



The School Library Association

The School Library Association is an independent charity established in 1937, which trades as an incorporated company. The School Library Association (SLA) is committed to supporting everyone involved with school libraries, promoting high quality reading and learning opportunities for all. The School Library Association offers:

- Advisory and information services, online and in person
- Lively, practical publications
- *The School Librarian*, our quarterly journal
- Relevant and focused INSET, conferences and training courses
- A network of branches for local support
- Advocacy for school libraries and School Library Services
- A significant voice at regional and national level

Company details:

- Registered Charity No. 313660. Registered in Scotland SC039453
- We are a Company Limited by Guarantee - company no. 552476
- Our VAT number is GB 233 8167 63

School Libraries – the current position:

The provision of school libraries in schools is a local decision, there is no statutory or Ofsted inspection basis for them in England and Wales, the situation in Scotland differs slightly. In some schools there is a room of books loosely referred to as a library, but without the guidance of a trained individual with recognised responsibility and support for the library it is just that – a room of books.

The ideal situation is to have a qualified professional librarian whose role is to support reading within the school, but also to underpin the curriculum - working alongside teachers offering digital and information literacy skills to enable children to develop the necessary skills to work in today's information rich world and to use that information with discrimination and also ethically. The librarian is the collection manager for all the school resources, for online and print media; he/she is also a team-teacher and teacher support for resource finding and enabling across the curriculum. In today's constrained economic circumstances schools are seeing the library as an easier target for cuts than a teaching post and libraries are being closed or staffed only part time or by untrained personnel. The role of the library is seen as underpinning the whole of the school development plans and is fully integrated into all areas of the schools pastoral, curriculum and community work.

Many librarians in school are often sole professionals and thus belonging to an organisation like SLA offers networking opportunities, local contacts, and mentoring along with the other general benefits of membership.

SLA – the Organisation:

We are a lean organisation comprising 3 administrators who look after the day to day running of the office, all the administration of a membership organisation and the processes that underpin our activities. In addition, there is a Production Editor for the journal and publications programme, and two professional librarians as Director and Assistant Director. The Director is the most public face of the organisation, making partnerships with others around reading, advocacy and campaigning, and she is also the Company Secretary. The current Director works in the office 2-3 days per month, and is based from a home office the rest of the time. The Assistant Director is office based and offers an advice service, as well as maintaining up to date and timely information in the members part of the website – www.sla.org.uk .

The office staff are also supplemented by the support of the Board of Trustees who often give practical support through offering regional training courses, editing the journal, managing the publications programme etc. We also have a proactive and supportive President in Kevin Crossley-Holland who started his term in June 2012, though he retires in June 2017. His successor, current Children's Laureate Chris Riddell, will become President from June.

Events supported by outside sponsorship:

- **School Librarian of the Year Award** – awarded annually since 2005, this award was created this in 2004 in response to the need for recognition of the excellent work that is carried out in school libraries every day, and to highlight best practice through celebrating those whose work is outstanding. Nominees do not need to be members of the SLA, and may be from any phase of education. For the latest winner see <http://www.sla.org.uk/slya.php>
- **SLA School Library Inspiration Award** – The award will be made annually to the school library that shows innovation, creativity and resourcefulness in its library design and product use. What matters is not how big the school library is, but what it has achieved with the available resources and the challenges it faces. The award is open to any school library whatever; there is no requirement to belong to the School Library Association or to have used DEMCO products. This award has grown from the SLA Library Design Award established 4 years ago. For more information see <http://www.sla.org.uk/inspiration-award.php>
- **SLA Information Book Award** - is an annual event celebrating information books, and is designed to support school libraries and to reinforce the importance of non-fiction whilst highlighting the high standard of resources available. The first award was celebrated in November 2010 – for more detail see <http://www.sla.org.uk/information-book-award.php>
- **SLA/CILIP SLG Pupil Library Assistant Award** – an annual event celebrating the excellent work of students in school libraries around the country. Details can be found on our website - <http://www.sla.org.uk/cilip-slg-sla-pupil-library-assistant-of-the-year-award.php#sn2969> and <http://libpupilaward.wixsite.com/home>

Summary of SLA Activity in 2016

- Organized training courses nationwide
- Extended our extensive website expanding the primary and secondary *Advice and Support* section
- published major new titles in our *Guidelines, Riveting Reads* and *Voices* series
- supported 18 regional and 3 national branches of SLA members
- commissioned wide ranging feature articles and comprehensive book reviews in *The School Librarian*
- secured external sponsorship for our Weekend Courses and Award schemes
- held the annual School Librarian of the Year Award at a high profile event - School Libraries Celebration Day in London
- managed our finances to keep membership fee increases below inflation at a time of increasing budget restraint
- helped promote the Kids' Lit Quiz, getting youngsters excited about reading
- represented our members at various meetings with government and other partners including Booktrust, Westminster Education Forums, Education Publishers Group on School Libraries, Designing Libraries, Reading Agency Summer Reading Challenge Strategic Group,
- Worked in partnership with CILIP and others to campaign for school library Ofsted inspection and statutory recognition.

To see more SLA activity please explore our website at www.sla.org.uk

Training - <http://www.sla.org.uk/training.php>

Publications - <http://www.sla.org.uk/publications.php>

Posters - <http://www.sla.org.uk/posters.php>

Learning & Teaching - <http://www.sla.org.uk/learning-and-teaching.php>

Blog - <http://www.sla.org.uk/blog.php>

Events Calendar - <http://www.sla.org.uk/events-calendar.php>

Tricia Adams, Director, School Library Association

tricia.adams@sla.org.uk

Tel: 07532 231946