

Cheddington Combined School's Reading Culture



At Cheddington, we start teaching reading to the children as soon as they enter Reception. We introduce them to phonics and encourage them to use their phonics to decode. As a school, we have invested in new books which are specifically linked to their phonics phases, which have accompanying resources to support and reinforce their phonics learning. We are extremely fortunate that our reading scheme has a wide range of books and our children are able to access a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. When our readers reach the reading level copper, they are given ownership over the books they read and they start a reading rotation. They read a book from the reading scheme, a library or class book and then their own book from home.

We strive to encourage children to develop a love for reading. Each day, we have a dedicated time, where our teachers read to our children. These books are purely used for pleasure and are either selected by the class teacher or voted on by the children, particularly in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, the children may have an author focus and are encouraged to bring their own books written by the author (pre-pandemic). Our daily reading allows the children to share their predictions and they are exposed their teachers modelling fluency and expression. We are fortunate to have enthusiastic teachers who love to read and will have discussions with their pupils about books, whether they are sharing their own opinion or suggesting other similar reads. Some classes in Key Stage 2 are using #BookMatch, which have books that are of a similar theme to one that they enjoy.

Throughout the pandemic, we have implemented a system which allows the children to continue accessing the school's library books. Each week, the children have had their class library lesson. Children have a range of books carefully selected for their age and are encouraged to read and discuss their books during this time. The wonderful element of our library system is that the children have a free choice to select the books that appeal to their interests. Our staff pay careful attention to the children's choice and will guide them appropriately to a book that may provide them more challenge or may be more accessible for them.

Even when children were accessing remote learning, each year group created a World Book Day Menu for their class in order to participate in the yearly event. The children had to complete the activities of their choice and were invited to share them with their class when they returned to school. Children also received their World Book Day tokens when they returned and were directed to local shops where these could have been used considering shop closures.

Our Year 4 class have been fortunate to take part in a scheme called Book Pen Pals. This has encouraged the children to engage in recommended reads by their author and for World Book Day they had a video of their class teacher interviewing the author. Additionally, due to restrictions, we have participated in virtual visits with authors. Year 4 had a virtual visit with Nizrana Farook after studying her novel and Year 5 and Year 6 participated in a virtual visit with Eoin Colfer. We are fortunate to be located near a bookshop who holds live events with authors and invites schools to participate. With their most recent event with Victoria Hislop, our Year 5 and 6s were able to join from school and the bookshop allowed us to share the link with our Year 4 who were learning from home. The children engage with these events and their enthusiasm is a joy when their question has been selected and the author answers them.

Despite the restrictions we have faced over the last year, we have provided our children an environment which has nurtured their love and enthusiasm for reading.