



Editorial ? November 2009

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News and comment from the Editor.

?It is a national scandal that less than a third of secondary schools has a trained librarian,? states The Campaign for the Book which demands, ?an extension of the role of the school librarian and a recognition of the school library as a key engine of learning? as well as ?all staff employed in school libraries to have access to appropriate and adequate support and training.? Amen to all that.

In this issue of **BfK** following on from Lucy Shepherd?s article on literary activities in her school (**BfK** No.178), Karen Hans explains the importance of the role of the school librarian and reminds us of the need for The Campaign for the Book when ?too many schools today are without properly qualified Librarians and/or properly resourced libraries? (see Briefing).

The future of school libraries is increasingly under threat as politicians search for measures to cut public spending. Writer Alan Gibbons, founder of The Campaign for the Book, has pointed out that, ?It is statutory to have prison libraries but not school libraries. We believe prisons should have libraries and can?t see why it is not statutory to have libraries in secondary schools.? Public libraries are statutory but, as Tricia Adams, Chief Executive of the School Library Association, says, ?not all schools are near them so a school library may be the only time a child can access them?. And that?s not taking into account the potential for liaison and integration with teaching and learning that is possible when there is a school librarian with good resources at their disposal on the staff. A school librarian should be seen as one of a school?s basic essentials.

Jonathan Douglas, Chief Executive of the National Literacy Trust, is calling for the appointment of a school library czar to champion the service. The Campaign for the Book is also demanding that school libraries become a statutory requirement and Alan Gibbons has launched a petition to the Prime Minister asking that libraries be made mandatory in UK schools. The petition must be signed by 11 December. Please support this crucially important campaign on behalf of all our children by adding your name to the petition. Go to <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/literacy> [3]. For the latest information on The Campaign for the Book go to www.alangibbons.net [4].



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