



Media Release

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Furry friends aid reading confidence

After a positive response to the rollout of Paws for Reading, the Selwyn District Libraries programme is now open for bookings at Leeston and Rolleston libraries in term four.

The programme encourages children to read to a friendly dog, helping them gain greater confidence reading aloud, as well as developing their literacy.

Libraries Manager Vicki Carlyon says feedback on the programme has been positive.

“After running the Paws for Reading trial in term two and three this year we have been very pleased with the feedback we’ve received from children and their parents,” she says.

“The volunteer dog owners selected by the Selwyn Dog Training Club have also enjoyed contributing to children’s reading progress and seeing the enjoyment both dogs and children take from their interactions.”

Stanley (aged six) and Edward Goh (aged five) are brothers who have both attended Paws for Reading sessions at Rolleston Library. Stanley says he likes reading to the dogs because “the dogs listen and like my stories”.

Edward’s favourite books to read to the dogs are books about cats. The boys’ mother Heather Goh says the sessions are very beneficial to their reading confidence.

“Reading to dogs has helped them a lot with their reading and I have noticed they are now more comfortable reading out loud,” she says.

Catherine Nicol says the programme has encouraged her son Toby to read. “He won’t read at home, but says it’s fun patting the dogs”.

Marwan Sayeed (aged six) has been reading to Indy and says he likes it when she sits on his lap as he reads his favourite book, ‘Puss in Boots’, to her.

Dogs have been carefully selected and are monitored by their handler. Library staff members are also present during the sessions, however children are encouraged to read to the dog with minimal adult intervention.

The free fifteen-minute sessions will continue to be available at Leeston and Rolleston on a fortnightly basis, with most taking place on the mobile library bus. Darfield and Lincoln libraries will not be running the programme this term, however libraries encourage anyone interested in attending a session to get in touch with them.

Bookings are open now for term four. Visit www.selwynlibraries.co.nz or contact your local library for more information.

PHOTO: Marwan Sayeed, age six, reading to Indy on the mobile library bus.

ENDS

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