

Minister joins the Summer Reading Buzz

On the 17th of June Minister Frances Fitzgerald launched the *Summer Reading Buzz*, a joint summer reading programme, at the County Library, Tallaght. A great morning of celebrations took place with Mayors and County Librarians from participating local authorities in attendance. Pupils from schools in South Dublin and Fingal were treated to a fabulous magic show before local Mayor Cathal King and Minister Frances Fitzgerald spoke to them about the value of reading and of the library service.



Minister Fitzgerald poses with bee mascots.

Collaboration

Originated in South Dublin, the *Summer Reading Buzz* now stretches over 6 local authorities. Librarians from South Dublin, Dublin City, Fingal, Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown, Kildare and Longford established a working committee that has seen the cost of summer reading reduced for each county. Purchasing loyalty cards, posters and reward in bulk has proved to be an excellent cost saving activity. And the committee was able to share ideas and recommendations on various accompanying summer activities. Naturally the *Buzz* will now have a greater impact as families all across Dublin, Longford and Kildare become familiar with the colourful bee posters and branding. It can only be hoped that next year will bring more partners and with it more savings!



Deputy Mayor Clare Byrne (Dublin City), Mayor Cathal King (South Dublin), Minister Frances Fitzgerald, Mayor Kieran Dennison (Fingal), Cathaoirleach Carrie Smyth (Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown) and Mayor Micheál Nolan (Kildare) together with pupils from St Dominic's NS, Tallaght and St Teresa's, Fingal.

So how does the Summer Reading Challenge work?

Going Places with Books: the Summer Reading Buzz aims to inspire children aged 4-12 years to read in the long summer break when their reading skills can decline without the regular reading activity at school. During July and August children are asked to read ten or more books of their choice from the library. They can sign up at their local branch or mobile library where they will receive a loyalty card which is stamped each time they read a book. Once the card is completed, it is entered into a draw which takes place at the end of the summer. Each child can complete as many loyalty cards as they choose. There are rewards along the way too with specially designed bookmarks, pencils, wristbands and bee stickers to encourage children to keep reading. Libraries will host events at the end of the Buzz when prizes and certificates will be presented.

Schools

Local schools are supporting the Buzz by displaying promotional posters in their school. Teachers are asked to generate interest by discussing summer reading and the value of using the library with their classes. Schools have also now started to use their end of year report cards to include comments such as: Keep up the reading. Why not join the Summer Reading Challenge at your local library?

