

# Award that recognises pupil library assistants moves to the Houses of Parliament

Bestselling author Cathy Cassidy is joining school librarians, representatives from literacy organisations and publishers to celebrate the [Pupil Library Assistant of the Year Award](#); a joint venture between the School Library Association and the CILIP School Libraries Group.

A five-strong shortlist has been selected from a very strong field of nominations from school librarians across the UK. The winner will be announced by Cassidy at a special ceremony on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March which is being held, this year, at Portcullis House, Westminster.

Recognising the valued assistance of pupils who help within their school libraries, the initiative is being sponsored by The Worshipful Company of Arbitrators; Authors Aloud UK, a company specialising in organising author visits; EES for Schools, an organisation that provides a range of specialist education services; leading children's publishers Hachette and Macmillan; and MLS, a company that produces high specification library systems for schools. The award's logo was specially designed by Children's Laureate, Chris Riddell.

Barbara Band, Chair of the Judging Panel and founder of the award said *"Week after week many students support the libraries in their schools by giving of their time and effort. Sadly, this is too often unrecognised and unrewarded. Yet these students are not only helping to create a lively and effective library that responds to the needs of its users, they are also gaining valuable skills and experience in the process. This award was created to recognise that work and also to highlight the unique synergy that occurs when a pupil becomes a library assistant."*

Tricia Adams, Director of the School Library Association said *"Pupil library assistants are a valuable element in the running of school libraries – giving service to the school but also gaining skills and confidence from the work they do in the library, which ultimately feeds back into their academic achievement and their motivation."*

Caroline Roche, Chair of the CILIP School Libraries Group said *"The work that pupil librarians do is invaluable in their schools. Many school librarians are lone workers and therefore rely heavily on assistance from pupil librarians during busy periods. But, more than that, many of these pupils enrich their libraries: recommending books, talking to their peers, creating newsletters, contributing to blogs, helping create displays - all the extras which can make a library vibrant and interesting. All of this enriches not only the library, but adds to their personal development. SLG thoroughly endorses this Award."*

Open to pupils who assist in school libraries across the UK, the award recognises the impact of their work on their school and its library and equally the value of the experience to the children's lives. Entries are judged by a panel of leading figures from the children's book world and school library community.

The five shortlisted pupils:

Rebecca Dunville – Wellington College, Belfast

William Harris – Lord Wandsworth College, Hampshire

Victoria Langford – St Hilda's CE High School, Liverpool

Rishi Shah – Queen Elizabeth's School, London

Harry Sindle – Ely College, Cambridgeshire

- Ends –

### **Press Contact**

Annie Everall

Director Authors Aloud UK and PLAA Judging Panel

Email: [annieeverall@authorsalouduk.co.uk](mailto:annieeverall@authorsalouduk.co.uk)

Mobile: 0788 927 4637

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **The judging panel**

- Sufiya Ahmed, Guest Judge, YA Author
- Barbara Band, CILIP Past President & School Library, Reading and Literacy Consultant
- Elizabeth Bentley, CILIP SLG Committee Member & School Librarian
- Dawn Finch, CILIP Past President & Children's/YA Author
- Annie Everall, Director, Authors Aloud UK & CILIP SLG Committee Member
- Sally Harrison, Principal Library Advisor, EES for Schools
- Susan Staniforth, SLA Board Member & School Library Consultant

#### **Sponsors**

The Worshipful Company of Arbitrators, Authors Aloud UK, EES for Schools, Hachette Children's Group, Macmillan Children's Books, and MLS.

#### **About the School Library Association**

The School Library Association is an independent charity that believes that every pupil is entitled to effective school library provision. The SLA is committed to supporting everyone involved with school libraries, promoting high quality reading and learning opportunities for all. Website: [www.sla.org.uk](http://www.sla.org.uk)

#### **About the CILIP School Libraries Group**

The School Libraries Group (SLG) of CILIP affirms that school libraries and school library services are fundamental to the development of a literate population able to participate fully in a thriving democracy, culture, civilization and economy. [www.cilip.org/slg](http://www.cilip.org/slg)

#### **Cathy Cassidy**

Cathy Cassidy is one of the UK's top-selling children's authors. She went to art school before working as fiction editor for the legendary Jackie magazine. After teaching art at secondary level, she became an agony aunt for Shout magazine but now writes full-time and tours extensively around the UK, visiting schools, libraries and bookshops, meeting her vast number of fans. Cathy has twice won the prestigious 'Queen of Teen' award and is an avid supporter of school and public libraries and librarians.