

## Learning Walk — 18.10.2016

### ***A group of governors visited school to look at Reading and the library.***

#### **What did we do?**

We met Mrs Hall-Murray (TA in year 6 and linked to the school library) to ask about reading. We discussed Accelerated Reading, the library, reading schemes, guided reading, support and interventions. We then looked at the library and books. We visited some classes to speak to children and staff about reading. We saw Accelerated Reading and Guided Reading in lessons.

#### **What did we learn?**

Accelerated Reading is for all yr 5 and 4 yr children, for yr 6 children as catch-up and in yr 3 to push the better readers. Miss Hodgson (subject co-ordinator for reading and the library) tests all the children to find out their reading age. This gives a level for the AR scheme. AR reading books are at different levels (shown by coloured labels) with a good choice of titles (fiction) at each level. After reading a book, the children complete a quiz on an iPad (85% is the target mark) to test their understanding of the book and their vocabulary. Data from the test is sent to the teacher. New or difficult words are recorded in jotters and followed up by the teacher. Children are able to choose their own books from the library for Accelerated Reading and are encouraged to take them home. AR is done at different times during the week: in lessons, before school, lunchtime.

Exceeding readers in year 6 (not on AR programme) choose reading books from the library and write book reviews.

Staff listen to children reading once a week.

##### *Guided reading*

The teacher chooses the text for GR. GR is taught four times a week from Year 2 to Year 6 and is used to help children understand texts and improve their skills in reading for meaning and any issues of context.

##### *Library use*

Children can choose their own books from the library. Most library books have questions about the book that children can answer after reading the book. We looked at the library and saw that there is an excellent range and number of books, including larger format books for the younger readers. We know from previous visits that children help in the library as monitors. Children told us that there is a good choice of books in the library.

##### *Reading scheme*

The books in the reading scheme are at different levels. The publisher gives them a level (based on government reading levels) and the school adds their own levels. Teaching Assistants keep records of which books are read by the children.

##### *Other reading interventions*

The school also uses Lexia and Reading Eggs programmes which the children can access at home. SEN children have books tailored to their needs. BRP Phonics programme is used to develop fluency and comprehension in struggling middle readers.

We learned that some children can read quite well but can struggle with unfamiliar contexts: eg we heard that a child did not understand the phrase 'Man the lifeboats', as they did not know what a lifeboat was. We saw from displays that the children are encouraged to read in many ways, eg information on different authors, photos from author visits, World Book Day activities. Library books also have recommendations to guide children to extend their reading, eg books on a similar theme, books by the same author. Children keep a reading log. At present school is running an 'Extreme Reading Challenge' over half-term.

Plans are in progress to put a list of recommended books for each year group in the library area and on the school website.

#### **Positive comments?**

Children enjoy reading and were positive about Accelerated Reading. There is a good choice of books to appeal to children, eg David Walliams, Tom Gates series by L Pichon, Dork Diaries, Wimpy Kid, Frank Lampard.

Children's choice of books is monitored to ensure that children progress and do not choose books that are too easy. Children were able to tell us about the library and which books they liked. They could explain how they did the quizzes on iPads and we saw some children completing the quizzes. Using the iPads for this also helps ICT skills. We were impressed by the organisation of the library and the different elements of teaching reading. Parent governors commented on their knowledge of Miss Hodgson's work on the library and in reading.

#### **Any questions?**

We asked whether families were encouraged to use the public libraries. They are, and school always promotes the city library Summer Reading Challenge.

We also asked about how school lets parents know about the importance of reading. It is highlighted at Parents' Evening (bookmarks were given out for each book band colour) and parents are encouraged to look at homework diaries.

We asked about colour-blind children being able to access the right books. Children would be helped if needed. It was also explained that the labels on the books were checked with two colour-blind children and they were able to differentiate the colours.

#### **Future visits**

In future visits or at committee meetings we could ask about the impact of AR and progress in reading by different groups of children.

#### **Other comments?**

It was a very informative visit, covering many aspects of reading. Governors thought it important that reading is a priority and that it is promoted with parents. We had asked about supporting parents who might have some difficulty themselves with reading which would make it harder for them to help their children. Groups have been set up in the past but were not always well attended. Staff support parents when asked and advise on local adult classes.

#### **Links to School Improvement Plan**

Key Issue 2: improve attainment in Reading across the whole school  
GB plan: improve monitoring process