

Bukit Panjang library gets bigger, better

It will reopen in July after revamp to cater to needs of growing population in area

Ng Wei Kai

Bukit Panjang Public Library will reopen on July 1 after 10 months of renovation to meet the needs of a growing population.

By 2030, Bukit Panjang is expected to grow by 15 per cent from its present 139,000 residents.

The revamped library, in Bukit Panjang Plaza, opened its doors yesterday for a media preview ahead of the official opening by Minister for Communications and Information Yaacob Ibrahim.

Floor space has increased by 85 per cent and the library is now divided into two distinct wings, located in facing units on the fourth level of the mall.

The old library space has been turned into an adult and teen zone with a volunteer-run space that houses discussion areas and a reading lounge area.

"Having it run by volunteers was about letting the community take ownership of the space, so that it could be run by the community, for the community," said associate librarian Joti Upadhyia, 28, who was involved in the redesign of the library.

There is also a redesigned children's space, which occupies the area previously rented by Japanese retailer Daiso.

In this space, there is a multimedia storytelling room called Stories Come Alive Room that uses images, light and sound effects to create interactive storytelling sessions for children.



Bukit Panjang Public Library's redesigned children's space boasts a multimedia storytelling room that uses images, light and sound effects to create interactive sessions. ST PHOTO: LAU FOOK KONG

Storytellers can use voice activation or a control panel on a tablet to activate various effects that play across three walls of the space while conducting their sessions.

Nanyang Polytechnic animation student Nursabrina Muhamad Lokman, 19, who worked on some of the animation featured in the room, said: "We took inspiration from chil-

dren's books and flash animation to create something that would be engaging for young children to watch."

Both new spaces also feature colour-coded way-finding paths linking books by age group and genre, as opposed to the traditional method of finding books using the Dewey Decimal classifica-

tion system. "This was to make looking for and reading books feel more like a journey, where users can be more independent," said Ms Upadhyia.

"For young children, text can be confusing; the colourful lines can make things more fun and interesting, like an adventure."

There is also a "book mountain"

in each wing, which is an innovative shelving design where readers can ascend a gradual ramp, discovering new books along the way.

"This place holds a lot of fond memories for my daughter," said Madam Um Melarcode Dharma Rajan, 44, a housewife who has been volunteering as a storyteller at the library since 2005.

"It's really exciting that the library has grown so much, it is now state of the art."

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See the library's new interactive features
str.sg/4EgJ