

SCHOLASTIC
EDUCATION

MAT Summary Report

March
2024



Welcome to the Scholastic Reading Audit summary for Oak Multi Academy Trust

As a literacy consultant and Primary English Consultant for Coventry Local Authority for many years, I supported schools to improve standards in reading.

Now working as the Director of Primary English Education Consultancy, I work with education professionals to improve all aspects of English teaching in the primary years.

This Reading Audit covers all areas of reading and is designed to challenge and support you in the teaching of reading and encouraging children to read for pleasure.

In this report and through the linked website you'll find background to each topic with links to research and best practice providing a clear context and opportunity to reflect and find out more.

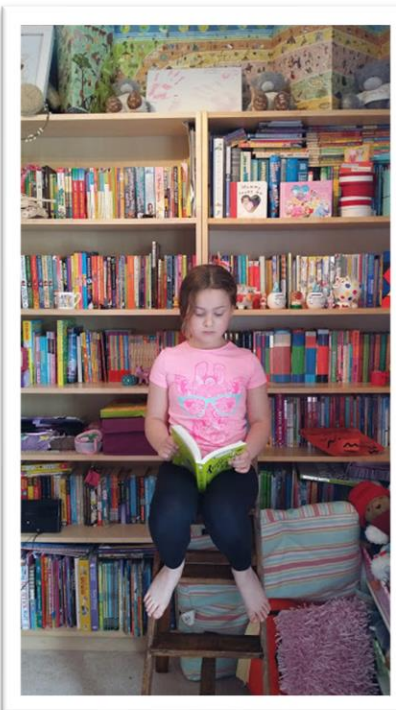
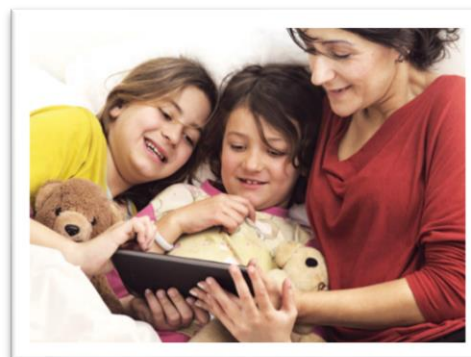
This is the second edition of the Scholastic Reading Audit, building on the good work of Ruth Sale, my predecessor as editor of the Reading Audit. In this edition we've added areas to support fluency, vocabulary, oracy and much more.

I hope you find this audit useful and I wish you luck on your reading journey!

Rachel Clarke

Rachel Clarke

Scholastic Reading Audit Editor, Independent Literacy Consultant and Author, Former member of the UKLA National Council as a representative for the West Midlands region.



Multiple sources and research documents support the Reading Audit. As much as possible, all sources are referenced in context. We have collated as much research as possible and created the Research Hub:

www.scholastic.co.uk/researchhub



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“Research on reading volume gives us a clear and empowering professional mandate. We have an opportunity to change kid’s lives by putting them on an upward reading spiral. The first step is to trust through experience with appealing books – and through high-volume pleasurable reading – strivers will thrive. We replace the dooming label ‘struggling reader’ with the dynamic effort-based term ‘striving reader’ because it connotes energy, action and progress.”

Stephanie Harvey & Annie Ward, Authors of *From Striving to Thriving: How to Grow Confident, Capable Readers*

Reading Audit for Oak Multi Academy Trust



Executive Summary

This report has been compiled based on the responses given by schools within Oak Multi Academy Trust. Oak Multi Academy Trust has five schools, with over 2,595 pupils between the ages of four and sixteen. These responses were given between November 2023 and January 2024, and this report contains links to best-practice, research and more. The questions and report are designed both to give you a snapshot of reading today across the Trust and to pose questions for further reflection.

This summary document gives you an overview of your schools' responses. On the next page in this document you will find each school's RAG rated responses. The visual nature of this page means that strengths, possible areas for development and opportunities to share good practice can be seen at a glance.

Green generally indicates that a school has identified that teaching and learning in that particular area is either good or better, although occasionally the desire for a wider range of resources or training to further improve and/or embed current good practice has been identified. We graded all of the schools in the Oak Multi Academy Trust as green for Whole Class Reading because teachers in all of your schools read aloud to their classes. In the case of some schools this is every day which is extremely pleasing to hear.

Some of the sections on the next page of this report are amber because, although there may be pockets of good practice across your schools, it appears to be patchy. For example, not all of your school survey children about their reading habits. You also run interventions for pupils who may be struggling but this is not the case for pupils who are thriving and may benefit from further challenge.

















































Red is usually used when a school has identified that a particular area either is currently not covered or is need of significant improvement. Occasionally red signifies missing information.











































From the responses your schools have given, all of your schools have fulfilled the requirements of the Reading Charter. Certificates are included with their reports and more information can be found on page 49 of their Audit.

We hope you find this audit useful and instructive. If you'd like to discuss any part of it with a consultant, please contact us at consultants@scholastic.co.uk or call 01993 893 453.

- Brookside Primary School
- Overdale Infants
- Overdale Junior
- Woodland Grange Primary
- Manor High School

At a glance summary

		Brookside Primary School	Overdale Infants	Overdale Junior	Woodland Grange Primary	Manor High School
Oracy						
Phonics & Early Reading						
Vocabulary						
Fluency						
Guided Reading						
Repeated Reading						
Reciprocal Reading						
Shared Reading						

		Brookside Primary School	Overdale Infants	Overdale Junior	Woodland Grange Primary	Manor High School
Assessment						
Interventions						
Whole Class Reading						
Independent Reading						
Home readers & family engagement						
Libraries						
Book Events						

The Pillars of Reading and the Daily Reading Lesson

Teaching children to read is a complex process. Turning words on a page into meaning and understanding is something that takes time, patience and a number of different strategies.

Countless research papers have been written into how to teach children to read, and some have affected national policies, such as the Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading, 2006, which became the underlying framework for teaching reading in England.

In 2018, Castles, Rastle and Nation wrote in *Ending the reading wars: Reading acquisition from novice to expert* are very clear that “*decoding and linguistic comprehension are both necessary, and neither is sufficient alone. A child who can decode print but cannot comprehend is not reading; likewise, regardless of the level of linguistic comprehension, reading cannot happen without decoding.*”

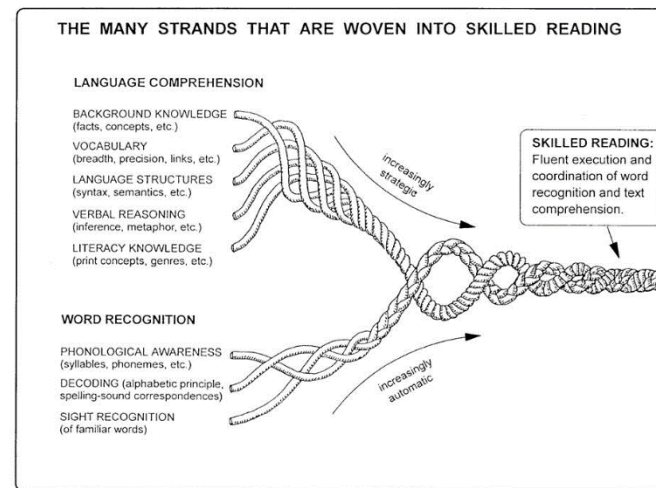
If the goal of reading is understanding what has been read, and that decoding and comprehension are both essential to this process, how do we get there? A key report published in 2000 by the National Reading Panel identified the ‘big five’ as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. More recently you’ll find references to a sixth pillar of reading, ‘oracy’ and at Scholastic we’ve added our own seventh pillar of ‘reading for pleasure’ (more on this on page 33). The ‘reading rope’ (right) is a recognisable illustration of how the Gough and Tunmer Simple View of Reading is composed and how inextricably linked they become. These pillars of reading are also evident in the Reading Framework published by the DfE in July 2023. The pillars of reading, the reading framework and the reading rope underpin this Reading Audit.

The Daily Reading Lesson

It is important that we remember that in education there are no ‘silver bullets’. Good teaching of reading does not have short cuts, and relying on one skill above all others will lead to imbalance and may lead to a need for intervention later in a child’s reading journey. It is important that educators ensure that there is a defined plan for how they are going to teach reading, through good pedagogical practice alongside highly effective and well researched resources.

Working with Rachel Clarke, Scholastic are developing the ‘Daily Reading Lesson’. We have read the research, we’ve looked at teaching strategies and resources from around the world and we are putting together a high-impact, low-workload reading model to ensure that you make every minute count in the classroom. To find out more about the Daily Reading Lesson, please visit www.scholastic.co.uk/reading-hub/daily-reading-lesson.

Chris Ratcliffe
Head of Education, Scholastic UK



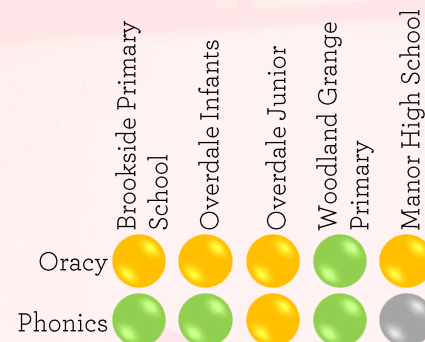
Scarborough, H. S. (2001). *Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice*. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook for research in early literacy* (pp. 97–110). New York, NY: Guilford Press.



Oracy & Phonics

Strengths

- All schools in the MAT are teaching oracy.
- All schools in the primary age range teach Systematic Synthetic Phonics.
- One of your primaries (Woodland Grange) said that the teaching and understanding of phonics in their school is outstanding. Are you using them as a beacon for your other schools?
- Your schools recognise that a complete reader needs access to a range of reading material as well as their phonic readers.



Opportunities for improvement

- Not all of your schools include oracy in their reading policy. This could be something you ask them to do.
- One school felt that the teaching and understanding of oracy was good. Your other schools felt the teaching and understanding of phonics were satisfactory or required improvement. This suggests oracy is an area for development.
- The confidence of Key Stage 2 teachers in teaching phonics was noted in the recent Ofsted Telling the Story report. As you have a Key Stage 2 only school in your Trust, it would be worth looking at how you can use the expertise in your Key Stage 1 settings to ensure that they build their knowledge and confidence in the teaching of phonics. Especially as they are likely to use phonics with their more vulnerable learners.

Quick-wins and required resources











- All of your schools would benefit from looking at the work undertaken by the Voice21 schools. These schools have long-standing experience in developing oracy learning that helps children become effective communicators.
- You have one school that feels their practice in oracy is good. You could look to use these school to support the other schools in the MAT.
- One of your primaries does not include phonics in their reading policy. Using the existing policies from your other schools could help you amend this easily.



Vocabulary & Fluency

Strengths

- All of your schools teach vocabulary directly which is pleasing to hear.
- Fluency is taught in all schools with primary age pupils.
- Where fluency is taught, children are taught to use expression, automaticity, smoothness, rhythm and phrasing.

	Brookside Primary School	Overdale Infants	Overdale Junior	Woodland Grange Primary	Manor High School
Vocabulary					
Fluency					



Opportunities for improvement

- Not all of your schools have policies for teaching vocabulary and fluency. You could look at bringing them together to create these as a team, or use the existing policies as models.
- Your secondary school is not teaching fluency at all. They may feel that teaching fluency is not required with older pupils. However, when children read aloud fluently, they are more likely to understand what they read when they read in their head.
- Not all of your schools measuring reading rates. Children at the end of Year 2 should be reading at the rate of 90 words per minute to ensure good comprehension. A running record would help you establish the rate of your children's reading but also the strategies they use/ don't use.



Quick-wins and required resources

- The tiered approach to language learning is used by two schools in the Trust. Looking at how they use this approach, and undertaking CPD into Beck et al's work could be effective ways to expand this practice.
- Asking schools to share the resources they use for teaching vocabulary and evaluating which are the most effective could help you select the best resources to meet the needs of your children.
- The Megabook of Fluency is an accessible CPD text that your teachers are likely to enjoy using. It helps teachers target their fluency work on specific areas such as expression, automaticity and reading with smoothness. It would be a good book to add to your CPD library.

Comprehension: Guided & Repeated reading

Strengths

- Most schools are teaching comprehension directly through guided reading.
- Schools are generally happy with the resources they use to teach guided reading.
- One of your schools is confident in choosing texts for lessons and feels that their staff teach guided reading well. They could be useful for helping your other schools to enhance their guided reading provision.

Opportunities for improvement

- There is scope for more schools in the Trust to explore repeated reading. It is a useful approach for gaining deep understanding of texts and can be mastered by pupils for their own use when reading without a teacher.
- There is a mixed picture in guided reading. In Key Stage 1. For example, your infant school does not use guided reading and says it does not have a policy on how to teach reading comprehension. Brookside school teaches guided reading every day to children in Reception and Year 1 so putting these schools together could help you achieve consistency of approaches.

	Brookside Primary School	Overdale Infants	Overdale Junior	Woodland Grange Primary	Manor High School
Guided					
Repeated					













Quick-wins and required resources

- The Daily Reading lesson (www.scholastic.co.uk/reading-hub/daily-reading-lesson) is an approach to teaching comprehension they uses a range of comprehension strategies, including repeated reading. You may find it a useful strategy to include in your Trusts' approach to teaching children to read.
- The best texts to use for repeated reading are short. Short Reads from Scholastic is a series of texts written specifically for repeated reading that you may find a useful addition to your reading stock.

Comprehension: reciprocal & shared

Strengths

- All of your schools undertake shared reading.
- One of your schools is using reciprocal reading. They report that their reciprocal reading resources are having an impact on pupil's learning which they can see through improved comprehension skills and children becoming more confident and showing a greater depth of understanding.

	Brookside Primary School	Overdale Infants	Overdale Junior	Woodland Grange Primary	Manor High School
Reciprocal					
Shared					



Opportunities for improvement

- Reciprocal reading is not as widely used as other approaches to comprehension, which is born out in this summary. When it is used it can have a huge impact on pupils' learning.
- Your infant school have suggested that they need support to improve the staff's understanding of how to teach comprehension. The recent Ofsted Telling the Story report noted that there is a high level of expertise in the teaching of phonics but less confidence with comprehension. It is likely that this is something you are looking at as a Trust.











Quick-wins and required resources

- This part of the Reading Audit asks about CPD books. Creating a library of CPD books for staff to read is an easy way to improvement knowledge about key aspects of pedagogy and practice.
- You could consider talking to colleagues at Manor High School, who could share their experiences of using Reciprocal Reading.
- Sharing best practice from across the Trust could help you celebrate the work that takes place in shared reading. Your staff are likely to enjoy this type of knowledge exchange.

Assessment, Interventions & CPD

Strengths

- The schools that completed the audit all reported that assessment is used to inform teaching and learning.
- Interventions are provided in all schools for children who are striving with reading.

	Brookside Primary School	Overdale Infants	Overdale Junior	Woodland Grange Primary	Manor High School
Assessment					
Interventions					

Opportunities for improvement

- There were few interventions for advanced pupils. It could be that their needs are met through adaptive teaching techniques; however, finding out how the needs of these pupils are met would be of interest.
- It looks as though CPD is an area for development. There are schools that have received up to date reading training, but this is not always the case. The Telling the Story report (Ofsted 2023) notes that there is little English CPD in many schools which impacts on teachers' subject knowledge.

Quick-wins and required resources

- The Record of Oral Language by Marie Clay could be a useful resource to consider to help collect robust information about children's oracy skills.
- If they don't already, schools would benefit from using a running record to assess the range of reading skills their children use. They may find that with a more detailed view of each child's reading, they can shape their provision to include skills such as oracy and vocabulary.



The importance of building a school reading culture

A number of years ago, Scholastic worked with UCL Institute of Education came up with the 'Scholastic Reading Charter' (p49). It was our way to help give schools an idea of how to put reading for pleasure the heart of the school day. That charter is as relevant today as it was then.

As we find on page 37, *"omnivorous reading in childhood and adolescence correlates positively with ultimate adult success"* (Simonton, 1988).

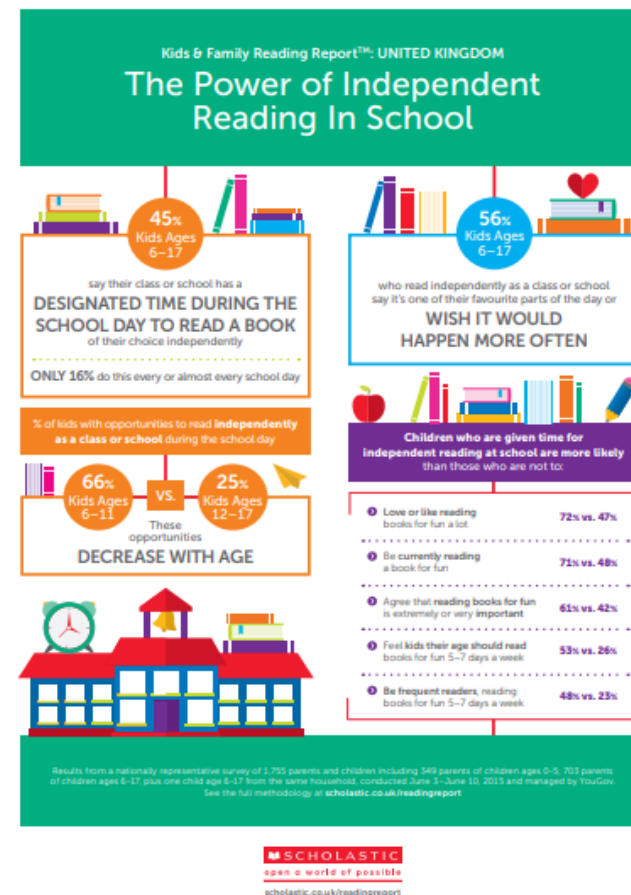
There are some key things to bear in mind when generating a whole school culture for reading:

- All staff need to see themselves as readers and allow students to see them reading. Whether this is through 'what we are reading' signs, or a book peeking out of your bag, it is important that children see reading books as more than something they have to do, rather, something they want to do.
- It is important that all staff are comfortable in, and enjoy, reading to their class for pleasure. The last ten minutes of the school day, being lost in a good story was a highlight of my school day. It is that moment when children can wind down, being gripped by a great story told well.
- Be aware of the latest authors and the latest books – and read them! Doing so gives you the incredible opportunity to recommend books to children and to discuss that book with them. Sign up to the Scholastic newsletters, visit bookshops, discuss children's and professional books at staff meetings.
- Making sure this reading culture extends to the home is crucial. Page 40 discusses this in much more detail, but one highlight shows that increasing parental involvement in primary and secondary schools had on average 2-3 months positive impact.

In today's classrooms with our compacted timetables, it is sometimes hard to see how to fit whole class reading in, but the need for it is summed up in this quote about The Power of Joyful Reading:

"In this powerful and engaging book, Eric Litwin and Gina Pepin remind us that learning to read is something that is taught and something that should be joyfully experienced. Reading should be more than a skill or competency – much more. It should add to our humanity and touch our hearts. Eric and Gina show us the way." Professor Timothy V. Rasinski, Professor of Literacy Education, Kent State University, Ohio.

Chris Ratcliffe
Head of Education, Scholastic UK













For more information on the Kids & Family Reading Report (UK) please visit :
<https://www.scholastic.co.uk/readingreport>



Whole Class & Independent Reading

Strengths

- Whole Class reading is strength. Children at schools in the Oak Trust regularly hear text read aloud to them by their teachers. In three of the primary schools this takes place in every year group on every day of the week. Your teachers should be praised for this achievement.
- Independent reading time is provided by all schools in the Trust. In two of the primaries this takes place every day in all year groups.

	Brookside Primary School	Overdale Infants	Overdale Junior	Woodland Grange Primary	Manor High School
Whole Class					
Independent					



Opportunities for improvement

- Pupils in your secondary school may benefit from increased sessions of independent reading time.
- Not all of your schools survey children regularly about their reading. Doing this gives you valuable insights about what children like to read. You can use this data to inform your library and book corner stock and to influence any visiting author events you may hold.

Quick-wins and required resources

- You may find it interesting to look at the books that are read aloud to children. Factors to consider could be progression of texts, a range of classic and modern authors and books that represent the lives of different children.
- Bringing the schools together to talk about reading for pleasure would give everyone a boost. There is so much good practice to share. Each teacher is likely to learn something new which will further enhance practice in this area.
- Check out the Reading Framework. It gives some great advice on how to set up classroom reading areas so that they support reading for pleasure.

Home readers & family engagement

Strengths

- Children are encouraged to read at home and your schools encourage parents to hear their children read at home.
- Your schools provide books for children to read at home. To maintain this, you should regularly audit the quality of these and that they meet current requirements – this is particularly the case with phonically decodable books for early readers.
- Parents are kept informed of their children's progress in reading through a range of means including parents' meetings and informal discussions where appropriate.

Opportunities for improvement

- Support for parents who may have difficulties reading or could be hard to reach is patchy. It was one of the limiting factors that prevented the schools in the Oak Trust from achieving green gradings in this aspect of the reading audit.
- There is scope for schools to look at how they are working with their feeder schools and local nurseries to encourage early reading. Again, this was one of the reasons for the amber grading of this aspect of reading.



Quick-wins and required resources

- Consider how schools can better support parents who may struggle with literacy or be hard to reach. A Trust-wide approach could help you to achieve this.
- Strengthening links between schools, nurseries and playgroups could help secure the phonics and early reading skills of children across the Trust.
- Your schools may find it easier to develop methods for supporting parents by working with each other, rather than trying to develop new approaches independently.

Libraries & Book Events

Strengths

- Your schools all celebrate reading through marking World Book Day. You could look at how they celebrate reading at other times of the year too. This would give you a good indication of how embedded a love of books and reading is in each school.
- Most schools in the Discovery Trust promote reading and books through displays in classrooms or central areas. This is pleasing to hear.

	Brookside Primary School	Overdale Infants	Overdale Junior	Woodland Grange Primary	Manor High School
Libraries					
Book Events					



Opportunities for improvement

- There is scope to improve library provision across the Trust through the employment of librarians. If schools are unable to fund qualified librarians, you could look at using volunteers or developing this role within existing job titles.
- It is best practice to replace 10% of a school's book stock each year and to not have books older than the oldest child in the school. CILIP recommends 10–13 quality library books for every pupils, excluding textbooks, structured readers and class sets. You may want to look at how close your schools are to meeting these recommendations.
- One of your schools does not have a library. Having a library puts reading at the heart of the school and so working with this school to establish a library is highly advisable.



Quick-wins and required resources

- To meet the needs of striving reader and to facilitate a culture of reading for pleasure across the Trust, it would be worth purchasing a range of hi-lo books for each library.
- Encouraging all of your pupils to join their local library would be a good way to ensure that they have access to books at all times, including the holidays.
- We suggested to some of your schools that they look at signing up for author webinars as a way of bringing authors and poets into their school. This could be something to encourage across the Trust as a way of promoting books and reading.



Reading Charter

1. Celebrate reading and ensure it's at the heart of all school activities
2. Cultivate strong links with the local library
3. Maintain well-stocked class and school libraries, with the aim of having a minimum of ten books per child in the school
4. Create a culture of book ownership and encourage children to value books
5. Ensure the school environment demonstrates a commitment to reading
6. Believe that every child has an entitlement to be able to read by the end of primary school
7. Set aside time every day for story time and create a buzz about reading with book weeks and author visits
8. Engage parents in a home/school reading culture
9. Ensure that all teaching staff are knowledgeable about books and reading and are confident to identify the right book for the right child at the right time
10. Never take reading for pleasure for granted
11. Celebrate reading success at every level
12. Value reading as a thoughtful activity at every level and encourage children to form opinions, both through their reading experience and about their reading experience



Institute of Education

Created in partnership with the
Institute of Education, University
College London



- Brookside Primary School
- Overdale Infants
- Overdale Junior
- Woodland Grange Primary
- Manor High School



- All of the schools in the Trust clearly fulfilled the criteria to be awarded a Scholastic Reading Charter Certificate.

Sources and acknowledgements

There are multiple sources and research documents that support the Reading Audit. As much as has been possible, all sources are referenced in context.

We have set up a Reading Hub, with all the research that supports this reading audit, and this can be found at www.scholastic.co.uk/ReadingHub

The Scholastic Reading Audit was initially created (March 2017) with the assistance of Ruth Sale, ex-Literacy Consultant for Worcestershire Local Authority.

The Scholastic Reading Audit has been updated (May 2021) with the assistance of Rachel Clarke, Independent Literacy Consultant and Author.

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