

Craigour Park Primary win School Reading Journey award

An Edinburgh primary school has received an award from the First Minister in a nationwide competition to encourage Scottish children to foster a lifelong love of reading.



Pupils at Craigour Park Primary School were presented with the School Reading Journey – National Winner Award by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon at the ceremony celebrating the first year of the First Minister’s Reading Challenge.

A total of 12 prizes were awarded at the celebration event at the Corn Exchange in Edinburgh yesterday.



Craigour Park Primary School won their award for their impressive approach to the Challenge, including innovative initiatives such as the Reading Radio, Family Bedtime Stories and parental involvement through family reading tasks, as well as lots of community and whole school engagement.

The school invited guest readers from the wider school community, such as the crossing patrol man and judo instructor, to show pupils that reading is something everyone enjoys; photos supplied by staff of themselves reading in unusual locations were posted round the school; and a home learning competition to design school reading mascots engaged families with the Challenge.

While the initial interest for the Challenge came from pupils who already enjoyed reading, the variety of projects the school put in place has led to a much wider involvement from children who had not previously displayed an enthusiastic approach to reading.

Commenting on the school's win, Head Teacher Carol Cameron said, "We are absolutely delighted to receive this award in the first year of the Challenge. We found the Challenge to be hugely motivating and have enjoyed harnessing the creativity in our school to embrace the Challenge in our own unique way. It has been lovely to see the increased enthusiasm and engagement in reading for enjoyment across the school. We look forward to building on this success in the future."

P7 pupil, Norah Joyce, age 12, said "I think the First Minister's Reading Challenge has been brilliant because it helped encourage children of all ages at Craigour Park to read more."

Shaymaa Al-Zaidi, also age 12, agreed, "The Reading Challenge has been incredible because it has allowed children to see how well they are doing with their reading especially because of the wonderful passports we were given."

Speaking after the event, the First Minister said : "The First Minister's Reading Challenge has been a fantastic success since it was launched last year and it's wonderful to be able to celebrate a love of reading with so many enthusiastic participants!

"Reading is one of life's greatest pleasures, and the Reading Challenge is opening up a world of adventure and fun for young people as well as giving them vital literacy and language skills. By working with guest speakers and charities, the Challenge is bringing the community together in a very unique way.

"Developing a love of reading in childhood can have a huge impact on educational attainment and future wellbeing which is why projects like these are so important. I am looking forward to seeing how the Challenge develops in the future."

Following the success of the initial year, the First Minister's Reading Challenge is being extended to reach an

additional 173,000 children across Scotland. The scheme will now be open to children in Primary 1 to Primary 3, as well as the original age group, Primary 4 to Primary 7.

Marc Lambert, Chief Executive of Scottish Book Trust who runs the Challenge, said: “Encouraging reading for pleasure is one of the most important things we can instill in children because we know the benefits are substantial and life-long. This wonderful initiative is an effective way to support schools, teachers and families to make reading for enjoyment a priority and we are delighted to have a part in its success.

“Craigour Park Primary School developed a really innovative range of projects to make sure pupils had every opportunity to get involved. Taking part in the Challenge has been a catalyst for growing the reading culture in the school and we are excited to see how they continue on their journey. The school is a very worthy winner of this award.”

.@NicolaSturgeon celebrated her Reading Challenge with 600 schoolchildren from P4 – P7 in Edinburgh today pic.twitter.com/7fluv6uQCm

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