librarian;
- providing adequate budget, resources and preparation time;
- opportunities for professional development and dialogue;
- ensuring that the school librarian participates in relevant meetings and relevant working groups;
- ensuring that the school librarian is part of performance reviews, school improvement plans and self-evaluation;
- ensuring there is an effective line management structure for school librarians.



Further Information

Call us: 0141 222 5785

E mail us: admin@cilips.org.uk

Visit the school library advocacy pages on our website:

<http://www.cilips.org.uk/school-library-advocacy/>

Submit best practice:

<http://www.cilips.org.uk/shared-practice/>

Other Links:

The CILIPS School Library special interest group including a link to their blog: <http://www.cilips.org.uk/slg/>

School Library Association: <http://www.sla.org.uk/>

Robert Gordon University report on the Impact of School Libraries on Learning: http://www.scottishlibraries.org/storage/sectors/schools/SLIC_RGU_Impact_of_School_Libraries_2013.pdf

CILIP UK leaflet on school library advocacy:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/school-libraries-group/professional-librarians-leaflet>

A website created by CILIP where the UK wide #shoutabout campaign is detailed: <http://www.schoollibraries.org/>

Thank you to all of the school library advocacy group for their work on this document.



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