

21st November 2023

South Lanarkshire Council
Almada Street
Hamilton
ML3 0AA

Dear Councillor,

I am writing to you from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland (CILIPS), the leading professional body for librarians nationally.

Many of our members work in services such as your school libraries and we are writing to ask that you continue to support this vital part of your workforce. We realise the local government funding picture is hugely challenging and we have made this point to the Scottish Government, but we believe that school libraries are an essential part of education and hope that you agree.

We are deeply concerned by your current savings proposal to reduce the school library service by approximately 50% by moving to a reduced service for all schools of 1-2 days per week.

Any proposal to reduce school librarian staffing will severely damage the service you offer and directly affect the quality of education you offer pupils as well as efforts nationally to improve literacy rates and attainment. An extensive, growing 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 equal and equitable access to curriculum related learning resources.

Recently, South Lanarkshire schools have seen increased book circulation, and this is due to having full-time librarians working on collection development and promotion. Many South Lanarkshire schools have also been accredited as reading schools and this accreditation is evidence of your schools championing and building a reading culture, and we believe this is best sustained by a full-time school librarian.

The National Strategy for School Libraries, Vibrant Libraries, Thriving Schools, which is currently being implemented in Scotland, states on numerous occasions the important role school librarians have in educational settings. School librarians are trained and skilled members of school staff, and reducing their impact will cause young people's education to suffer.

We ask that you take the above into account in setting the next budget and offer school librarians some reassurance over their positions at the earliest possible time.

Yours Sincerely



Sean McNamara, Head of CILIP Scotland