

STOCKPORT CHILDREN BOOK AWARDS 2023

Report of the Director of Place Management

1.0 Introduction to the Book Award programme

- 1.1 The Stockport Children's Book Award scheme is a reading for pleasure programme run by Stockport Libraries and aimed at Stockport primary schools. It supports literacy and democracy in school age children (5-11). The programme has been running for 27 years and has particularly grown in recent years to become an event that many schools and families look forward to each year.
- 1.2 Children are encouraged to read a shortlist of new fiction titles by UK authors, between Spring and Summer, suitable for their age group. This shortlist is chosen by Stockport Libraries. Children then place a vote for their favourite book between February half term and the end of summer term.
- 1.2 A grand presentation evening takes place at the end of the scheme at Stockport Town Hall Ballroom, once all votes are cast. The event is an evening in which the Mayor of Stockport; the Executive Member for Communities, Culture & Sport; children, teachers and families from the participating schools; and also shortlisted UK authors and illustrators come together to celebrate reading for pleasure.
- 1.3 The aims of the awards are to engage and encourage children to:
 - improve literacy and encourage links with the local library
 - read for pleasure
 - try something new
 - promote the act of democracy through voting
 - take part in a borough wide reading for pleasure programme
 - create opportunities to meet authors/illustrators,
 - create a community of readers in Stockport and a "buzz" around Stockport
 - encourage participation in artwork inspired by the books read
- 1.4 The Awards are largely funded by participating schools who opt in to participate and also sponsorship from our library partners as part of Corporate Social responsibility.

2.0 Importance of Reading for Pleasure

- 2.1 The book awards support teachers and pupils with the benefits of reading for pleasure and impact on children's literacy. They emphasise the key role our library service plays in supporting literacy for our young residents.
- 2.2 Reading is an incredibly powerful way of supporting children for school readiness and for learning and development. A variety of research highlights the impact of reading on children. This includes the importance of sharing stories in early years to transform attitudes to reading and introduce children to language they might not ordinarily hear. American research on the impact of sharing stories demonstrated children at five years old who never read had a vocabulary of 4662 words, compared to children who read 5 books a day had a vocabulary of 1,283,300 words. Scientific research has shown that life success is linked to reading, including a study from Yale University demonstrated an increase in life expectancy by two years.

3.0 Participation

- 3.1 37 schools registered to take part, an increase from 34 schools in 2022 (for school testimonies see appendix 1). Schools are invited to participate in a range of activities, which includes:
 - Voting for their favourite title
 - Attendance at virtual author events with shortlisted authors
 - Submission of artwork for a competition
 - Attendance at a grand presentation awards evening
- 3.2 One of the truly powerful focuses is the awards are voted for by children and is an early introduction to the importance of democracy. Schools do not receive a prescriptive approach to voting. Children who attend non-participatory schools can vote online via Stockport Council web site. This year a huge **5789 total votes were received from children, an increase from 2022 by 87%**.
- 3.3 170 classes took part in virtual author events, approximately 5100 children in total. Funding received supports the costs for shortlisted authors to attend.
- 3.4 Schools are encouraged to get children to enter artwork celebrating the shortlisted titles. This artwork provides a multi-functional approach for our awards, as winning artwork is framed and provided as prizes for the winning/attending authors. The creator of the winning piece of artwork receives the amazing prize of their height in books and the nine best pieces of artwork, representing books in the shortlist, receive tickets to the evening.
- 3.5 As part of Stockport Town of Culture the submitted artwork is now displayed as part of The Real Public Art Show at Stockport War Memorial Art Gallery (Aug 23).
- 3.6 Children participating in the awards truly reflect the demographics of our Borough.

4.0 Presentation Evening

- 4.1 This year, the presentation evening was held at Stockport Town Hall on Tuesday 4th July 2023 and attended by 33 of 37 participating schools. The Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Stockport attended the awards as well as Councillor Frankie Singleton, Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture & Sport.
- 4.2 The Awards ceremony itself compered by the Head of Resident Services. Over an hour everyone celebrated readers of year (child nominated by each school), the winning authors and the power of reading.
- 4.3 Following the awards children meet the shortlisted authors, who signed copies of their books and also purchased shortlisted titles.
- 4.4 Next year the date is already set for the scheme and awards ceremony in the Ballroom on 25th June 2024.

5.0 Stockport Children Book Awards Video

- 5.1 To showcase the Book Awards a video celebrating our awards has been produced which we will use to encourage more schools and children to participate in the awards next year. This short video will form an advocacy tool to promote the awards for the next two to three years and whilst it aims to encourage participation in the scheme, it ultimately aims to drive forward improved literacy of Stockport children.

<https://video.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-childrens-book-award-2023>

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 That scrutiny notes the Stockport Children Book Awards.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none.

Anyone wishing to discuss the report should contact Martin Roberts on 07527387299 or by email on martin.roberts@stockport.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1 - Feedback from Schools

Our children thoroughly enjoyed themselves and one staff member said it was the most child-friendly evening yet - well done to you and the team.

You have really breathed fresh life into them in recent years.

Many thanks,

Helen Walker, Hursthead Junior School

I just wanted to say a huge well done for yesterday evening! It's the first time I've been and it was absolutely brilliant - we all loved it. It was so well organised and so engaging.

Best wishes

Patricia Harrison, St Winifreds School

We've really enjoyed being involved and the events have been amazing - our children really enjoyed last night.

Kind regards

Elizabeth Green, Vernon park

Thank you so much for this and all your hard work organising everything! It is the first year I have been involved and the children have loved it.

Liz Grange, Woodley Primary



APPENDIX 2 – List of participating schools

BA participation 23	attended a virtual visit	submitted artwork	attended the evening
Pownall Green Primary School	yes		
Hursthead Junior School	yes		
Outwood Primary School	yes		
Queensgate Primary School	yes	individual	
St Thomas' CE Primary Heaton Chapel	yes	yes	
Cale Green Primary School	yes		
Norbury Hall Primary School	yes	yes	
westmorland primary school, BRI	yes	yes	
St John's CE, HET	yes		
Nevill Road Junior School, BRA	yes	yes	
St Winifred's RC Primary School, HET	yes		
Torkington Primary School	yes	individual	
Tithe Barn Primary School, HET	yes		
Prospect Vale Primary School	yes		
St Simons Catholic School, HAG	yes		
Our Lady's Primary, EDG	yes		no
Alexandra Park Primary School, EDG	yes	yes	
Vale View Primary, RED	yes	yes	
Woodley Primary School, Stockport.	yes		
High Lane Primary School	yes		
Gatley primary	yes		no
Brookside Primary School	yes	yes	
Arden Primary School			
Dial Park Primary			
North Cheshire Jewish Primary School			
Lark Hill Primary School			
Banks Lane Junior School		yes	
Warren Wood Primary School			
Bolshaw Primary School, HEG			
Mellor Primary School, MAR			
All Saints' Marple		yes	
Vernon Park, CLL			
st mary's marple bridge		yes	
Didsbury Road Primary			no
Moorfield Primary			no
St Bernadette's Catholic Primary, BRI			no
Cheadle Catholic Junior School			no