

Monday 24 May 2021

Library provides memberships to primary children

Ahead of the 2021 Summer Reading Challenge, primary schools are working with Jersey Library to ensure that every child between 4-11 has a free library membership, and access to a reading diary.

The Summer Reading Challenge is an annual event which challenges children to read six books during the summer holidays. For every book they read, children are given a sticker, and those who complete the challenge receive a medal and a certificate, which is given out during the autumn term.

Over 2,500 children sign up each year. Last year, when libraries were closed to the public, over 1,700 children collected reading packs from Jersey Library so they could take part.

For the first time, Jersey Library will be giving every primary-aged child a reading diary so they can take part. The Library's current pause on overdue fines will continue until the end of the year and every eligible child will be given a library card, so they can borrow books to take part in the challenge.

To do this, primary schools will share each child's name, age, and address with Jersey Library, after Friday 11 June. The Library will be working to remove any duplicate memberships over the coming weeks.

Any parents who do not want their child's information shared can opt out by emailing Children, Education, Young People and Skills (CYPES) by emailing education@gov.je.

Children will receive their membership cards and diaries later in the summer term, and can read their first book in school, before carrying on with the Challenge in the town, CommuniCare and mobile libraries over the summer.

Chief Library, Ed Jewell, said: "We want to remove any barrier that could impede children from developing a love of reading. Automatic library membership, free access to Jersey Library's fantastic collections, and the removal of overdue fines are practical ways in which we can ensure our services are readily accessible to families across the Island.

"Having a library card opens up a world of enjoyment, learning and development for children, and I hope we see many new faces for this Summer Reading Challenge."

Assistant Minister for Education, Deputy Scott Wickenden, said: "Reading regularly is one the most important indicators of academic success, which is means it's vital that all children have access to books. This initiative means that more children will have access to all the resources that the library has to offer."