

First Minister launches her 2018 Reading Challenge to Scottish pupils

The First Minister's Reading Challenge has just opened to all pupils in primary and secondary schools throughout Scotland.

Secondary schools, libraries and community groups are now able to register and take part in the challenge which has run in primary schools since 2016 and is delivered by Scottish Book Trust.



Author Ali Smith and First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, at the 2018 Edinburgh International Book Festival. The First Minister is a prolific reader as anyone who keeps an eye on her Twitter account can tell you.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon launched the third year of the challenge at Renfrew High School, one of the secondary schools that took part in a pilot last year.

She said: "I set up the First Minister's Reading Challenge to instil a love of reading from an early age. Reading not only opens up a whole new world of adventure, but also helps

develop and improve children's literacy.

"The evaluation of the programme showed it has been well received by pupils, schools and parents in primary schools. It is important we build on that enthusiasm and encourage young people to continue reading as they progress through their education into secondary school.

"Registration for this year's challenge is now open and I'm looking forward to seeing pupils from P1 to S6 getting involved."□

Headteacher of Renfrew High School Billy Burke said: "We were delighted to participate in the secondary pilot of the First Minister's Reading Challenge and I have been hugely impressed by how our young people have embraced the opportunity. Particularly through the outstanding work of our school library with a variety of external partners, we have developed a vibrant culture of creativity and reading for pleasure throughout the school.

"Literacy unlocks the wider curriculum, and it is fantastic to see our pupils enjoying, embracing and leading in this area of their learning."□