

12<sup>th</sup> November 2025



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email: [admin@cilips.org.uk](mailto:admin@cilips.org.uk)

Fife Council  
Fife House  
North Street  
Glenrothes

Dear Councillor,

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland ([CILIPS](http://cilips.org.uk)) is the leading professional body for librarians in Scotland and our members work in all sectors, including several in school libraries in Fife.

We are writing to you to raise our significant worries about the current school library service in Fife. Over several years we have been contacted by both librarians and parents about cuts and de-professionalisation and have raised this with officers but have had little response. We understand that Unison have now also raised their concerns and we would like to put our support behind that.

Over the past few years, we understand that school libraries have been gradually de-valued and many staff de-professionalised. This has seen schools left without librarians or less qualified staff delivering libraries and often with decreasing funding. This runs counter to a range of evidence that supports the impact school libraries, staffed by appropriately qualified school librarians, can have on educational outcomes.

Recently Sweden made it a legal requirement for schools to have school librarians, and the UK Government have made school libraries a priority and we continue to urge both local and national government in Scotland to do the same. Pupils in Fife are being left with a postcode lottery of library provision, and this is unacceptable.

We recognise that the current local government funding model means difficult decisions need to be made and we have [written](#) to the Scottish Government about this and have also made it clear that we think school librarians need [greater protection](#). However, we strongly disagree with cuts being made gradually over time with little consultation. Cuts to school libraries will further create a growing divide in social class and opportunity and it is important parents understand that.

As our [evidence bank](#) shows, school librarians provide essential support to curriculum delivery, and research indicates that children who can use a school library have higher attainment and confidence. Over 1 in 4 adults in Scotland face challenges related to reading, writing and numbers, this reduces their earning potential by approximately 7.1% compared with those who have a basic level of literacy, showing that the support of skilled school librarians at a young age is vital. The fact that nearly 1 in 10 Scottish children do not have a book of their own at home and that the number of children who enjoy reading has fallen significantly recently makes their access to school libraries, staffed by trained professionals, even more crucial.

Librarians are specialists in matters of media and information literacy, ethics, and censorship, and with a recent rise of [book banning requests](#) it is vital that school librarians are in place in schools to provide their expertise. With the continued growth of Generative AI, we have also seen how school librarians can [support this](#) nationally.

We would urge you to take the steps outlined by Unison including a clear commitment to a properly staffed library in every secondary school, a pause on further reductions, relocations, or “locking” of library spaces and establishing a local minimum standard for school libraries—covering space, safe access, stock, digital provision and staffing.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean McNamara', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Sean McNamara

Director, CILIP Scotland