

Derbyshire Summer Reading Challenge report 2015



Overview

The Summer Reading Challenge is the UK's biggest reading promotion for children, and has been running annually since 1999. It is co-ordinated by the Reading Agency and the UK public library network. Throughout the Summer Reading Challenge library staff, teenage and adult volunteers, support children, helping them to discover new authors and explore a wide range of different types of books.

2015 was the 60th anniversary of the Guinness Book of Records and the theme of Record Breakers inspired 763,821 children in the UK to take part at their local libraries during their summer holidays. Of these, 22,726 were under 4 which is an increase of 55%.

- UKLA research¹ has shown that taking part in the Challenge helps prevent the summer dip in literacy skills, which can be particularly damaging for disadvantaged children.
- The challenge motivates children to read independently and more frequently, and inspires boys to read outside school (only 1 in 4 boys read outside class every day²). Children who enjoy reading are more likely to score highly on reading assessments than those who don't³, and those who use libraries are twice as likely to be above average readers⁴.

- In 2013 the Institute of Education research⁵ clearly demonstrated the power reading for pleasure has on improving children’s cognitive development and educational attainment, and the Summer Reading Challenge helps support this.
- National Literacy Trust research has shown that there is an important positive relationship between reading enjoyment, reading frequency and reading attainment ⁶, with children who read stories or novels outside school regularly having better reading scores than children who rarely read for pleasure ⁷.

In Derbyshire the Summer Reading Challenge contributes towards: -

Reading for Pleasure

“Children who love reading will read more and, over time, choose literature which is more demanding and suitably stretching. as the amount a child reads increases, their reading attainment improves, which in turn encourages them to read more. All reading makes a difference, but evidence suggests that reading for pleasure makes the most.” Reading: the next steps (Department for Education, 2015. DFE-00094-2015)

- 284,496 children’s library items were issued between July – September 2015. An increase of 23% on 2014
- 9320 young people took part.
- 43% of starters were boys.
- 6570 young people finished the challenge (70.5%)

Quotes from participants

“My boys loved taking part in Record Breakersthey take part every year. It gives them an excuse to come to the library and do lots of reading, which they love” (Gamesley)

“We think the Reading Challenge is a wonderful idea and gives children a real sense of accomplishment. We all love books anyway and this just encourages us to read even more”.

“... was happy to go to bed in the summer holidays because this is when he read his books. At bedtime he was eager to pick up the story from the night before. He is enjoying telling me about the story he is reading.....”

“I think this is a brilliant idea, encouraging children to read, which is something that can normally be a struggle in the holiday” (Buxton)

“ It’s a great incentive for my children to read during the summer holidays.particularly enjoys exploring books she would not get to read as part of the school reading programme i.e. comic style books”

“ I really do think it encourage my kids to keep reading/being read to over the summer”(5 and 2.5 years old)

School Readiness and learning

Parents and carers who regularly share books with young children are helping their child’s speech. *“Reading widely... opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.”* (National Curriculum for English 2014 Key Stages 1 and 2).

- 566 under 4s took part, which represents 6% of the total.
- The biggest number of participants was 4 – 7 year olds which made up 49% of those taking part.

Quotes from participants

“... was a little young, but loved sticking on the stickers and loved the medal at the end” (Aged 2)

Comment from a mum about her 5 year old. *“... hadn’t been able to complete the challenge last year because obviously his reading wasn’t as good and he hadn’t wanted to do it, but **this year** he had entered into the spirit of the challenge and was very enthusiastic to complete; the Summer Reading Challenge really had fulfilled its objective in encouraging him to keep reading in the school holidays”.*

Health, wellbeing and confidence

The challenge brings families together by offering a rich variety of free creative events. These events offer children the opportunity to build their social and interactive skills and build their confidence levels.

- Over 127 events were held across 45 libraries.
- Over 1731 adults and children attended activities.

Quotes from Participants

“Very enjoyable. My son joined in all by himself where normally he doesn’t get involved and needs lots of encouragement”

“..... Enjoyed the reading challenge, especially once she had access to the “dyslexic range”

“ The Summer Reading Challenge really works for us. My daughter is a reluctant reader and never wants to read a school book at home. The reading challenge is something she sees in a different way – a way of getting a pat on the back maybe. She stood up in assembly and shared her medal she was so pleased with herself last year. I was pleased to see the challenge continues as it is a much needed way of getting her to read, which suits me as a mum”

Community Engagement through Volunteers

Summer Reading Challenge volunteering supports the government’s major *Step Up To Serve*⁷ campaign, which aims to double the number of young people participating in social action by 2020. In 2015 Summer Reading Challenge volunteering was funded by the Social Action Fund, managed by The Social Investment Business, on behalf of the Cabinet Office.



- 95 young people aged 13 – 24 years volunteered as Summer Reading Champions across 32 libraries.
- They worked more than 1377.5 hours. An increase of over 3% - less young people volunteered in 2015, but did more hours than 2014.
- Predominantly they were aged 12 – 15 years (57.9%).
- 24 of the 95 had volunteered before.

Quotes from volunteers

"I have really enjoyed volunteering for the Summer Reading Challenge as I have improved my communication and organisation skills and it has given me valuable experience for when I am a teacher." (Hannah, aged 20)

"It was fun meeting new people. It was nice seeing children have fun. I gained confidence" (Age 14)

"My experience as a volunteer with the library was really positive. The staff were very supportive and helpful and made me feel like part of the team. I enjoyed meeting lots of new people and helping members of the public to access the services that the library offers. I feel I learnt lots of new skills and really increased my confidence in dealing with new people."

Community Engagement through partnership working

The challenge gives libraries the opportunity to work with partners and other organisations. 30 events involved work with partners including Derbyshire Adult Community Education, Derbyshire Record Office, Gordon MacLellan and Clever Cloggers. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=in_sDtmJWQY

In addition



- The Extreme Roadshow launched the Challenge at Ilkeston Library on 11th July. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-GwvrbJxqN8>

- 306 Derbyshire schools and 16 nurseries had children taking part, as well as 106 other schools from across the country.
- 38 home schooled children took part, an increase of 111% on 2014.



- 92 schools were visited to promote the Challenge.
- 445 young people joined the library during the summer so they could take part in the Summer Reading Challenge, a 48% increase on 2014.



- Over 37 medal ceremonies were held in libraries and in schools where visits had been made to promote the challenge.
- In 2015 it cost £0.81 per child taking part to run the challenge in Derbyshire

References

- 1 Summer Reading Challenge Impact Research Report, UKLA, 2009
- 2 Boy's Reading Commission, National Literacy Trust, 2012
- 3 PIRLS, 2009
- 4 National Literacy Trust, 2011
- 5 Institute of Education 2013: <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/newsEvents/89938.html>
- 6 Clark, C. and De Zoysa, S. (2011) *Mapping the interrelationships of reading enjoyment, attitudes, behaviour and attainment: An exploratory investigation*. London: National Literacy Trust.
- 7 PIRLS (2006) and PISA (2009) in Department for Education (2012) *Research evidence on reading for pleasure*. London: DfE.
- 8 www.stepuptoserve.org.uk